

EXT. RENTAL HILLSIDE HOUSE – PRESENT DAY – ESTABLISHING

1

Studio City Hills morning; sunshine, foliage, a low-budget FILM CREW unloads a Ryder truck. Lunchbox Joes, everyday shoot, except...

KAREN DUNN (late 30's, raven hair, flawless cream complexion, striking eyes) screeches up in black Porsche, older model year. Dripping with sex appeal, tight dress matches the car in color and sleekness. When she saunters by, work stops.

INT. RENTAL HOUSE – CONTINUOUS

2

FILM CREW arranging low-tech, low-budget living room set. Doughnuts and coffee on a folding crafty table. MAKEUP ARTIST filing her nails. Waiting...

ROD (late 20's buff, shirtless) is doing push-ups to bulge for picture.

JOHN (50's, overweight, balding director) is overseeing lighting. He looks up from the video rig, noticing his arriving talent. Welcoming smile, nicotine stains...he reeks of sleaze.

KAREN

Sorry I'm late, John...are you ready for me yet?

JOHN

Hmm. I'm always ready for you, baby. You know that.

KAREN

You horny old bastard...and with all the younger ones you've had.

JOHN

The shot's gonna take a little more time to setup, but if you need some help getting those juices of yours flowing...

Massaging his arm in passing, a breathy voice. With age comes wisdom.

KAREN

You'd just ruin me for the shot, John. Take care of the camera, I'll find the *Tropicana*.

Stroked, JOHN continues working. KAREN acknowledges the attentive CREW with smiles. She strolls to Mr. Coffee and pours a cup. After one last pump, ROD joins her.

(CONTINUED)

ROD

Did John say how much longer?

KAREN

Not sure, but soon I think. Hi, Rod. Nice to see you too.

Her charm is overwhelming, disarming him of attitude. She's a pro in every way.

ROD

Only 'cause I've gotta be outta here by two.

KAREN

Hot date waiting? Don't sweat it, you'll be getting some from me in about ten minutes.

ROD

I've gotta Vana Vixen gig out in Woodland Hills this afternoon. *Video Voyeur*, ya know good money...slick product.

KAREN

Live Internet feeds and bogus Id's. If that girl is really eighteen...*real* money hand over fist though.

KAREN sips her coffee. Though she acts casually, there's embitterment. Resentment.

ROD

Hey, it's our business, ya know? Right or wrong, and it's changing, fast. Have you ever watched yourself screwing on DVD with an HDTV? It's bizarre, like being in front of a mirror, but you're not moving. How 'bout you, been working on any new stuff?

KAREN

Enough to get by, but there are my legal problems...never ending legal problems.

WARDROBE LADY provides each a swimsuit. They undress and dress in front of us. There's no shame or shyness. It's business.

(CONTINUED)

MAKEUP ARTIST dots and dabs over ROD’S body. Bathing suit is Euro. KAREN is already made up. String bikini. Flawless. They’re offered bathrobes. Both decline.

ROD

Why don’t you just drop the Diva Stockwell name?

KAREN

The name is what keeps me working. Everyone in this business knows me as Diva Stockwell, the Eva Stockwell look-a-like. The only luck I’ve ever had in this town was being born looking like a famous actress. I’m way too old and unknown to be starting over.

ROD

Maybe Eva was lucky enough to be born looking like Karen Dunn the porn star?

JOHN

Pictures up! Let’s get busy, sweaty and jizzy.

JOHN’S words saw through the rental walls. He’s satisfied with the room. Lights are glowing. The CREW animates. We’re ready for *action*...

KAREN and ROD enter set—the center of CREW attention. Final touches. The lit sofa awaits them. We slowly move in on camera lens. We hear the CHATTERING of stage direction. Spontaneous SEXY TALK. The red camera eye dilates. Blurs.

DISSOLVE TO:

MONTAGE: SUGGESTIVE SEXUAL IMAGES stimulate us—though their moments are far from intimate as CREWMEN CROSS WITH CAMERAS AND BOOMS. We see how uninteresting this is for them—this is just a paycheck for everyone involved.

3-4

CUT TO:

EXT. RENTAL HOUSE – LATER THAT AFTERNOON

5

JOHN is at the door smoking. The CREW is reloading truck. We’re done. Post coitus. KAREN steps outside. She’s put herself back together. Only so much can be fixed.

KAREN

Make sure you keep a copy of this video on your shelf, John...that way you’ll have me in mind *and in hand*, on your next project.

(CONTINUED)

Cash on demand. JOHN passes her an envelope. Smiling exhale. He's a voyeur.
KAREN squeals away. Cloud of rubber. A tempting-tempest. She's done with them.

CUT TO:

INT. PORSCHE – MOMENTS LATER

6

Driving down Laurel Canyon into Hollywood, KAREN answers BUZZING CELL PHONE.
Not her favorite caller. We can see the rage. Razor blade sarcasm.

KAREN

Yeah, I just finished working. (beat) You
knew I'd be spent? How much screwing
do you expect me to do in one morning?
No that's fine, the cash goes to the lawyer
anyway...screw to get screwed.

CUT TO:

INT. CLUB ELECTRA OFFICE – AT THE SAME TIME – ESTABLISHING

7

A desk, broken barstool, some liqueur boxes give us the feel of a nightclub. On the phone
with his feet up having an afternoon cocktail...

DAYTON SMITH (mid-40's, ruggedly handsome, needs a shave), phone in one hand a scotch
sweats in tumbler. A cigarette smolders in ashtray. He should be in a 1950s private-dick-flick.

DAYTON

Rick wants the Eva Stockwell deal, and you know
who that means...the one and only look-a-like.

DAYTON is referring to a small leather bound DATE BOOK.

CUT TO:

INT. PORSCHE – CONTINUOUS

8

KAREN

(repeating)

...Sunset west to Kings Road. Half a mile up
to 1969. Wait for *Rick's* gate to open...

CUT TO:

INT. CLUB ELECTRA OFFICE – AT THE SAME TIME

9

(CONTINUED)

DAYTON

Oh, and Karen, you're a star. Break a leg...

CUT TO:

INT. PORSCHE – CONTINUOUS

10

KAREN hangs up the line on his words. Under her breath...

KAREN

Prick...

INT. CLUB ELECTRA OFFICE – AT THE SAME TIME

11

DAYTON holds the disconnected line away from his ear. We hear the hum.

DAYTON

Bitch...

INSERT: The DATE BOOK is placed in the desk drawer. With it other items of interest: A chrome .45 semiautomatic and a smaller black.25. He locks the items securely inside.

CUT TO:

INT. PORSCHE – CONTINUOUS

12

No love lost or wasted words it's business as usual. KAREN continues driving. We see our favorite landmarks: Sunset, Tower Records, Hustler Store, Kings Way. We're there...

EXT. 1969 KINGS WAY – MOMENTS LATER

13

KAREN reaches the gated address confirmed by a GOLD 1969 placard. Estate house looms down the driveway. ACTIVATES intercom. No words. The barrier opens inviting us through.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FILM LOCATION – THAT AFTERNOON

14

This production obviously has a budget. White trucks and trailers compose a base camp. CREW on the clock but filming has stopped. We stand around with coffee and smokes.

Exiting her gigantic motor home, EVA STOCKWELL (mid 30's) reveals herself to the impatiently waiting CREW. It's about time.

The uncanny physical similarity between Eva and Karen Dunn is revealed.

(CONTINUED)

The DIRECTOR waits at the metal steps over eggshells. No one wants his job today. She starts walking with him at her heels—like an obedient dog he follows.

EVA

This afternoon has been completely unacceptable.
You're lucky I'm still here.

DIRECTOR

Have we made this situation acceptable?

EVA

(stops abruptly)

Barely. You know my contract specifies
that I will only report to set if I'm satisfied
with my makeup and hair. What is so hard
to understand about that?

DIRECTOR

We're losing the light and we're not coming
back to this location. If we don't get the shot
we have to drop the scene. I thought maybe
you'd see things my way...a team player.

EVA

You thought wrong. I'm the one having to
be immortalized with the frizzies, not you,
or the team.

Though the blue sky is clear, EVA is a storm cloud raining on everyone's day. Marching toward the bright lights of a exterior set, she leaves the DIRECTOR stunned, slack jawed.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. 'FACT FINDERS' STUDIO SET – LATER

15

We experience the workings of a tabloid news show. Through the control room glass we see the set. At the anchor desk, GUY FAIRFAX (30's, dark and handsome plastic man) shuffling copy. CANDI RAND (30's, blonde, model turned talking head) applies lip liner. Airing is mere seconds away. Cue cameras. In five, four, three...

CANDI

More controversy in the life of Hollywood
starlet, Eva Stockwell as a federal jury
hands down a long awaited decision. Good
evening everyone. I'm Candi Rand.

(CONTINUED)

GUY

And I'm Guy Fairfax...welcome to *Fact Finders*.

Behind CANDI and GUY we see a large video monitor. STILL PHOTOS of EVA and KAREN are superimposed. Different poses, expressions—such a similar look.

CANDI (V.O.)

Looking nearly identical, they could be twin sisters...there may be sibling rivalry but no love lost here. When adult film star Karen Dunn began calling herself *Diva Stockwell* in her steamy videos, the real Eva Stockwell took action.

The VIDEO cuts to a shot of downtown L.A. Federal Court steps. CROWD awaiting the celebrity litigants. A sea of REPORTERS. We see a media circus...

GUY (V.O.)

After almost two years of expensive legal maneuvering and headline grabbing, the judge finds for Karen Dunn...allowing her to continue calling herself *Diva Stockwell*.

We first see KAREN and her LAWYERS exiting.

CANDY (V.O.)

When the celebrity war parties crossed each other on the courthouse steps in front of the waiting cameras...more than unkind words were exchanged.

KAREN seeks free publicity, playing to the MEDIA . Smiling, she sells sexy. The VIDEO is grainy from a previously taped remote shot. We hear the audio feed:

KAREN

...I'd like to thank all of my supporters for your letters and kindness. And to my critics...lighten up...rent one of my videos. I know Ms. Stockwell will be starring in a stuffy movie version of Hamlet...instead you can see me in *Diva Does Denmark*...

The OPPOSING WAR PARTY is exiting courthouse amongst the flurry of MEDIA activity.

(CONTINUED)

With the LAWYERS is RICHARD MEYERS (40's, Hollywood manager, dated silk suit) and CALVIN RACINE (40's, slick, arrogant, showpiece boyfriend). Men attempt to shield EVA from MEDIA. She is not stopping to comment, until...

We see EVA angling on KAREN and the microphones.

EVA

Slut...

LAWYERS corral both WOMEN. Camera flashes. Hailstorm of questions.

KAREN

Who are you calling a slut...you uptight bitch? You blew it...and now there's nothing you can do to stop me.

EVA

We'll see about that...

Separated in haste, LAWYERS on both sides hurry their clients away from the MEDIA. We pull back our focus from the STUDIO MONITOR to reveal the '*FACT FINDERS*' set.

GUY

Tough talk, Candi. Obviously the story doesn't end here.

CANDI

That's right, Guy. Our sources report that an appeal will almost certainly be filed. And as news from this continuing saga breaks, *Fact Finders* will be there...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CLUB ELECTRA – THAT NIGHT

16

The Sunset Strip. A river of sporty cars flowing past club kids outside trendy bars. Neon.

At the red velvet rope, DOORMAN checks his list. CROWD tries to enter Club Electra. We don't have to wait...we see over the line, through the door into the packed interior.

INT. CLUB ELECTRA – CONTINUOUS

House music, smoke, SWEATY BODIES pumping and grinding, cocktails, XTC...

(CONTINUED)

INT. CLUB ELECTRA BACK OFFICE – AT THE SAME TIME

17

DAYTON eyes his B&W video security monitors with keen interest. Along with the guns, we can tell he's very interested in security. He watches KAREN at bar, celebrating her win, drinking up a storm with FRIENDS.

MAN IN SUIT enters frame and takes KAREN aside. He quickly looks over his shoulder, scanning the room. We can't see his face clearly, nor can DAYTON as he squints at monitor.

African-American bouncer, MALCOM EDWARDS (late 20's) enters office after a quick door knock.

MALCOLM

Hey Dayton, I need singles for Kaylee's bar.
She's having a really good night.

DAYTON looks up from screen; rubbing eyes he reaches for his cash box.

DAYTON

Funny, I thought Karen was *giving* away
Kaylee's bar.

From cash box, DAYTON reveals several stacks of wrapped singles. MALCOLM passes DAYTON big bills for change, while also glancing at video screen.

MALCOLM

My *other* boss has signed her share of comps
tonight.

DAYTON

(counting)

Is my loving wife all banged up...totally out
of control?

MALCOLM

That all depends...you know Karen. She's
wild when loaded, she's wild when she's not.

DAYTON glances at the video monitor once more. The MAN IN SUIT has moved closer to KAREN. Their conversation has become private...very private.

DAYTON returns to the business of making change.

(CONTINUED)

DAYTON

I better go shut her off while we still have
some booze to sell.

DAYTON locks the cashbox in desk. While his hand is inside desk drawer, we see him
DEPRESS RECORD BUTTON activating the SECURITY MONITOR VCR.

INSERT: RECORD BUTTON GLOWING RED.

DAYTON stands, finishes his scotch and moves toward door. MALCOLM steps aside, letting
his boss pass. Neither is eager for a confrontation with KAREN whether she's sober or straight.

MALCOLM

After you...

DAYTON

Thanks...I'll remember this come raise time.

DAYTON glances at the MONITOR one last time. MAN IN SUIT is now leaving KAREN.
We glimpse his face—the image is distantly fuzzy. Before we can focus, he's gone.

The club interior is packed. It takes time for DAYTON and MALCOLM to push through the
CROWD. From above them, we see a SEA OF MOVING BODIES.

INT. CLUB ELECTRA AT KAYLEE'S BAR – CONTINUOUS

18

Bartender KAYLEE TATE (30's, blonde hair, expensive breast implants) is filling shot
glasses. Everyone is having a very good time. KAREN offers the shots to her FRIENDS,
eyes DAYTON as he and MALCOLM approach. Contempt, no love lost, and her fuse is
burning bright.

KAREN

(slurring)

Ah, Dayton the little-prick Smith. Glad you
could join us for *my* celebration.

No one wants a part of this confrontation, including DAYTON...

DAYTON

(mildly)

Hard to miss it. Who was that guy you were
talking to? Didn't look like your average
Club Electra type.

(CONTINUED)

KAREN

Why are you checking up on me? Jealous,
or maybe pissed 'cause I could be screwing
someone for free?

As Dayton appears to sense the thin ice. KAREN raises her shot glass to toast:

KAREN

There once was a bitch from the Hills, who
lived on her liquor and pills, along came Diva
Dunn, who killed Eva's fun, by screwing like
her for cheap thrills. Down the hatch!

Karen fires down her drink tauntingly as tensions are high and FRIENDS reluctantly join in the sentiment. It's embarrassing for everyone witnessing the display. MALCOLM and KAYLEE watch from behind the bar. We cringe with them.

DAYTON

Satisfied? Now why don't you take it easy on
the booze for a while.

KAREN

It's none of your goddamned business how
many shots I have or who I talk to Dayton?
(scoffs) Get used to the idea of not being my
husband and thinking you know what's best
for me.

KAREN drops the SHOT GLASS under her heel, and after stumbling, smashes it. It's an ugly scene. Most of her FRIENDS are mingling away.

DAYTON

Look, why don't you come back to
the office and take a break for a while?

KAREN

You just do your job and keep an eye on *my*
place. I'll worry about myself, thank you
very much.

DAYTON

Always the same old Karen. Well as general
manager and still part owner of Club Electra,
I'm cutting you off. You'll thank me in the morning.

(CONTINUED)

DAYTON turns to KAYLEE and MALCOLM—both are seen yet remaining silent.

DAYTON

Kaylee, see that Karen is served no more alcohol at your bar tonight...and please bring her some coffee. Malcolm, inform the other bartenders.

MALCOLM does not appear happy in the power struggle between two employers. He leaves as ordered, while KAYLEE immediately prepares the coffee order.

KAREN

Who the hell do you think you are? This is my club. I don't care what little part you still own.

KAREN steps closer—she's in his face, very confrontational. No one shuts her off.

KAREN

I'm tired of whoring for you. I'm tired of working with you. I'm tired of seeing your face. Now that the trial is over, there are gonna be some big changes around here. (confides) I know you don't have the cash to buy my half of Club Electra and I know how badly you want it. You know the deal...that means I get the purchase option on you, and I'm buying your ass out...and there's nothing you can do about it. So, be a good soon to be ex-husband and ex-manager, and get the hell out of my face.

She turns away from DAYTON to face the bar. KAYLEE is just placing down the COFFEE. KAREN slaps the serving away—the CUP smashes on the SAUCER. Ceramic flies. KAREN demands from KAYLEE:

KAREN

Another round of shots!

KAYLEE

I'm really sorry, Karen...I can't do that...

KAREN

Some loyalty, Kaylee...what is Dayton screwing you too? Good...you're fired.

(CONTINUED)

DAYTON

Ignore her Kaylee, she's drunk. She'll pass out on the office couch and forget all about tonight.

KAREN reaches over the bar to seize a bottle, any bottle from the pour well, but DAYTON attempts to restrain her. She grabs his arm and pushes him away. They struggle, lose their balance, and both fall hard against the bar. Dayton catches his wrist on the BROKEN COFFEE CUP SHARDS and starts bleeding. His GOLD WATCH flies off his wrist and lands on the bar next to Karen's HANDBAG.

INSERT: BLOODIED WATCH next to HANDBAG.

It's a bad cut—BLOOD STAINS the bar top. A CROWD has formed watching the ruckus.

KAREN

Get your hands off me, you bastard.

DAYTON

(holding his wound)

That's it. I'm calling you a cab. You'll thank me in the morning.

KAREN holds the bar for balance, staggers then stands up straight. She scans the WATCHFUL EYES and gains her composure. While KAYLEE is cleaning the blood off the bar, she passes DAYTON napkins for his wound.

INSERT: We see that among the items cleared away by KAYLEE, THE WATCH HAS BEEN REMOVED.

KAREN

Don't bother, I'm outta here. But this isn't over...and *you'll both* be so sorry when I'm through. You have no idea.

KAREN saunters, though occasionally stumbling, away from Kaylee's bar and the stunned CROWD.

CUT TO:

EXT. CLUB ELECTRA VALET LOT – MOMENTS LATER

19

Her PORSCHE pulls up to the valet stand where KAREN waits. VALET opens the door.

VALET

Are you Okay, Ms. Dunn? I can have one of the boys drive you home, Si?

(CONTINUED)

KAREN stumbling, slumps into driver's seat.

KAREN

I'm fine. Besides, I'm not going home...
just for a better time.

KAREN closes the door on her slurred words. Nearly colliding with an oncoming car, she storms off into the moving sea of SUNSET TRAFFIC.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MULHOLLAND DRIVE – DAWN

20

Sun rising over the peacefully resting residences of the Hollywood Hills except—we track down the winding ribbon of road to discover a SMASHED BARRIER FENCE. The white wood is SPLINTERED from what appears to be a forceful impact.

FIRE AND RESUCE UNITS are collecting hoses while OFFICERS are making measurements around the fence. AMBULANCE CREW removes a gurney from the back of their unit. There's no urgency to their movements. An LAPD helicopter sweeps overhead revealing to us a STEEP DROP to the canyon floor. A few hundred feet below, a smoldering vehicle rests overturned.

One of the two lanes is closed and TRAFFIC builds as the morning commute is underway. An unmarked LAPD sedan maneuvers through the congestion and parks just beyond the tapeline.

LIEUTENANT DAVE PERKINS (mid-50's, clean-shaven, wrinkled suit, LAPD detective with a tall and erect posture, lessened by middle age), steps out of sedan and approaches the OFFICERS. He shades his eyes from the glaring sunlight while appraising the situation.

PERKINS

What do we have here, Officer Martinez?

Patrolmen JOE MARTINEZ (20's) steps under the tape line toward PERKINS.

MARTINEZ

Good-morning, detective.

PERKINS

Not for the driver down below, I'm sure.

MARTINEZ

(refers to notes)

Female Caucasian, the paramedics guessed her mid 30's; pretty hard to tell though, the remains are badly burned.

(CONTINUED)

PPERKINS steps under tapeline—it's a long way down.

PERKINS

Did you run the tags yet?

MARTINEZ

Vanity plate for a black 1997 Porsche convertible.
California registration...DVA4HYR...

PERKINS

(sounds it out)

D-V-A for H-Y-R...something for hire...
Any theory on what happened?

MARTINEZ

It's hard to say with any certainty. There
are no skid marks near the point of impact.
It looks like she just took the corner too fast
and flew off the hill.

The TWO OFFICERS walk back to a nearby LAPD black and white. MARTINEZ sits in unit typing on his computer as LOGAN (20's, female officer) approaches wearing EVIDENCE GLOVES and carrying a torn HANDBAG.

LOGAN

Excuse me, lieutenant. This just turned up
on the hill near the wreck...it may have ID.

The OFFICER places the handbag on the trunk. Before PERKINS can study the evidence, MARTINEZ steps from passenger seat with his notebook in hand.

MARTINEZ

DVA4HYR registered to a Ms. Karen Ann Dunn,
of 4145 Grand View Terrace in Los Angeles. D.O.B.
1-12-67. No outstanding warrants in L.A. County.

PERKINS

Sounds like *diva for hire*...let's take a look
inside that bag for ID confirmation.

(CONTINUED)

Receiving evidence gloves from MARTINEZ, both UNIFORMS watch as PERKINS empties the handbag contents on the trunk. We see the typical items expected: makeup, wallet, tissues, except, oddly, DRIED BROWN SMEARS some of the items.

PERKINS

Hmm...no signs of fire damage and it looks like we have some blood here. We'll have to have this typed. How far away from the wreck was this found?

LOGAN

(casual guess)

Ah, fifty feet or sixty feet maybe.

PERKINS

Was it fifty or sixty?

PERKINS inquisitor's tone puts the LOGAN on the defensive.

LOGAN

Sixty feet, detective.

PERKINS

When the victim likely suffered her fatal injuries, and if that's when the bag was stained, why wasn't it torched as well? Was she perhaps bleeding inside the car *before* the crash? Is this even her blood?

MARTINEZ and the LOGAN exchange looks of chastisement, as PERKINS inspects the WALLET. He removes a driver's license with a color photo of KAREN DUNN.

PERKINS

If this is blood, I think Karen Ann Dunn would like us to know how it stained her purse. Close this area off until that hill is combed for other evidence.

While PERKINS carefully collects the handbag items, MARTINEZ and LOGAN return to the tapeline. They look back to confirm their distance away from the crusty detective.

LOGAN

What's his problem? It was treated like a routine investigation by everyone else working down there.

(CONTINUED)

MARTINEZ

Ah, don't sweat it. You know what they say about Lieutenant Perkins down at the station. He's always *looking for a mystery...* (smirks) whether there's one to solve or not.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FITZGERALD'S BAR – EARLY EVENING

21

PERKINS parks his sedan in the parking lot. The sun is setting and the evening breeze rustles the palms. Before entering, he brushes off his dust-covered suit, hand combs his hair and adjusts his wrinkled tie.

INT. FITZGERALD'S BAR – CONTINUOUS

22

PERKINS enters the dimly lit interior. Pool balls crack. A jukebox plays oldies. B&W photos of police officers adorn the yellowing walls. A dozen late-day DRINKERS, some of them FELLOW OFFICERS, line the barstools. A Dodgers game drones on TV over the wall of bottles. Conversations hum in soft, tired tones.

DIANE GREGORY (40's, attractive, feisty veteran bartender) is behind bar pouring a draft. Her focused, attentive eyes, tells us that she's seen and heard it all.

Diane greets Perkins with a greasy bowl of salted NUTS.

DIANE

David Perkins, my favorite workaholic, I'll get you your usual, Johnnie Red.

PERKINS takes an empty barstool. Digs his hand into the PEANUT BOWL.

Seated at the bar, TWO YOUNG OFFICERS, straighten up when PERKINS steps up to Order. He takes notices of their stiffening posture while greeting them. LUPE (mid-20's) a handsome and confident Hispanic was chatting with WHITFORD (mid-20's) nervous looking, wet behind the ears rookie cop.

PERKINS

Lupe... Whitford, how are you two settling in to life after the academy, here in wild Hollywood.

WHITFORD

Fine, Lieutenant Perkins, thank you sir...

WHITFORD'S quick, nervous response leaves LUPE silenced.

(CONTINUED)

PERKINS

This isn't the academy, gentlemen...rank's checked at the door if you want to drink with your fellow cops at Fitzgerald's.

LUPE and WHITFORD both nod appreciatively.

PERKINS

I read in your transcript, Lupe, that you were a marine, stationed in the Balkans.

LUPE

First Mobile infantry...Semper Fi.

PERKINS

I was a Marine MP...a few generations back. Da Nang, in Seventy-one. Tough assignment for you guys in the Balkans as well. No hard feelings for being sent there? You must be very patriotic?

LUPE

(relaxed)

A lot of the guys complained but I figured it was my duty...if not there, somewhere else, Somalia maybe. They called me Juan...red, white and blue for it.

PERKINS

We'll, in this department, you're *Johnnie Blue* now.

LUPE smiles proudly—there's MUTUAL respect here. WHITFORD still looks nervous.

DETECTIVE ROBBINS (40's, overweight and out of shape from his Hollywood Station desk job) enters their local hangout. Nodding to the OTHER COPS, he pulls up a barstool next to PERKINS. DIANE greets him with a welcoming smile as he motions to beer tap.

ROBBINS

Missed you down at the Station today, Perks.

PERKINS dusts his jacket sleeve.

(CONTINUED)

PERKINS

I was up on Mulholland with a torched Porsche.

ROBBINS

Yeah, I heard...Karen "Diva" Dunn, right?
News travels fast at the Hollywood Station.

PERKINS

Well, I've got the next of kin notifications and paperwork to deal with.

ROBBINS

Speaking of paperwork...I've got the transfers on that Metro detective. She'll be in Hollywood for good, morning after next. Her name is Gail Cunningham. I put her file on that landfill area you call a desk. Want the advance dirt?

PERKINS pauses with his hand on the bar. He's already looking at the exit door.

PERKINS

There's dirt?

ROBBINS

Well, I called a buddy in Metro...he told me she just didn't fit in and requested a transfer. Let's just call her a feminist with an agenda, ya know what I mean?

PERKINS

I call it more manpower, or female power...what we need right now.

Getting DIANE'S attention by placing his glass down PERKINS stands to leave.

DIANE

Leaving already? One cannot live on scotch and bar snacks alone. (rattling the bowl) You're one tough nut, David Perkins.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BEVERLY HILLS ESTATE — EVENING

23

We are outside an opulent three-story mansion. There's real money here and a security system to protect the wealth within. Angle on the numbered gate: 1777 REXFORD. We travel through.

INT. BEVERLY HILL ESTATE — CONTINUOUS

EVA STOCKWELL is inside her sunken living room, sipping from a ROCKS TUMBLER, watching the wide screen TV. She is in her perfect world with a 'FACT FINDERS' broadcast playing in background. The volume is turned up.

EVA strolls to wet bar and pours some Johnnie Black on the ice. She turns abruptly to TV when:

CANDI(V.O.)

Tragedy in Hollywood early yesterday morning with the death of Karen Ann Dunn; good-evening everyone. I'm Candi Rand...

EVA watches intently—she appears emotionless as we then focus on the screen before her.

GUY

And I'm Guy Fairfax. You may remember the name Karen Ann Dunn. She was embroiled in an identity controversy with actress Eva Stockwell—the two women looked amazingly similar. They filled headlines and courtrooms until all that ended early yesterday morning when Karen drove her Porsche through a barrier fence on Mulholland road...

We hear Eva's PHONE. It snaps her out of a hypnotic daze. She goes to wet bar and answers...

EVA

Hello...

RICHARD(V.O.)

Eva...this is Richard Meyers...

EVA

(hesitantly)

Hello Richard...

RICHARD

Are you alright? You sound a little...distant.

(CONTINUED)

EVA

It's just the news...are you watching the news?

RICHARD(V.O.)

(excitedly)

About Karen Ann Dunn? Isn't that the bomb?
Firebomb I mean.

EVA laughs—it's a measured reaction.

EVA

I'm right in the middle of...

RICHARD(V.O.)

(ignores)

I have news, that as your manager, I can tell
you, may be the best offer of your career. We
need to meet...tomorrow, if possible.

EVA

Alright...would you meet me here? I haven't
been getting out much since losing the trial.

RICHARD(V.O.)

Tomorrow it is...breakfast at your place. And
Eva, put the whole Diva Stockwell ordeal
behind...us, the news I have will have made it
all worth it.

RICHARD hangs up abruptly. EVA places the phone back on the bar. Her DRINK awaits.
We see the BROADCAST has gone to commercial.

EVA switches off TV and steps toward the balcony overlooking her outdoor pool and spa.
It's so relaxing to watch the opulent blue water swirling over the submerged lights, until...

Shockingly, a hand lands on EVA'S shoulder. She swings around nearly launching the glass.
Standing behind her is CALVIN RACINE.

EVA

Jesus, you scared the shit out of me.

CALVIN jingles his keys. His look is more surprised than hers. He's confused, even setback.

(CONTINUED)

CALVIN

I have the keys...remember? Besides, where is your housekeeper? Usually Juanita let's me in. I rang the buzzer.

EVA collects her composure. A sip of scotch calms her.

EVA

I must not have heard the bell...the TV and the phone. I had to let Juanita go the other day. I'm sure she was stealing from me.

CALVIN studies the drink in her hand. Smelling the booze, he squints, cocks his head.

CALVIN

Whiskey? As long as I've known you, you've been consoled by Merlot and downers.

She steps beyond him, back inside the living room—he follows at her hurried pace.

EVA

That was for stress...this is for celebration. Have you heard the news? Karen Dunn is dead...car accident.

CALVIN'S expression goes blank. He's stone-faced, slack jawed.

CALVIN

No shit, are you sure? I was on the golf course all afternoon.

EVA

She drove off Mulholland last night. I just saw it on TV. They're not giving any details.

CALVIN

I can't believe it.

EVA

Well, it's true and I can tell you, there are going to be a lot of changes in me and around here now that she's fucking...out of my life...for good.

(CONTINUED)

He steps back from her verbal wave of indignation. He glimpses the SCOTCH BOTTLE.

CALVIN

How much of that Johnnie Black have you had?

EVA raises her glass to toast.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LAPD HOLLYWOOD STATION — THE NEXT MORNING

24

PERKINS parks his sedan in the lot. He has coffee in one hand, walking and reading TIMES.

INT. PERKINS' HOLLYWOOD STATION CUBICLE – CONTINUOUS

On his desk is a bin marked KAREN ANN DUNN. Within, file folders and bags of evidence.

Enter CAPTAIN MILLS (late-50's, tired eyes, graying, slouching, too many years on the force). With him, DETECTIVE GAIL CUNNINGHAM (late-20's green eyes, smart glasses, red hair, suit). Everything about her demeanor says no-nonsense, business.

MILLS

Hey Perks, got a minute?

PERKINS stands when his fellow OFFICERS step into the glass cubicle.

MILLS

This is Detective Gail Cunningham, up from Metro. Show her how things work around here, will ya?

PERKINS greets CUNNINGHAM with a firm handshake.

PERKINS

We can always use more good detectives, captain.

MILLS glances at the EVIDENCE sprawled on the desk.

MILLS

What's the situation with the Karen Dunn case I keep hearing so much about? Routine DUI right?

(CONTINUED)

PERKINS

I just received the toxicology. She was loaded

MILLS studies the autopsy papers fresh from the medical examiners office. We see the printing.

MILLS

We're not looking for a *mystery* here, are we
Detective Perkins?

PERKINS

There have been some ambiguities, captain,
I'll keep you updated as I learn more...

MILLS places the autopsy file in the evidence bin. He doesn't appear eager for the details.

MILLS

If you learn more...I think the respectable
folks in this town would like her out of the
headlines for good. If it's a routine DUI, let's
call it that and move on.

MILLS nods to PERKINS, turns to go then stops abruptly in the doorway.

MILLS

And Perks, if this looks like more than an
accident, I wanna be kept up to speed.

PERKINS

You got it, captain.

As MILLS exits, CUNNINGHAM helps herself to the chair across from the desk.

PERKINS

I haven't had a chance to read your transfer file.
Any reason why you wanted to join us here in
Hollywood?

CUNNINGHAM

Metro is a fine department. I left for personal
reasons, lieutenant.

PERKINS

Fair enough. Would you like me to show you
around Hollywood Station, detective?

(CONTINUED)

CUNNINGHAM

Lieutenant Perkins, what did Captain Mills mean by *keeping Karen Dunn out of the headlines?*

Without answering, he passes her the autopsy report. He nods as though appreciating her desire to get right to work and he gives her that opportunity.

CUNNINGHAM

(reading)

Cause of death...severed third vertebrae, multiple fractures and internal hemorrhaging as a result of extreme trauma. Evidence of cocaine and alcohol found in tissue samples.

PERKINS

So, it's like the papers say...she was loaded and took the corner too fast. Like her life, in the fast lane.

PERKINS observes her as she reads. It only takes a moment for her to note an ambiguity.

CUNNINGHAM

What does the coroner mean in the toxicology side notes, when he wrote that blood alcohol registers as non-uniform? BAC ranges from .31 to .08. How is that possible?

PERKINS

Read on.

CUNNINGHAM already was, looking up moments later.

CUNNINGHAM

Alcohol vaporization in the torso and appendages as a result of the extreme heat? Would that explain it? Yet you obviously think it's suspicious?

He nods subtly then stands as she's still focusing on the reading.

PERKINS

Are you ready for the station tour now? We'll start with the...

(CONTINUED)

CUNNINGHAM

(unrelenting)

Pooling...as a result of alcohol injection post mortem. That's what you're thinking, isn't it?

Again, PERKINS nods ever so subtly, as to not show too much approval. Taking a BAG from the evidence bin, he tosses it over to her. She makes a one handed catch.

PERKINS

With unhappy uniforms, I combed the hill above the wreck the entire day before we removed the Porsche. Using a metal detector, that's all we came up with.

Inside is a WATCH—the band is torn from the face with brown smears on the leather.

CUNNINGHAM

First, I would note the inscription. (reading) *To Dayton, Forever in time...Love Karen*. According to the papers, Smith is the deceased's husband?

PERKINS

Estranged...I spoke with him on the phone while notifying the next of kin. There was not a lot of love in Karen's world. Bible toting parents had disowned her and she was divorcing Dayton. He's supposed to come in and sign some papers. About that watch...

CUNNINGHAM was on top of things when she casually tossed the bag back to him.

CUNNINGHAM

Several possibilities...the watch could have been torn off the driver's wrist in the tumble before the ensuing fire. It could have been torn off in some struggle prior to the accident then flew out of the car...or it could've been placed at the scene.

PERKINS

It's Dayton watch, yet his estranged spouse Karen had it in her possession?

(CONTINUED)

CUNNINGHAM

We shouldn't rule out *any* possibilities...but it could've been a long forgotten memento, left under the seat, debris from a tumbling Porsche convertible.

PERKINS returns and firm nod, even a hint of proud smile, admiring her intellectual savvy.

PERKINS

Perhaps a crime lab test on the batteries will tell us more...you find this case...interesting, detective?

CUNNINGHAM removes her glasses, revealing how beautiful she is with or without them.

CUNNINGHAM

I've read many news stories about Karen's lifelong victim status. I've taken a keen interest in that sort of thing. If she died the victim of foul play, I wanna know, just like I'm sure she'd want us to find out.

PERKINS

It sounds like you have an agenda. That's alright provided it doesn't interfere with your perspective. The tour of this station begins with me. I'm known as the detective trying to solve mysteries that aren't there—maybe I have somewhat of an agenda as well. Captain Mills has already inscribed my gold retirement watch.

CUNNINGHAM steps toward the evidence bin. Her tone is confident and understanding.

CUNNINGHAM

Tour complete, lieutenant? Seeing as though I'm new, with no present caseload, how about you bring me up to speed and we get to work.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CLUB ELECTRA OFFICE — LATE AFTERNOON

25

DAYTON SMITH is sitting alone at his desk. A cigarette smolders in the ashtray and scotch sweats in a tumbler. He needs a shower, shave and a change of clothing. We don't want to get that close. He's reading the LA Times when the door intercom buzzes, rattling his tense nerves.

(CONTINUED)

DAYTON activates ANSWER BUTTON on intercom unit.

DAYTON
Deliveries around the back.

We travel with DAYTON from the office through the dim club interior, expecting to greet a booze trucker. He deactivates the back alarm and opens the door to the bright afternoon light.

At first his nocturnal vision is blinded—then we see his visitors are not teamsters with beer cases. PEREZ (40's, Latin American, short, stocky, pit bull with a silk suit), and OLSON (40's, brutish, an Anglo triggerman, tall, wiry) carrying briefcase, in which we imagine there to be a compacted Uzi.

PEREZ
Ah, Mr. Smith, just the man we wanted to see.

DAYTON
I already told an LAPD detective over the phone that I'd be in for my wife's paperwork when I was feeling better. We were separated after all.

PEREZ
We're not policemen, Mr. Smith but we are here to discuss matters that concern your deceased wife...our condolences. I'm Mr. Perez, and this is my associate, Mr. Olson.

DAYTON returns an irritated, get to the point look. He glances at OLSON. From the outline of the man's suit jacket, it appears that he's armed. We can see hints of leather holster strap.

PEREZ
You see, Mr. Smith, we had business dealings with Karen that concern the ownership of this establishment. Now that she had her *accident* there are some very disappointed people.

DAYTON
Just what are you saying, that I was responsible for my wife's death?

PEREZ slides his hand into the breast pocket of his suit. For a tense moment, we think his is going to draw a weapon. He removes a folded legal DOCUMENT and passes it to DAYTON.

(CONTINUED)

PEREZ

This is a copy of the partnership agreement you had with your wife.

DAYTON

Alright, who are you guys and what business is our private agreement of yours?

PEREZ

We're your friends, Mr. Smith. We're just trying to help you out. We know about the Hollywood look-alike call girl business you were running with Karen and some of your other girls. We also know you helped get these young women into prostitution and pornography, including Karen. The people we represent knew your wife very well. They had recently made a deal with her and now stand to lose a lot of money because she's dead.

DAYTON scans the DOCUMENT, shaking his head with a scowl.

DAYTON

What the hell-kinda deal are you talking about?

PEREZ

Your Club Electra partnership agreement gives you outright ownership of the establishment upon Karen's death, and the partner insurance. Rather strange how she so conveniently died before the divorce and buyout sent you back to the streets.

DAYTON

That's it...you walk into my goddamned place and accuse me of killing my wife. Go to hell!

PEREZ motions to OLSON. The man draws a holstered 9mm we feared he possessed.

PEREZ

There was a deal made with Karen, now she's gone. If you're responsible, we have a big problem. We want you to sell this club outright and leave town. It's simple, no questions asked or answered.

(CONTINUED)

DAYTON

And if I don't?

PEREZ

Aside from the world of hurt you would find yourself in, I wonder how the LAPD would like a copy of this agreement; strong motive for murdering your wife, don't you think?

DAYTON

Did you ever consider that the high and mighty Ms. Eva Stockwell had a hand in this? You guys watch the news? Now that the nightmare lawsuit with Karen is over *for good*, Eva was offered the highest paying movie deal of her life.

PEREZ

Those matters don't concern us, Mr. Smith, your ownership of this club does. If you killed Karen, think of it as her hand from the grave holding this pistol. And if you didn't kill her, just think of all the poor young girls you got into your sex business; now it's your turn to get fucked.

OLSON returns the 9mm to its concealed holster as PEREZ turns for the door. When it opens we can see that dusk is upon them. He stops abruptly and smiles, threateningly:

PEREZ (Cont.)

We'll be back with the sale papers. Take the night and another day or two...say your good-byes, and pack up your things. Maybe you should consider relocating in Miami. I understand that city has a growing smut industry, though it's a little humid there this time of year. But not nearly as *hot* as it will be getting for you should you make the mistake of staying in L.A.

FADE TO BLACK:

FADE IN:

EXT. LAPD HOLLYWOOD STATION — THE NEXT MORNING 26

INT. PERKINS' HOLLYWOOD STATION CUBICLE – CONTINUOUS 27

(CONTINUED)

CUNNINGHAM arrives at the station to discover PERKINS is already working. She stands at the doorframe, resting her shoulder eyeing what looks like NEW EVIDENCE.

CUNNINGHAM

I thought I was here early.

PERKINS

Karen Ann Dunn had a strongbox at Cal Southern Savings Bank. A branch manager released the contents to the LAPD after reading about her accident. We have a good evidence chain and some things inside that I think you'll find very interesting.

CUNNINGHAM moves to the desk, slips on latex gloves, then touching the corners, inspects the front and back POLAROID PHOTOS. We cannot see the images, yet her disgusted look reveals much about the depictions.

CUNNINGHAM

That poor woman...

After she has gone through the stack, PERKINS passes to her a LEGAL DOCUMENT.

PERKINS

Oh, there's much more. I want you to read this contract in depth then give me your perspective. But first...

PERKINS passes her a handwritten note that's sealed in a clear plastic evidence bag. CUNNINGHAM takes a moment to read the blue ink as he rocks back in his chair.

CUNNINGHAM

This is...just unbelievable. Does he have any violent priors?

PERKINS holds up an LAPD COMPUTER PRINTOUT.

PERKINS

He and Karen both had wrap sheets; Dayton's includes solicitation, pandering, and B & E as a juvenile, but no priors involving domestic violence.

CUNNINGHAM scans it, appearing skeptical—untrusting of the inclusiveness.

(CONTINUED)

CUNNINGHAM

None reported...I think it's time we had a long talk with Mr. Dayton Smith.

CUT TO:

EXT. CLUB ELECTRA — AFTERNOON 28

INT. CLUB ELECTRA OFFICE — CONTINUOUS 29

DAYTON SMITH is sitting alone at his desk watching the security video monitor. We see a STACK OF VHS tapes. He pauses, rewinds, and then plays one with keen interest.

THE INTERCOM BUZZES—the startling noise rattles our collective nerves. However, the voice through the line is not from armed men but from bartender KAYLEE TATE.

CUT TO:

EXT. CLUB ELECTRA BACKDOOR – CONTINUOUS 30

KAYLEE

Hey Dayton, are you there? I'm here early like you asked...hello?

CUT TO:

INT. CLUB ELECTRA OFFICE — CONTINUOUS 31

DAYTON stops the tape play then reaches for the .45 semi strategically placed near him. Checking the action as he stands, we travel through the dark club interior toward the back.

CUT TO:

EXT. CLUB ELECTRA BACKDOOR – CONTINUOUS 32

Keeping the .45 tucked in his belt, he carefully opens the backdoor for KAYLEE to enter. He looks behind her—seeing no one in the empty valet lot, quickly re-secures the alarmed lock.

DAYTON hurries KAYLEE back toward the office.

KAYLEE

What's going on? Are you alright?

CUT TO:

INT. CLUB ELECTRA OFFICE — CONTINUOUS 33

(CONTINUED)

DAYTON

I'm facing a world of hurt and I need your help.

Though KAYLEE has a blank, unknowing expression, she observes the glinting .45 semi.

KAYLEE

Sure, Dayton...I take it this is not about helping you cook the books.

He seizes the VIDEO REMOTE and rolls the PLAYBACK.

DAYTON

Hardly. When Karen left here the night of her accident, twenty minutes before I shut her off, she was talking up close and personal with that stiff in a suit. See him there?

KAYLEE steps closer to the SCREEN. She watches intently as DAYTON stops and starts the PLAYBACK. We see that man's SHADOWY FACE; he appears vaguely familiar.

KAYLEE

I remember that night well, but I was so busy pouring drinks. I never had a chance to look up from the bottle well and register.

DAYTON

So, you don't recognize this guy?

KAYLEE

No. Sorry, Dayton.

Clearly frustrated, DAYTON stops the playback—the screen switches to the street camera.

Removing the TAPE from the video unit, he places it in his desk drawer. For safe keeping, he locks it in the desk securely with the .25 SEMI and the BLACK DATEBOOK.

DAYTON

Two men in suits shook me down today. Men that had some deal with Karen for the sale of this club. I thought one of them was on the tape. They think I had something to do with Karen's death and want me to sell this place to them for a song then leave town. And one guy's 9mm was doing most of the talking.

(CONTINUED)

KAYLEE

What about Malcolm, he's head of security?
Maybe he can help with the ID of the guy on
on the video?

DAYTON

He was in the office with me changing money
when this suit made his brief appearance. You
were the only employee that had a clear view
of Karen and her mystery man. That night, I
thought he was a john she was doing on the fly
and wasn't too concerned. But now....

KAYLEE

What about the police? Are you gonna go to them?

DAYTON

More bad news. I have to go to the Hollywood
Station tomorrow to talk with the two detectives
investigating the *accident*. If they're suspicious
of foul play, I'm sure I've made the short list. No
doubt they'll also question the staff at some point.

KAYLEE

We're going to...reopen the club then?

DAYTON

Bills have to be paid and I can't afford to lose
anymore business.

DAYTON removes the .45 from his waist and places the weapon on the desktop in front of him.

DAYTON

Start keeping your eyes peeled for anyone you
you think is strange or out of the ordinary...men
in suits, guys not drinking, even cops. I think I'll
be seeing these guys again soon, and no hired
thugs are gonna force me outta my place.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LAPD HOLLYWOOD STATION – THE FOLLOWING MORNING

34

Driving a rusted-yellow MG with smoky exhaust, DAYTON parks in the visitor's lot.

(CONTINUED)

Sporting a clean-shaven appearance, we see the concern lines on his face after he exhales a drag of his smoke. He crushes the butt under his boot—like the flames of life extinguished.

INT. PERKINS' HOLLYWOOD STATION CUBICLE – CONTINUOUS

35

PERKINS and CUNNINGHAM are wrist deep in EVIDENCE when the phone buzzes.

PERKINS

Escort him up to interview room one, Sergeant.

CUT TO:

INT.HOLLYWOOD STATION INTERVIEW ROOM – MOMENTS LATER

36

Alone, DAYTON is smoking a cigarette in the room not much larger than a modest jail cell. He nervously fidgets with his lighter on the tabletop. We see he obviously doesn't want to be there. After a moment, PERKINS and CUNNINGHAM enter with the evidence bin and unreadable expressions. DAYTON looks up from the table and exhales a blue cloud into the dismal room.

PERKINS

Thanks for coming in, Mr. Smith, I'm Detective Perkins, and this is Detective Cunningham.

CUNNINGHAM places down the bin and DAYTON stands to shake PERKINS' hand. She does not acknowledge him; her expression offers HARBORED CONTEMPT.

PERKINS glances at the bandage on his suspect's wrist.

PERKINS

That looks painful.

DAYTON

Part of the bar business, detective, and I had to leave my business to come out here today...so if I could take care of Karen's accident paperwork...

Reacting to DAYTON'S tone, PERKINS also gets down to business. We're eager for answers.

PERKINS

Well, Mr. Smith...

DAYTON

Call me Dayton...Mr. Smith was my father, you know that old saying.

(CONTINUED)

PERKINS

All right, *Dayton*. The fact of the matter is, Detective Cunningham and I aren't certain your wife's death was...accidental.

DAYTON

What are you talking about...murder?

CUNNINGHAM starts a tape recorder while PERKINS hands DAYTON an official form.

PERKINS

You wouldn't mind signing this release? It just says that your statements were made to us voluntarily, without coercion. And you know you don't *have* to talk with us.

DAYTON

Look, I've got nothing to hide...and if God forbid, Karen was murdered...I wanna help.

DAYTON scribbles his signature on the form and slides it back. Good-cop-bad-cop seems to be in play—CUNNINGHAM is poised with the stack of photos.

CUNNINGHAM

The LAPD is well aware of the *illegal activities* you and Karen were involved in: prostitution, narcotics and dope dealing at Club Electra.

DAYTON sighs, subtly—we're not here to pick his brain for *other* possible suspects.

DAYTON

Sex and drugs and rock and roll...

CUNNINGHAM

Personally, I find the objectifying and the exploitation of innocent women despicable. Antagonizing me, Mr. Smith is very unwise.

PERKINS already must defuse the tension.

PERKINS

Detective Cunningham's generation doesn't have the same appreciation for that expression as ours did, Dayton. Back to the car accident.

(CONTINUED)

CUNNINGHAM adjusts her glasses then proceeds with the PHOTOS in hand.

CUNNINGHAM

You can start by helping us explain these. We matched the prints on the plastic with prints from Karen's LAPD arrest file. Like you, she's had her share of bookings.

We now see the grim pictures as does DAYTON; there are multiple depictions of KAREN DUNN bruised and beaten. Various inscriptions in handwriting describe the beatings as at the hands of her violent, abusive husband, Dayton Smith. The photos have varying dates and styles of dress.

DAYTON

No...no, this is bullshit! In all the years I was with Karen, I never laid a hand on her. Where did you get these?

CUNNINGHAM

Karen had opened a strongbox at the Cal Southern Saving Bank within days of her accident, did you know that?

DAYTON

Karen did a lot of things I wasn't aware of.

CUNNINGHAM

You'd be surprised what we've already found. Are you implying that these photos have been fabricated?

DAYTON slides the photos back as though completely fictitious and not worth his attention.

DAYTON

Call it what you want...I say these are bullshit.

CUNNINGHAM

What about this note we discovered with the photos?

CUNNINGHAM displays the plastic sealed note and begins reading:

(CONTINUED)

CUNNINGHAM (Cont.)

I'm in fear for my life from my sick husband, Dayton Smith. Now that the Eva Stockwell lawsuit is over, I can concentrate on my divorce but Dayton said he would kill me before letting me go. As you can see, he's beaten me for years. I was too afraid to go to the police, but I can't go on living like this. If something should happen to me now that I'm leaving him for good, know that Dayton's responsible. Signed Karen Ann Dunn.

Our suspect takes out another cigarette, tamping the butt on the hard pack.

DAYTON

I can't explain that note...but I never beat or even threatened Karen in my life.

PERKINS glances at the cassette recorder. The wheels are turning, monotonously humming.

PERKINS

We understand your marriage was breaking up, Dayton. How many really last these days? We do have a lot of things that need explaining before Karen's death can be ruled accidental.

CUT TO:

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM MONTAGE – CONTINUOUS

37

We watch as DAYTON responds in a series of related answers that we assume takes hours to complete yet occurs quickly for us—clearly, suspicion about Dayton's involvement is building.

DAYTON

I don't know why Karen would want to set me up? Maybe it was to punish me for my...tomcatting...I wasn't the most faithful husband in the world...

FADE TO:

DAYTON (Cont.)

I suppose it's *possible* that Karen committed suicide, but not likely. She was full of life...not always happy, but lived every minute. If she did herself in though, she obviously hated me enough to make it look like murder.

FADE TO:

DAYTON (Cont.)

It's just a partnership agreement some LA shyster drew up for Karen and me. If we split up, the first partner with the cash could buy the other out. I don't see how that's a motive for killing her though?

FADE TO:

DAYTON (Cont.)

Yeah...Karen and I were into *adult entertainment*. And she was connected in the porn video business, if you know what I mean. If I had ever hit her, some guys from the Valley would have fit me for concrete cowboy-boots.

FADE TO:

We see the fatigue on DAYTON'S face. The interview room ASHTRAY has several crushed butts, telling us that the DETECTIVES have put our suspect through a long, grueling Q&A. PERKINS removes the bagged wristwatch from the evidence bin and slides it to DAYTON.

PERKINS

There's just one more thing we need you to help us with. We found this on the hill near the car.

DAYTON studies the WATCH through the clear plastic. Passing it back, we see no reaction

CUNNINGHAM

Is it yours?

DAYTON

Yeah, it's mine. It's got my name on the back.

PERKINS

Those brown smears are bloodstains. The type is a match to the blood samples we found inside your wife's handbag. Any idea how your watch ended up at the accident scene, bloodied?

DAYTON

It was a car accident...did you ever consider the obvious, like it's Karen's blood?

While blood is the topic, DAYTON unconsciously rubs the bandage covering his cut.

(CONTINUED)

We see PERKINS take notice of the subtle behavior, though not comment.

PERKINS

It's not. Before Karen's body was cremated at the request of her family in Nebraska, in addition to a thorough autopsy, we took several blood and tissue samples. The blood at the scene is not her type.

DAYTON

Let me guess...you think it's my blood found at the scene.

PERKINS

If its not, that will tell us a lot and we can move onto other angles in the investigation.

DAYTON appears irritated. He rubs his bandage once more then lights another cigarette.

DAYTON

Ya know, I've got some questions for the LAPD. Two men came into my club the other day. They want me to sell the place to them and leave town. Claimed they were friends with Karen and they had a deal with her. These guys, Perez and Olson, are connected, probably drug and porn enforcers. Maybe they took Karen out, double-crossed her. That's another angle for you. Or what about the high and mighty Eva Stockwell? Did you ever think that maybe she used her power and influence to takeout the woman she so hated? Karen did win that lawsuit after all. I'm sure Eva was pissed. How about that angle? If you want my damn blood, knock yourselves out...suck my veins dry. I wasn't at that hill when the accident happened. All of my people can vouch for that. As for what you guys think you have on me, that watch included, someone for some reason is setting me up for a fall.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BEVERLY HILLS ESTATE — EVENING

38

We travel with a black STRETCH LIMO as it passes through the 1777 Rexford gate.

(CONTINUED)

INT. BEVERLY HILL ESTATE — CONTINUOUS

39

EVA STOCKWELL returns home appearing exhausted with dragging steps. She places down a thick SCRIPT on the bar, immediately filling a tumbler with Johnnie Black scotch.

Sedating herself with a long sip of whiskey, she walks into the sunken living room and activates the large screen entertainment unit. After surfing through several channels, EVA stops when she comes upon a familiar face on a broadcast. We see a B& W press photo of KAREN ANN DUNN on the tabloid show, 'FACT FINDERS'.

She squints at the screen, lifting the scotch to her lips, watching intently:

GUY (V.O.)

Several days have passed since the accidental death of porn star and Eva Stockwell look alike, Karen Dunn, now inside sources in the LAPD tell *Fact Finders* that her death may have been no accident...

EVA'S expression is blank, emotionless as she listens to every detail.

CANDI (V.O.)

Though none would comment officially, sources close to the investigation say that Karen Dunn's estranged husband, Dayton R. Smith was questioned for hours today by Hollywood detectives. No arrests have been made in the case and police are not saying much else about the possible murder of a woman, who even in death, is the focus of major controversy.

ANGLE ON:

We now see the 'FACT FINDERS' program and the talking heads on the broadcast set.

GUY

In a related story, a reversal of fortune for the real Eva Stockwell, as she lands one of the highest paid roles in her career playing Danielle DeLacroix in the adaptation of Pierre Saxon's bestseller, *Hopes Relived*.

(CONTINUED)

CANDI

With the Karen Dunn legal controversy behind her, leading man and co-producer Steven Garret is rumored to have insisted upon Eva getting the role as Danielle. Once again in the national headlines, Eva's a hot commodity...ten million dollars worth.

GUY

It's long been rumored around the studio back lots that Eva has the reputation of being hard to work with.

ANGLE ON:

We angle on EVA'S troubled expression—clearly the insinuation is upsetting.

GUY (V.O.)

Many industry insiders thought the Karen Dunn distraction was the cause of Eva's difficulties, always overshadowing her screen performances with scandal and media hype. Some even wrote off Eva's career after two of her latest films tanked at the box office. Ironically, the death of Karen Dunn, it seems, has given Eva Stockwell's career a new life.

ANGLE ON:

EVA'S PHONE BUZZES, interrupting her intense focus. She answers abruptly:

CALVIN (V.O.)

Eva, I'm at the gate...it's the old pop in. I thought I'd ring first this time.

EVA

Come on through. You have the code key, Calvin.

EVA does not appear happy to have a visitor. Taking another long sip of scotch, she walks to a wall-sized mirror and checks her hair. After a primp, she returns to the bar. Enter CALVIN with his tennis bag and a fresh sweat. EVA has an unreceptive expression. He slides the racquet bag from his shoulder and strokes a forehand—his arrogant mannerisms are annoying.

CALVIN

I thought I'd...*swing by* after the racquet club.

(CONTINUED)

EVA

I'm not really in the mood for company
right now, Calvin, I'm sorry.

CALVIN

What are you talking about? Why?

EVA

This new film deal. There's a lot of dialogue and
with all of the stress, sometimes I don't think I
know what the hell I'm doing.

We sense CALVIN is pressured for compassion, though he eyes her scotch glass.

CALVIN

You've been doing this forever...just relax.

EVA sips her drinks—she's nearly finished another.

EVA

Believe me, I'm trying.

CALVIN

Is that really helping? I mean it's so not like
you to be downing the hard stuff like that.

EVA

I do have it stocked at my wet bar, don't I?

CALVIN

Yeah, for cocktail parties, and to clean your
silver in a pinch.

EVA

Well, it's a woman's prerogative to change.

CALVIN

(under his breath)

Not always for the best...

EVA

What was that?

(CONTINUED)

CALVIN

(withdraws)

Just testing to see if your changes included a sense of humor.

EVA

And what should I find funny? Aside from the work stress, the LAPD think Karen Dunn may have been murdered?

CALVIN

Who the hell cares about her? If anything, you should be happy now you have that trashy whore out of your life for good.

EVA

Did it ever occur to you that the LAPD may think I had something to do with it? That's all I need for my career comeback...can you imagine the press on that? *Celebrity Eva Stockwell, suspect in the killing of Midwest porn princess, pictures at eleven.*

CALVIN

That's ridiculous, why would they think you did it?

EVA

Think about it, Calvin! The trial I lost, remember? The public insults...

Abruptly turning from CALVIN, EVA returns to the bar for a refill. He follows at her pace. While EVA pours a large shot into the glass he puts his hand on the *Johnnie Black* bottle.

CALVIN

That's not going to help solve anything, Eva.

EVA angrily forces his hand away, continuing to pour.

EVA

Not your place.

CALVIN

Fine...had enough? Why don't you have more.

EVA

I'll have as much as I want.

(CONTINUED)

CALVIN seizes the bottle from the bar, focusing on her tumbler.

CALVIN

Good...let me help you. Want more, I'll pour.

EVA splashes the booze in his face. There is a silent moment as he attempts to control his rage.

EVA

How about you Calvin? Do you want more?

CALVIN

You're a fucking bitch!

EVA swings a palm across his face. His wet skin echoes the SLAP. We cringe, feeling the pain.

When it appears EVA is prepared to level another insulting blow, CALVIN catches her hand. He pulls her closer to his body, attempting to shield the force of her continued assault. Pulling EVA even closer, the two are nearly face-to-face, resulting in love-hate embrace.

In a rage of passion, the TWO tumble into the bar sending bottles and glasses smashing down in crescendo to their animalistic savagery. They tear at each other's clothing, RIPPING them off until EVA takes on the role of aggressor. She turns abruptly, taking CALVIN by the hand.

EVA pushes CALVIN down, straddling him. She grinds her body into his pelvis, watching as he arches his head back. She locks her hands around his throat, choking him. His expression quickly changes from RAPTURE to SHOCK and FEAR.

With her weight as leverage, CALVIN is unable to remove the grip and turns a shade of purple. Only when EVA powerfully climaxes does she release her hold. He gasps, wheezing for breath.

Satisfied, she casually stands, while he struggles to his feet. Redressing in his torn tennis whites, CALVIN attempts speech.

CALVIN

You are seriously screwed up. I don't even fucking know you anymore. I'm outta here!

EVA eyes him with powerful satisfaction and he collects himself and his gear. When CALVIN turns away, slowly walking toward the door, EVA follows:

EVA

Aren't you forgetting something?

(CONTINUED)

He stops, turning back to her—his face shades if red. We can feel his pain and humiliation as EVA holds out her hand. CALVIN reaches into his tennis bag and removes a keycard. Attempting to be caviler but clearly not, he flicks the card in her direction. Not responding, EVA watches CALVIN out the door.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CLUB ELECTRA — THE FOLLOWING DAY 40

INT. CLUB ELECTRA OFFICE — CONTINUOUS 41

DAYTON SMITH is sitting alone at his desk, once again watching the security video monitor. Still, the tape of the *mystery man* plays. We see DAYTON as a man possessed with making an ID. While a cigarette smolders in the ashtray, we angle on the glinting Colt .45 semiautomatic.

The INTECOM BUZZER snapping DAYTON out of his intense introspection. Stopping the tape and switching to the security camera, we see PEREZ and OLSON have returned.

PEREZ (V.O.)

We have returned with your airline tickets,
Mr. Smith. I hope you're packed.

DAYTON

(into intercom)

I'll be right there.

There is little time—DAYTON jams the .45 into his waistband. Hurrying over to the video unit, he removes the *mystery man* VHS tape.

After quickly locking the TAPE inside the bottom desk drawer, he picks up his CELL PHONE. We see him program three digits—*911* on the PUNCH PAD. Adding to the tension we hear:

PEREZ (V.O.)

Come now, Mr. Smith. I do hate to be kept
waiting. Sign the papers, take your ticket and
we'll part company...*friends*.

Ignoring the overt intimidation, DAYTON speaks into the phone receiver:

DAYTON

(panicked)

Yes, operator, I'm at Club Electra on Sunset.
Men have broken into the bar. I'm locked in the
office and need you to send out officers...hurry.

(CONTINUED)

We hear GARBLED WORDS over the line as the operator wants more information.

DAYTON
(whispers)

They're right outside. Please hurry.

DAYTON closes the CELL then sprints out of the office. Over his back, we can see the B&W video monitor and PEREZ AND OLSON are reaching for weapons and splitting up.

CUT TO:

INT. CLUB ELECTRA MEN'S ROOM — CONTINUOUS

42

DAYTON is at the window, attempting to climb out—the process is slow and awkward.

CUT TO:

EXT. CLUB ELECTRA BACK ALLEY — CONTINUOUS

43

From his POV, we see the back alley. Still no sign of the thugs as DAYTON drops to the pavement near a filthy dumpster. He attempts to close the window, though it remains opened.

We angle on PEREZ and OLSON, each of them are converging toward the back of the nightclub. Upon reaching DAYTON'S escape window and with SILENCED WEAPONS drawn, the two thugs make a quick inspection—their prey has seemingly eluded them.

Silently, PEREZ motions to OLSON, pointing the muzzle of his weapon at the dumpster. We move with them as the thugs prepare to lift the stained lid. We hear the FLIES and can virtually smell the filth. They approach ever so slowly, preparing to fire into this assumed hiding place. Instantly, PEREZ throws the LID over while OLSON points his prone WEAPON inside.

In anticipation, OLSON fires several silenced rounds into the trash, however there are only GARBAGEBAGS within. Frustrated, OLSON and PEREZ begin moving the trash around in case their prey is hiding underneath.

POLICE SIRENS can be heard in the distance, though the sound is growing louder. From the back alley, we can see an angle onto the main street beyond—THREE LAPD SQUADCARS are converging at the front of the club. OLSON and PEREZ hurry away in the other direction.

CUT TO:

INT. CLUB ELECTRA MEN'S ROOM — CONTINUOUS

44

Cleverly, DAYTON has climbed back inside using the opened window as a ruse. With the coast clear, he's not sticking around for the more cops. DAYTON drops back down to the PAVEMENT hitting the mean streets.

CUT TO:

EXT. CLUB ELECTRA — MOMENTS LATER

45

Several LAPD OFFICERS are near their units outside the Club Electra entrance. There's no urgency in their actions. OFFICER ONE is speaking into his RADIO near the ENTRANCE.

OFFICER ONE

We've been all around the place and there's nothing to report. There are no signs of forced entry and no one's answering the intercom. Should we use a ram to proceed inside...over?

OFFICER TWO approaches the first with the IRON BATTERING RAM.

OFFICER ONE

(into radio)

Copy that...*do not* proceed inside...over.

OFFICER TWO

What's the holdup? Are we breaking down the door?

OFFICER ONE

Negative...dispatch believes it was a prank caller. It was a cellular 911 from an undetermined user. Probably some pissed off minor who had his fake ID confiscated at the door last night...let's move out.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LAPD HOLLYWOOD STATION — EVENING

46

INT. PERKINS' HOLLYWOOD STATION CUBICLE – CONTINUOUS

47

PERKINS and CUNNINGHAM are sharing Chinese takeout while surrounded by a CLUTTER OF EVIDENCE. An OFFICER enters with a sealed MANILA ENVELOPE MARKED: *DUNN INVESTIGATION*.

OFFICER

Excuse me detectives, this just came up for you from the crime lab, marked urgent.

PERKINS wipes his fingers and takes the document. The OFFICER waits at the door, seemingly eager to get an update on the rumor mill surrounding the Karen Dunn case.

(CONTINUED)

PERKINS

That will be all, thank you.

Disappointed, the OFFICER leaves prompting CUNNINGHAM to slide her seat closer.

PERKINS

(scanning)

The RH factor matches the samples...that is Dayton Smith's blood in the handbag and the samples scraped from the watchband.

CUNNINGHAM

So...do we take him in?

PERKINS rocks back in his chair, tossing the DOCUMENTS in her direction. Before she can begin reading, MILLS steps into the space. He appears tired and stressed, due for retirement.

MILLS

Detective Cunningham, how are you settling in to the way we do things here in Hollywood? God knows, the Lieutenant has been around long enough to retire twice over.

CUNNINGHAM

Just fine, Captain Mills, thank you. We haven't discussed his permanent golf and fishing duties.

MILLS acknowledges her subtle defense of her senior detective with a equally subtle nod.

MILLS

Speaking of fishing for evidence, and our internal boat of leaks, I'm getting all of my updates on the Karen Dunn case from the newspapers. How did your interview with Dayton Smith go? I saw his mug in the news. Rumor has it he's a suspect, which is news to me, because I didn't know we had a potential murder on our hands.

PERKINS

We want to rule out all the possibilities before I close the book on this one, Captain.

(CONTINUED)

MILLS

As you both well know, the more media exposure there is in a case the less room this department has for mistakes. If it looks like murder, I want you two to pass this case off to the guys in robbery homicide.

There is a silence among them as MILLS leverages his tired body off the doorframe.

MILLS

At any rate, I want regular updates on the case. Getting my internal memos via the *LA Times* is not good for my...ulcers.

After MILLS' departure CUNNINGHAM moves her seat closer to the desk.

CUNNINGHAM

Our mutual tight lips about this investigation goes deeper than departmental leaks, doesn't it Lieutenant Perkins?

PERKINS

Why don't I want the guys from robbery homicide to get credit for our hard work, screw it up...or worst of all, help see that the truth is covered up.

CUNNINGHAM

Look...I'd like to send this sleaze ball Dayton Smith down more than you know. What he's done to innocent women over his despicable life is why I got into police work in the first place. But an internal cover up? That sounds like black helicopter kind of stuff.

PERKINS glances toward the OFFICERS outside his cubicle. His tone becomes stealthy:

PERKINS

Because of Karen's line of work, there are more civic minded folks in this city that would like to see this case closed regardless. Eva Stockwell is the kind of Hollywood player that can really make things happen; a little grease for the political wheels.

(CONTINUED)

CUNNINGHAM slides in even closer as their discussion has become covert.

CUNNINGHAM

Considering all we have on Dayton, what do you mean...that you think Stockwell may be involved?

PERKINS

The more possibilities we rule out, the closer we'll get to the truth. It's the bottom of the ninth for my career but you're a lot closer to your rookie season.

CUNNINGHAM

Let's play ball, lieutenant Perkins.

Assured that she's in the risky game, PERKINS stands abruptly:

PERKINS

Get your score card ready, Detective, because I know just the playing field.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HOLLYWOOD RESIDENTIAL STREET — AT THE SAME TIME

48

There are a few apartment buildings here and small, single level houses. This isn't a wealthy neighborhood. Working class people with street parking and blue recycling containers reside.

We're outside one of those SINGLE LEVEL HOUSES—the front door is ajar and light is coming from the living room. We move through that door...

INT. HOLLYWOOD RESIDENCE — CONTINUOUS

49

DAYTON is packing—he's leaving on his own terms. Playing in the background, an evening broadcast of 'FACT FINDERS'.

CANDI RAND is narrating while DAYTON places crumpled clothing in a duffle bag—the last item to be packed, the glinting .45.

CANDI (V.O.)

The Hollywood rumor mills are again turning in the turbulent life of Eva Stockwell, as high-powered investment banker and long time love interest, Calvin Racine, is given his relationship pink-slip...

(CONTINUED)

GUY (V.O.)

Rarely giving interviews since her lawsuit
with the deceased adult-film star Karen Dunn...

For DAYTON, no longer in the broadcast background noise—he gives the TV screen his full attention. We watch the ON-SCREEN talking heads as he does...

GUY

Our cameras got a rare glimpse of Eva on
the Defiant Films studio lot, where she recently
began work on the screen adaptation of Pierre
Saxon's World War One epic, *Hopes Relived*.

The REMOTE VIDEO shows EVA and her MANAGER on a FILM LOCATION.

CANDI

Seen here with manager and career guru,
Richard Meyers, Eva Stockwell is cashing in
on one of the highest paid roles of her life.
Having visited her on the set every day since
shooting, it's rumored that Eva and Richard
are sharing more than a financial windfall...

We focus on DAYTON'S stunned reaction—he can see he's made a crucial recognition.

INSERT: B&W footage of the Club Electra MYSTERY MAN talking with KAREN on security videotape.

With rage in his eyes, he seizes the duffle bag and storms out of the apartment. Checking to ensure that no one is waiting outside his apartment house, DAYTON sneaks through the darkness of a neighbors yard to find A COVERED CAR parked near a DUMPSTER.

DAYTON removes the cover to reveal his YELLOW MG, safely hidden from sight. Jamming the .45 in his waistband, he tosses the duffle bag in the trunk then speeds away.

CUT TO:

EXT. MULHOLLAND CRASH SITE — AT THE SAME TIME

50

Surrounded by the shimmering city lights, PERKINS pulls the sedan in front of the broken barrier fence, leaving his hazards on. With flashlight in hand, CUNNINGHAM steps out into the chilly evening air near the precipice. With them we peer over the perilous heights.

(CONTINUED)

CUNNINGHAM

Can you imagine her last few seconds, all alone in the world, with no close family and a tough life from the start, knowing she'll never get that second chance?

PERKINS scans the area with his flashlight, not dwelling on the sentimentality he states:

PERKINS

You know what bothers me the most about this area?

CUNNINGHAM

Anything relating to my fear of heights?

PERKINS

She must have been doing mach three to break through that fence. No skid marks anywhere near the crash point. Look at how the fence is smashed, a straight impact. Cars taking a sharp corner make some kind of side impact or at least hit at an angle. It looks like she never started her turn.

CUNNINGHAM turns around for a complete perspective on the road.

CUNNINGHAM

After the long straight section there?

PERKINS

It's an S-turn with a straight center. Karen made the top of the S, sped through the center, and then couldn't make the bottom of the S. How long do you think that center stretch is?

Both FLASHLIGHT BEAMS illuminate the road surface

CUNNINGHAM

About a hundred yards, I'd say.

PERKINS

A lightweight car like a Porsche 911 must be really moving to make that kind of impact. Cal Trans estimated her speed at over fifty in a twenty-five zone.

(CONTINUED)

The DETECTIVES begin pacing off a distance.

CUT TO:

EXT. MULHOLLAND ROAD EMBANKMENT – MOMENTS LATER

51

We are now a distance from the flashing construction lights.

PERKINS

Over three hundred of my size elevens...
a hundred yards or so.

A wash of headlights approach. The DETECTIVES watch a MOTORIST slows to a crawl around the top of the 'S' turn near them, speeds up on the center straightaway, then passes the deadly bottom of the S at a crawl.

CUNNINGHAM

That car almost came to a stop on both corners.

PERKINS

That may be it, Detective Cunningham.

PERKINS walks briskly to the edge of the road AT AN EMBANKMENT, searching the gravel with his light.

PERKINS

No skid marks near the impact point. Maybe we're looking in the wrong place. It didn't occur to me until I saw that car crawl by. Both times I've driven up here, tonight, and the morning the body was discovered, I came from the west. Karen had to have been coming from the east. The only way she could have reached such a high speed was to travel from the east, using the straightaway to accelerate.

CUNNINGHAM

Didn't Dayton say Karen left Electra and drove west?

PERKINS

So he said...

PERKINS focuses his light on a specific gravelly dirt patch bordering the paved road. BLACK RUBBER has scored the edge of the road.

(CONTINUED)

PERKINS

That's it, that's it. Look right there.

CUNNINGHAM

An acceleration point?

PERKINS

I'd wager my pension that Karen's car came to a stop in the middle of the road, backed up to right here then she or...someone else gunned it to eternity.

CUNNINGHAM

Simply put, Karen Dunn's car started from a dead stop at this point, and that her death was not a routine DUI, but either suicide or murder.

PERKINS

We'll need to get these treads tested and cross-reference them to the 911 wreck..

With an eager pace, PERKINS begins walking back toward the sedan.

CUNNINGHAM

What do you think really happened up here that night?

PERKINS

Her death was not an accident. The question becomes, did she do it on her own, or did she have help?

CUT TO:

INT. DAYTON'S MG ON THE STREETS OF HOLLYWOOD — AT THE SAME TIME 52

DAYTON is racing through the residential streets, passing a MAN near the crosswalk selling STAR MAPS. He slams on his breaks then turns around, skidding in front of the vendor. DAYTON jumps out of the car, approaching the startled man. Maps fly...

DAYTON

You have Eva Stockwell's address on those maps?

(CONTINUED)

STAR MAP VENDOR

Man, I thought you was gonna rob my ass...damn.

The VENDOR bends down to collect his SCATTERED MAPS.

STAR MAP VENDOR

Now, who you lookin' for?

DAYTON

Eva Stockwell, you know, the actress.

STAR MAP VENDOR

Hey man, I got 'em all, check it out. Eva Stockwell, Diane West, Lauren O'Rourke. Name it, man, and only five bucks.

DAYTON pulls a five from his wallet then snatches a MAP.

DAYTON

Show me Eva Stockwell's place.

STAR MAP VENDOR

Relax man, shit, it's right here, in Beverly Hills, 1777 Rexford Drive. See it there?

INSERT: We see a finger pointed to one of many red stars in the Beverly Hills section.

Without another word, DAYTON jumps back into his MG, quickly peeling away.

STAR MAP VENDOR

(mumbling)

Crazy ass mother...

CUT TO:

INT. DAYTON'S MG ON BEVERLY HILLS STREETS — MOMENTS LATER 53

DAYTON is passing OPULENT HOMES before turning onto REXFORD. Driving several more blocks, DAYTON passes a security gate with a GOLD 1777 PLACARD.

Continuing past the estate he parks in the dark BRUSH between properties—we're there.

CUT TO:

EXT. REXFORD STREET — CONTINUOUS 54

(CONTINUED)

With a ROPE and FLASHLIGHT in hand DAYTON starts jogging back to the estate. When a CAR PASSES, we LEAP into the roadside brush with him. Luckily he took the precaution as a BHPD BLACK AND WHITE is patrolling the quiet residential streets.

Reaching the front gate, we see what DAYTON is up against. The ESTATE is completely gated, well lit and under the 1777 ADDRESS PLACARD is a noticeable warning:

INSERT: *“Property protected by Mega-Tech Professional Security System.”*

CUT TO:

EXT. EVA’S GATED ESTATE — CONTINUOUS

55

DAYTON drops from a THICK BRANCH drooping over the FENCE onto the GROUNDS. Lying motionless, he shines the flashlight over the LAWN.

INSERT: The beam hits a MOTION DETECTOR near the ESTATE FOUNDATION.

DAYTON CRAWLS across the grounds, attempting to defeat the device.

We see LIGHTS and hear LOUD CLASSICAL MUSIC coming from the BACKYARD of the estate. That is the direction DAYTON slithers toward as we get his grassy POV.

CUT TO:

EXT. ESTATE BACKYARD LAWN — MOMENTS LATER

56

DAYTON reaches the side of the first floor, hidden in the shadow of the three-story structure.

Spotting no other motion detectors with his flashlight beam, he stands in a ROSE GARDEN near the CONCRETE PILLARS of the backyard balcony.

In the garden, DAYTON yanks up a WOODEN STAKE used to support one of the many rose bushes. He peers up...we see the three towering floors he must ascend to the balcony.

Using the ROPE he’s concealed in his jacket, DAYTON ties it to the STAKE, creating a crude anchor.

CUT TO:

INT. EVA’S ESTATE LIVINGROOM — AT THE SAME TIME

57

EVA is at home, reading script pages, seemingly oblivious to the impending invasion.

CUT TO:

EXT. ESTATE BACKYARD ROSE BED — AT THE SAME TIME

58

As a spear, DAYTON hurls the roped-stake toward the balcony high above him.

INSERT: The STAKE lands on the balcony floor yet when pulled slips through the posts.

DAYTON attempts another throw with the same failed result. The MUSIC coming from above has muted the sound of wood striking marble. Upon his third throw, we see...

INSERT: The stake lands sideways—its length leveraged against two of the balcony posts.

DAYTON tugs on the rope. Satisfied it will support his weight, he starts climbing upward.

He slowly ascends, placing his feet, one after the other up the side of the pillars. So far so good until DAYTON LOOKS DOWN. We see as he does, a patchwork of rose stakes ready to impale him should the rope give.

Bad timing as with each pull on the rope DAYTON makes, the tension changes. From his TENSED expression, little time remains—yet he's nearly reached the balcony post.

INSERT: We can see a BOWING of the stake post and hear the FIBERS CRACKING

The moment DAYTON is within arm's length of the balcony railing post, the stake snaps then splits—miraculously, he's made a one-handed-grab as the rope dangles in the other.

CUT TO:

EXT. EVA'S LIVINGROOM BALCONY — MOMENTS LATER

59

DAYTON has managed to pull himself up to the posts, fighting for breath, using his legs and body to reach safety. He discards the broken stake then ties the rope securely to a post.

DAYTON creeps toward the opened French doors leading inside. He peeks through, seeing EVA alone in the living room. As DAYTON slips the .45 out of his belt, the MUSIC STOPS.

CUT TO:

INT. EVA'S ESTATE LIVINGROOM — CONTINUOUS

60

EVA steps away from the STEREO UNIT. She carries a damp ROCKS GLASS towards the balcony, swaying to the softer STRING SELECTION. She's heading our way...

DAYTON checks the action on the .45 then looks up to see EVA passing through the FRENCH DOORS. EVA SEES him, DROPPING THE GLASS then SCREAMING.

(CONTINUED)

DAYTON

Don't move, don't yell out. Don't do anything but listen. You don't know me but...

Catching her breath, EVA slowly backs away toward the interior.

EVA

Take anything from the house you want, please, just don't hurt me.

DAYTON

I said don't talk.

DAYTON moves closer to EVA, abruptly stopping. He stares at her, appearing confused, as though there's familiarity. Yet in the darkness of the balcony and the tension of the moment, he returns to the business at hand.

DAYTON

I'm here for some answers.

EVA

Answers to what? Who the hell are you? How did you get in here?

DAYTON

Look, I'll ask the questions. Just shut up and listen.

EVA remains perfectly still, staring at the .45 while DAYTON stands near his escape rope.

DAYTON

Like I was saying, you don't know me, but you knew my wife, Karen Dunn. Well, in case you haven't heard, she's dead, but I'm sure you know that.

EVA

Jesus, what do you want from me?

DAYTON

There are a lot of people who think Karen was murdered, and most of them are saying I did it. The cops, the media, hell, I've got goddamn hit men shaken' me down about her death.

(CONTINUED)

EVA stares at the wavering gun, hardly bringing herself to compose words.

EVA

I don't know anything, please, you have to believe me.

DAYTON

You're not listening to me. I want some answers.

EVA

Answers?

DAYTON

What went down with Karen and who have you sent after me?

EVA

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

DAYTON

What about your manager then, what's his name, Meyers, Richard Meyers. He was hanging out at my bar with Karen the night she died. He's having me hit?

EVA'S tone changes from TERROR to INDIGNATION.

EVA

Richard? Having you hit? What are you talking about?

DAYTON

I saw your manager at my club with Karen. I've got him on videotape. What was he doing there?

EVA

I don't know. I'm sure you're confusing him with someone else. Now please, just go. I won't call the police, I promise.

DAYTON

That was your manager, I'm sure of it. And I bet you're a big part of whatever the hell went down. Now I'm facing hit men and maybe the lethal needle for Karen's death...putting a bullet in you can't make my fucking life that much worse.

(CONTINUED)

Tears start rolling down EVA'S cheeks.

EVA

Please, I don't know what you're talking about.
Don't hurt me...take anything you want from
the house.

DAYTON

Don't play this act with me! You know what's
going on. Club Electra, after the trial, your
manager met my wife and when I walked over,
he disappeared. A couple hours later Karen ends
up dead and I'm the fall guy.

EVA

Richard had never even met Karen. He only
went to the trial a few times. And even if he'd
talked with her privately, how would I know?

DAYTON

You probably sent him.

EVA

That's crazy.

DAYTON

Pretty goddamn convenient, Karen dies after
you lose the trial, then all of a sudden, you
get the biggest film deal of your life.

EVA

Please, you've got to believe me. I had nothing
to do with Karen's death.

Suddenly, their tense moment is broken by the sound of approaching POLICE SIRENS.

DAYTON

You hit the fucking alarm?!

EVA

You probably set it off sneaking up here.
There are motion detectors all over the place.

DAYTON takes the PRESET ESCAPE ROPE in one hand, securing his .45 with the other.

(CONTINUED)

DAYTON

This isn't over. I'm gonna get to the bottom
of what went down that night...I promise.

DAYTON leaps over the rail and repels down as a stunned EVA watches him disappear.

CUT TO:

EXT. ESTATE BACKYARD ROSE BED — CONTINUOUS

61

DAYTON'S treated to EVA'S shrill SCREAMS for help as his feet touch down in the garden below. He tucks the .45 back in his belt, looks for the direction of the police lights and then sprints into the BACKYARD darkness away from them.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PERKINS SEDAN AT MULHOLLAND DRIVE — LATER

62

PERKINS and CUNNINGHAM are leaving the crash site when his CELL BUZZES.

PERKINS

Perkins here...

CUT TO:

INT. HOLLYWOOD STATION – CONTINUOUS

63

ROBBINS is seated at his desk, feet up—it's the end of his shift.

ROBBINS

I thought you might want to know, BHPD just
posted an A.P.B. on your pal, Dayton Smith.

CUT TO:

INT. PERKINS SEDAN — CONTINUOUS

64

PERKINS

Dayton Smith? Are you sure?

ROBBINS(V.O.)

They posted him on a home invasion B&E and
you'll never guess where...

PERKINS glances at CUNNINGHAM. She has his full attention and an EAGER expression.

(CONTINUED)

ROBBINS(V.O.)

Eva Stockwell's Beverly Hills estate... apparently he scaled the balcony and paid her a surprise visit.

PERKINS

Anyone hurt?

ROBBINS(V.O.)

I don't have any details for you...

PERKINS

How about an address?

ROBBINS(V.O.)

1777 Rexford, off Santa Monica in Beverly Hills.

PERKINS

Thanks Robbins...that's the kind of dirt I need.

PERKINS snaps his phone closed then activates the RED POLICE LIGHT on his dash.

CUNNINGHAM

I take it we're not calling it a night?

PERKINS

Our night has just begun...hold on...

CUT TO:

EXT. EVA'S ESTATE DRIVEWAY – MINUTES LATER

65

ANGLE ON: Perkins' SEDAN among the BHPD black and white units parked in front.

PERKINS and CUNNINGHAM flash their badges to an ND COP outside the front door.

CUT TO:

INT. EVA'S ESTATE LIVING ROOM – CONTINUOUS

66

The living room is filled with ND OFFICERS gathering evidence of the assault. EVA is at the bar, sipping from a coffee cup with a police coat is draped over her shoulders. Her eyes are ringed with circles of smudged mascara. A consoling RICHARD is seated next to her.

(CONTINUED)

BHPD DETECTIVE ANN HALLOVICH (late 40's, masculine, short hair, permanently scowling female officer) approaches the new arrivals.

PERKINS

Detectives Perkins and Cunningham, LAPD
Hollywood Station.

There's very little camaraderie here...

HALLOVICH

Detective Hallovich, BHPD...can I help you?

PERKINS

We'd like to talk to Ms. Stockwell if we could.
Your perpetrator, Dayton Smith is a suspect in
a murder case we're investigating in Hollywood.

HALLOVICH

I'm afraid speaking with Ms. Stockwell is not
possible. She's been quite traumatized by the
whole ordeal.

PERKINS

All right, if this is a bad time...but can you at
least fill us in on your work here? Have you
searched the estate grounds and adjacent
properties for any sign of Dayton Smith?

HALLOVICH

Actually, we're all quite busy here, detective.
We'll have a formal statement to issue
sometime tomorrow.

PERKINS

What about air support? I make a call and
can get a chopper over here heat-seeking for
suspects hiding in the...

HALLOVICH

That maybe how things are done in LA,
searching in private neighbors yards and
buzzing property owners with helicopters all
night, but in Beverly Hills we take a more
professional approach to our investigations.

(CONTINUED)

PERKINS

You do realize, detective, this man Dayton Smith is the suspect in a murder case?

HALLOVICH

And you do realize, detective, that the taxpayers in Beverly Hills want their police to be seen not heard. This isn't South Central, or Hollywood for that matter. Tomorrow, I'll give you whatever details I can.

CUT TO:

INT. PERKINS SEDAN AT THREE GATE OF EVA'S ESTATE – MOMENTS LATER

67

PERKINS and CUNNINGHAM drive past the gate, out to the street.

CUNNINGHAM

So much for interdepartmental cooperation.

PERKINS

Politician cops like Ann Hallovich, that's just what I'm talking about and how good leads go bad fast.

CUNNINGHAM

Why do you think Dayton Smith would do this foolish B&E when he knows we're breathing down his back for a murder wrap?

PERKINS

It doesn't make much sense. I was more worried about him skipping town before we we're able to build a solid enough case against him...but this.

CUNNINGHAM

How about what Dayton said in our interview, hired hit men and the high and mighty, Ms. Eva Stockwell?

PERKINS

Judging by his actions tonight, I think it's safe to say that at least *he believes* Eva Stockwell was somehow involved in Karen's death.

(CONTINUED)

CUNNINGHAM

I'm looking forward to talking with Dayton Smith again, this time in custodial interrogation, before he relocates to some Mexican brothel or sex shop.

PERKINS

If my on-coming hunch is correct, I will double down my pension that Dayton Smith will return to Ms. Stockwell's before his forced retirement south of the border. If the BHPD won't help us, we'll help them. We'll set up a covert stakeout of her place while at the same time keeping an eye on his club. I'll position you and an officer here while I watch the goings on at Club Electra.

CUNNINGHAM

(rare sarcasm)

Do I get to spend the night with any particular officer?

PERKINS

I've got just the officer in mind. A man's man, former Marine, you'll love him.

As CUNNINGHAM subtly rolls her eyes back at him, he's mentally processing:

PERKINS

I know he won't run...I can feel it. This is Dayton's kind of city, he thinks he owns it. A man like that settles debts before skipping town. You know what the funny thing is?

He has her full attention as they return to the BRIGHT LIGHTS OF SUNSET BLVD.

PERKINS

With his street smarts, our mutual suspect is probably still around her estate, hiding in the bushes somewhere close by, just waiting them out.

CUT TO:

EXT. HEDGE ACROSS THE STREET FROM EVA'S FRONT GATE – LATER

68

In a moment of comic relief, we see that Perkins was right—DAYTON is still close by.

(CONTINUED)

With the POLICE UNITS departing, we see the MEGA TECH SECURITY VAN arrive. The last car in the driveway is RICHARD'S red BMW. DAYTON spots the M-E-Y-E-R-S vanity tag. Moments later, RICHARD emerges from the FRONT DOOR and unlocks the BMW. DAYTON sprints back to his MG.

EXT. REXFORD DRIVE — CONTINUOUS 69

DAYTON'S MG catches up with the BMW after Richard pulls out of Eva's driveway.

CUT TO:

EXT. SUNSET BOULEVARD — MOMENTS LATER 70

Through the LA STREETS, DAYTON follows far enough back not to be noticed.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS — CONTINUOUS 71

RICHARD'S BMW enters the gated address 1969 KINGS ROAD.

CUT TO:

INT. KAREN'S PORSCHE IN THE HOLLYWOOD HILLS — FLASHBACK 72

We see B & W footage of KAREN DUNN driving her Porsche. She's full of life and we recall the resentful CELL PHONE CONVERSATION.

KAREN

Sunset west to Kings Road. Half mile up to
1969. Wait for the gate to open.

CUT TO:

EXT. 1969 KINGS ROAD ADDRESS — PRESENT CONTINUOUS 73

We can feel DAYTON'S CHILL when he makes the connection. He continues on, taking his CELL PHONE from his jacket as he drives. DAYTON programs a number—it RINGS.

KAYLEE(V.O.)

Club Electra...

DAYTON

Kaylee, thank God you're there...its Dayton.

We hear a WASH OF STATIC. DAYTON checks the phone LED.

INSERT: the LED reads LOW SIGNAL STRENGTH.

(CONTINUED)

KAYLEE(V.O.)

Dayton, I can barely hear you...you're
breaking up...

DAYTON

Kaylee...if you can hear me...it was Richard
Meyers, the go-between with Eva Stockwell.
He was a former john...he secretly met with
Karen just before she died...

The STATIC has increased and no longer can voices be heard.

CUT TO:

INT. CLUB ELECTRA OFFICE — AT THE SAME TIME

74

We see KAYLEE holding the office phone in her hand. With a BLANK EXPRESSION,
we don't know whether she's heard DAYTON'S message or not.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LAPD HOLLYWOOD STATION PISTOL RANGE — CONTINUOUS

75

With CUNNINGHAM standing behind him, PERKINS studies the duty roster.

INSERT: FINGER pointing to typeface reading JUAN HECTOR LUPE

We follow PERKINS and CUNNINGHAM through the range door where several ND COPS
are shooting with ear protection and tinted glasses. LUPE is firing his 9mm into a silhouette
body target. After he expends his clip, PERKINS taps him on the back..

PERKINS

Juan, can we talk to you a second?

LUPE

Sure, lieutenant.

PERKINS

Extra practice on your own time, Juan, I like
that dedication. I saw your name on the sign-up
sheet and figured we could talk. Would you be
interested in working with us on a special
homicide assignment?

(CONTINUED)

LUPE

Homicide? Are you kidding...name it.

PERKINS

This assignment is not through the regular channels, if you know what I mean.

LUPE

Go on.

PERKINS

I mean we could all be hanging in the breeze if things go wrong.

LUPE

If it's special duty and dangerous, count me in.

PERKINS

Don't you want to know what you'd be doing first?

LUPE

I want to be a detective someday. I'll do whatever it takes to get there.

PERKINS

I'll clear it with your shift supervisor, and Detective Cunningham will brief you in the field.

As PERKINS turns to leave, LUPE stops him.

LUPE

Hey, lieutenant, I've got no seniority. Why me?

PERKINS

A lot of your academy classmates are young and off the streets themselves...wearing police blues instead of gang colors. I need a good triggerman, a combat vet I can trust. It's that simple, Johnnie Blue, your city needs you.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET ADJACENT TO EVA'S ESTATE – LATER THAT NIGHT

76

CUNNINGHAM and LUPE are staked out in an UNMARKED.

CUT TO:

EXT. CLUB ELECTRA – AT THE SAME TIME

77

PERKINS drives up to club entrance in his UNMARKED. Parking a half block away and with INFRARED BINOCULARS, he peers through his tinted windows, scanning the CLUB LINE and PASSING BODIES. Like CUNNINGHAM, across town, now is a waiting game.

CUT TO:

EXT. SEEDY HOLLYWOOD STREETS — AT THE SAME TIME

78

DAYTON is on the mean streets, well east of the Sunset west glitz. Pulling into a rundown commercial lot on WESTERN AVE., he parks in the dark shadows.

CROSSING THE STREET with his eyes fixed on the A SLEEZY STRIP BAR, DAYTON approaches the BRASS RAIL RODEO topless bar.

CUT TO:

EXT. BRASS RAIL RODEO TOPLESS BAR — CONTINUOUS

79

Mingling outside a few ND UNDESIRABLE TYPES. Seated beyond the opened door, BIG AL (40's, overweight, tattooed biker type) who receives DAYTON coolly.

BIG AL

Dayton Smith...been a long time, ever since you moved to the Westside. What brings you back to the old neighborhood?

DAYTON

Just passing through, you know, Big Al. How's business?

BIG AL

Nothing like that nightclub of yours I'm sure. We all heard about Karen...sorry, she was good people.

DAYTON

It's been hard.

BIG AL eyes DAYTON with suspicion as we can feel the tension between them.

BIG AL

I'm sure...(blunt) so what are you really doing here? My girls don't need any trouble.

(CONTINUED)

DAYTON

Hey, Al, it's not like that. Can't an old customer stop by for a drink and shoot-the-shit with friends?

BIG AL

I suppose so...(motions to curtain)

CUT TO:

INT. BRASS RAIL RODEO TOPLESS BAR — CONTINUOUS

80

This is not a place for the faint of heart—ND DOWN AND OUTS line the bar, STRIPPERS work the dance floor BRASS RAILS. Despite the booze, there's no happiness to be had here.

After motioning to the BEER TAP and tossing a BILL on the BAR, DAYTON activates his CELL PHONE. He covers one ear from the rhythmic noise of the DANCE FLOOR

DAYTON

Kaylee, it's Dayton.

KAYLEE(V.O.)

Dayton, what's going on? Where are you?

DAYTON

Let's just say I'm hot on the streets. The cops are after me and I've got hit men shaking me down, but I'm finally starting to put it all together. To get my ass out of the sling, I need to get inside my office for my get out of jail free cards...

After DAYTON finishes speaking we hear the BRASS RAIL DJ announce:

DJ (V.O.)

Give a big Brass Rail hand for April Rayne...

PATRONS clap as DAYTON covers the receiver. We see APRIL (30's, weathered but attractive blonde.) When the noise level lowers:

DAYTON

Any heat at Electra?

KAYLEE(V.O.)

The Club is filling up now, there could be hired guns or plain clothes cops in the crowd. I don't understand, what do you need here?

(CONTINUED)

DAYTON

The cops haven't closed us down because they think they might spot me in the crowd...and they'd be right. I'll explain everything when I see you. For now, just leave the men's room window unlocked... I'll get into the office as soon as I can. And Kaylee, thanks for sticking around for me and be careful, these folks mean business.

After closing his CELL, DAYTON motions to the BARTENDER (40's, male redneck) who approaches with a unwelcoming look. DAYTON slides another bill his way.

BARTENDER

(eyes the full beer)

Something else for you?

DAYTON

Yeah, I'd like to speak with April Rayne. Tell her it's her old boss, Dayton Smith.

BARTENDER

Ms. Rayne is very busy, tonight. What's it about?

DAYTON flashes yet another CRISP BILL...this one is a FIFTY.

DAYTON

Private lap dance.

After BARTENDER takes both his bills and departs, DAYTON sips his beer, eyeing the next DANCER (20's, attractive female though aged with hardness) we can almost feel her pain.

Wearing a silk robe, APRIL walks over to the bar led by the BARTENDER. Scowling at DAYTON, she angles on him gripping the FIFTY—she throws it down in front of him.

APRIL

I don't work...whore for you anymore, and I think you should go.

DAYTON

April, I don't want to hire you I just want to talk.

The BARTENDER stands over her shoulder as APRIL confronts DAYTON.

(CONTINUED)

APRIL

We have nothing to talk about. I've finally started putting my life together since I got you and your world of shit out of it. I'm getting clean and sober and am done turning tricks. So there's nothing you've got to say that I'm interested in hearing.

With the BARTENDER standing over her shoulder, the chastisement is for all to hear.

DAYTON

Just hear what I have to say, for old times sake. I need your help and it has nothing to do with the kind of business you think.

APRIL

It wouldn't have anything to do with Karen's death by any chance? Word on the street is that you took her out to own that fancy club of yours...and I wouldn't be surprised. It's all about you, isn't it? It always has been. How many women have you screwed over, including Karen, just to get what you want?

DAYTON

I had nothing to do with her death...you have to believe me. I just need to get off the street for a while until things cool down. I can pay you. Just one night. Hotels aren't safe and I'm running out of time.

APRIL

If you're looking for sympathy here, you're in the wrong place. I don't know what really went down with you and Karen, but considering all the other women who have been screwed over by you, maybe this is payback...screwing Karma. So take it like a man and leave me alone. I've got to get back to work.

Empowered APRIL walks away, prompting the BARTENDER to lean over the bar.

BARTENDER

I think you should finish your beer and move on. We don't want you or your business here.

(CONTINUED)

EXT. SEEDY HOLLYWOOD STREETS — MOMENTS LATER

81

DAYTON is back in his yellow MG. It's a unique car and he's obvious—like a bad habit.

INSET: BLUE TRAFFIC SIGNS—SUNSET AND WESTERN INTERSECTION.

A BLACK MERCEDES SEDAN is waiting at the other side of the red traffic light. Through the windshield, we can see the driver and passenger: PEREZ AND OLSON.

DAYTON continues westbound keeping his eyes peeled for LAPD cruisers, however, that is not the immediate danger—within seconds, the headlights of the Mercedes are directly behind him, closing fast.

We see the glint of GUNMETAL from the Mercedes passenger seat: OLSON angles his MP5K machine pistol out his open window. A sudden, violent burst is let loose at the MG.

There's a SHOWER of white sparks, deflected bullets, and pieces of auto metal. A slug shatters his rearview mirror, another passes through the windshield. DAYTON swerves hard right then left trying to dodge the hail of bullets.

This cat and mouse continues through several residential blocks, with PEREZ BUMPING the MG rear quarter panel. Again, DAYTON side skids barely missing PARKED CARS.

DAYTON floors the MG and the MERCEDES matches his speed. More MUZZLE FLASHES are followed by CALAMITOUS IMPACTS. Slugs hit buildings and cars, while GLASS SHOWERS and CAR ALARMS BLARE.

DAYTON side skids through another light, barely missing a PASSING CAR while fighting for control. PEREZ must brake through the corner, FALLING BACK FIFTY YARDS.

Taking advantage of the separation, DAYTON reaches for his 45—he has a surprise waiting.

Frustrated, PEREZ maneuvers the MERCEDES alongside the MG for OLSON take better aim. DAYTON suddenly raises his PISTOL and RETURNS FIRE.

CUT TO:

INT. MERCEDES FRONT SEAT — CONTINUOUS

82

Attempting to avoid this unexpected return fire, PEREZ cuts the wheel and hits the brakes, losing control as a result. The MERCEDES swerves toward a light pole. It's coming right at us: we brace with them while skidding—until CRASH, AIRBAGS deploy, GLASS FLIES.

CUT TO:

INT. DAYTON'S MG — CONTINUOUS 83

DAYTON can barely contain his excitement having eluded his deadly pursuers, however his exhilaration is short lived as his ENGINE BEGINS TO SPUTTER. Having suffered a great amount of damage to his own car, he studies the DASH BOARD INSTRUMENTS.

INSERT: The FUEL GAGE SHOWS 'EMPTY.'

INSERT: We can see underneath the back bumper to the FUEL TANK—GASOLINE streams out of a single bullet hole.

CUT TO:

INT. DAYTON'S MG — CONTINUOUS 84

Amidst the sound of his quitting engine, and with the Mercedes left behind, we hear POLICE SIRENS. DAYTON REFERS to the residential Hollywood Street sign closest to his position.

INSERT: FULLER AVENUE and a arrowed sign for RUNYON CANYON PARK.

DAYTON follows the sign, parking his bullet-ridden MG under thick trees and bushes.

Taking a screwdriver from the glove box, he REMOVES BOTH LICENSE PLATES, burying them under leaves at the side of the road.

CUT TO:

EXT. RUNYON CANYON PARK — CONTINUOUS 85

Using his last bit of strength, DAYTON manages to scale the eight-foot concrete wall.

CUT TO:

INT. RUNYON CANYON PARK — CONTINUOUS 86

Possessing only his .45 and FLASHLIGHT, he walks along a paved road until he follows a narrow dirt trail leading toward obscurity. He COLLAPSES in a bed of pine needles.

DAYTON gazes up at the purple horizon, his eyelids heavy with exhaustion. Closing his eyes and beginning to drift off, an LAPD Air Support helicopter thunders overhead, racing toward the nearby location of that night's deadly gunplay.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CLUB ELECTRA – DAWN OF THE NEXT MORNING 87

(CONTINUED)

Alone, PERKINS remains in his sedan parked adjacent to the ENTRANCE. His eyelids are barely open. As the sun breaks over the horizon, he flips open his CELL PHONE.

CUT TO:

EXT. STAKEOUT SEDAN ADJACENT TO EVA'S ESTATE – AT THE SAME TIME

88

LUPE pours COFFEE from his thermos as CUNNINGHAM'S CELL BUZZES. LUPE taps her on the shoulder rousing the detective from her sleep shift.

CUNNINGHAM

What time is it?

LUPE

Almost six, detective.

Across the street, we see as they do as EVA'S GATE OPENS for a LIMO to enter.

LUPE

We have movement.

CUNNINGHAM studies the scene through her binoculars, watching as a FEMALE FIGURE exits the lower level then is escorted into the backseat.

CUNNINGHAM

(into her cell)

A limo just entered and picked up a female passenger.

PERKINS (V.O.)

Any ID on the female?

CUNNINGHAM

I assume it's Eva Stockwell, but can't confirm.

PERKINS (V.O.)

How are you two holding up?

CUNNINGHAM

Lupe had the last watch. I'll gonna let him get some rest. There's been no sign of Smith.

CUT TO:

EXT. CLUB ELECTRA – AT THE SAME TIME

89

(CONTINUED)

PERKINS

Nothing here either.

CUNNINGHAM (V.O.)

And what about you, Lone Ranger? How are you holding up?

PERKINS

I've gotta thing for sleepless nights, but I know you two don't. I think it's time to pack it in for the day, judging by Dayton's m.o., he's not a creature of the day. We'll reposition ourselves tonight. I'll meet you at the station for a quick debrief.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOLLYWOOD POLICE STATION — LATER THAT MORNING

90

With the unmarked sedans in the lot, three OFFICERS meet.

PERKINS

Thanks for your help, Juan. Go home to your wife and get some sleep. We'll see you back here at six p.m.

LUPE

Copy that...lieutenant. Goodnight...or, morning.

As LUPE eagerly departs:

PERKINS

You too, Detective Cunningham.

Seeing PERKINS walk toward the entrance, CUNNINGHAM joins him.

CUNNINGHAM

What about you, lieutenant? No rest for the weary?

PERKINS

I'm just gonna check the Watch Commander's log before I get some rest.

(CONTINUED)

CUNNINGHAM

I had a sleep shift...we'll check the log together.

INT. HOLLYWOOD STATION SQUADROOM — CONTINUOUS

91

PERKINS and CUNNINGHAM walk down the hall past the squad room. MILLS has all the officers at attention. He is dressed in SWEATS as if having been rushed to the Station.

CAPTAIN MILLS(V.O.)

Ten city blocks of a roving gun battle and no arrests or even a single suspect? What are you all, Keystone Cops, fired from Warner Brothers?!

In passing, PERKINS glances in at MILLS then speeds up the pace. CUNNINGHAM follows his lead but they're too late—MILLS charges down the hall after them.

CAPTAIN MILLS

Tell me that celebrity-stalking maniac, Dayton Smith, had nothing to do with this machinegun toting, Third World rampage tonight.

PERKINS

Good morning, Captain. Machinegun rampage?

CAPTAIN MILLS

Good morning my ass. Where the hell have you two been all night? Not only did your suspect Dayton Smith pull a home invasion on one of the most powerful women in L.A, a witness called in the tags on a little yellow MG convertible tearing up the town with a Mercedes. Read the reports.

While MILLS swallows ROLAIDS, the TWO DETECTIVES exchange very surprised looks.

CAPTAIN MILLS

Had he not tripped a motion detector in her yard, God knows how bad this could have been. I'm passing your case off to Robbery Homicide and the FBI. We're a goddamn laughing stock around here, and what's worse is that while we're left cleaning-up the mess, by now, your man has no doubt skipped town and is sipping marguerites in some South of the Border red light district.

CUT TO:

EXT. RUNYON CANYON PARK — LATER THAT MORNING 92

High up in the PARK, DAYTON wakes, filthy and exhausted from the night before—far from the highlife. The sun is overhead, illuminating the GRAND CITYSCAPE beyond the park boundaries.

CUT TO:

EXT. RUNYON CANYON PARK — MONTAGE 93

In more moments of comic relief, we see quick images of DAYTON waiting for the return of night. Looking like a homeless man on the trails, he dodges hikers, dog walkers and cyclists.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. RUNYON CANYON PARK — DUSK 94

INSERT: We read the WOODEN SIGN posted on the gate, '*PARK CLOSED AT DUSK*'.

A PARKING ENFORCEMENT OFFICER (black, 20's) is ticketing vehicles outside the park entrance. Coming upon a YELLOW MG with no plates, she makes a closer inspection. Seeing the amount of bullet damage, with wide-eyes she quickly grabs her radio.

EXT. RUNYON CANYON PARK — MOMENTS LATER 95

Within no time, several LAPD UNITS pull up to the GATE. Overhead, an AIR SUPPORT chopper begins sweeping over the park interior with its intense SPOTLIGHT.

CUT TO:

INT. RUNYON CANYON PARK — CONTINUOUS 96

DAYTON has managed to avoid discovery for an entire day—now looking more filthy and exhausted. Instantly, the chopper sweeps overhead, clueing him to a new pursuit.

He sprints down a NARROW TRAIL toward the fenced park boundaries bordering the residential neighborhoods. The BRUSH cuts him and SWEAT soaks his torn clothing.

CUT TO:

INT. AIR SUPPORT CHOPPER COCKPIT — AT THE SAME TIME 97

We feel our guts twist when the PILOT banks a sharp turn. The TACTICAL FLIGHT OFFICER is watching the heat detection screen.

(CONTINUED)

TFO

I have a strong heat source at 210 degrees,
moving west, rapidly.

PILOT

Copy that...two-one-zero degrees. Ground
units, this is Air One. We're picking up a hot
target moving toward the western park border.

Once again, we want to lose our lunch as the PILOT throws over the collective control,
carving another gut-wrenching turn. Through the CANOPY we see the SPOTLIGHT
blazing on the approaching trees and trails—it's a wild ride and we're barely holding on.

CUT TO:

INT. RUNYON CANYON PARK — CONTINUOUS

98

From DAYTON'S P.O.V. we can see the houses bordering the park. One in particular has
a BARBECUE GRILL blazing the in backyard. We can smell the STEAKS roasting within
the thick cloud of smoke rising skyward, as can DAYTON.

Managing to CRAWL under the fence, and with the CHOPPER nearly overhead, DAYTON
SPRINTS for cover near a SHED in the residential backyard.

CUT TO:

INT. AIR SUPPORT CHOPPER COCKPIT — AT THE SAME TIME

99

The OBSERVER shakes his head while staring at his screen.

TFO

We're right over the hotspot...but it's now
dispersing like...

PILOT

Smoke, maybe?

While hovering over the backyard and creating a maelstrom of leaves and lawn, the PILOT
POINTS toward the glowing BARBECUE GRILL a few hundred feet below the chopper.

PILOT

Ground units, this is Air One. We've found
our heat source. We've got the steaks if you
guys have the suds, over. Proceeding east to
resume our sweep pattern.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACKYARD ADJACENT TO RUNYON PARK — MOMENTS LATER

100

Waiting near the SHED as the CHOPPER thunders away, DAYTON keeps his eye on a MAN (30's) sipping beer, tending the grill.

Using his FLASHLIGHT to peek inside the OPENED SHED, the beam hits a BICYCLE. Quickly and quietly, DAYTON removes the bike and leans it against the shed exterior wall.

Seconds later, the MAN carries a platter from the grill and enters the backdoor of the house. DAYTON seizes on the opportunity, pushing the bike through the yard toward the street.

With only moments to spare, as we can hear VOICES from within the house, DAYTON stops. He uses the grill mitt to take a large T-bone from the fire. Adding to his theft and our comic relief, he grabs the cold BEER the MAN left outside on the grill rack. When the MAN returns with tongs and a clean platter seconds later:

INSERT: The grill surface shows an empty spot where a STEAK HAD BEEN COOKING.

The MAN gives us a confused look and more humor as not only is one of his steaks gone, but in casually reaching for his BREW, that has disappeared as well.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PARKING LOT ADJACENT TO CLUB ELECTRA — LATER

101

DAYTON has been PEDDLING on Sunset, ditching the bike by a DUMPSTER within sight of the club facade. Looking like a homeless guy now more than ever, DAYTON is able to move virtually unnoticed. Still, he's proceeding with caution through one of the adjacent lots, watching the Sunset as he goes, until...

L.A. WOMAN

(talking down tone)

Here, would you like some money for food?
(demanding of her escort) Oh, give him some
money, Corey...he looks like he's really down
on his luck.

Startled, and nearly drawing his concealed .45, DAYTON looks over to see a trendy, yet very nauseating L.A. COUPLE have just exited their parked Lexus. The ALARM CHIRPS.

DAYTON simply shakes his head and continues on as the L.A. GUY holds out some cash.

L.A. GUY

What are you too proud, or something,
you fucking drunk...?

(CONTINUED)

DAYTON stops in his tracks and turns to them, while in the same motion DRAWS THE .45 on the L.A. GUY.

DAYTON
Did I ask you for anything? Did I even talk
to you?

The L.A.GUY is stark white and trembling—not a word leaves his lips. After shaking his head at them, DAYTON conceals the .45 while continuing on his way, leaving the silenced couple in his wake.

We can see the L.A. GUYS SHOCKED expression, and not a word is spoken until...

L.A. WOMAN
(clueless)
Corey, that's disgusting...couldn't you wait
until we got into the restaurant?

INSERT: We see a growing wet spot staining the L.A. GUY'S cotton khaki CROTCH.

CUT TO:

EXT. CLUB ELECTRA BACK ALLEY — MOMENTS LATER 102

To his relief, the men's room WINDOW has been left cracked open as requested...

CUT TO:

INT. CLUB ELECTRA MEN'S ROOM — CONTINUOUS 103

We feel DAYTON'S pain as he FLOPS onto the men's room floor, making a loud THUMP.

KAYLEE (V.O.)
(through the closed door)
Is anybody there?

DAYTON
(stumbling to his feet)
Kaylee?

KAYLEE steps into the bathroom, staring at the bloody scratches on his face and arms.

DAYTON
Thank God a friendly face...who else is here,
anyone?

(CONTINUED)

KAYLEE

No, I'm alone. I just got here to open, like you said.

DAYTON

Police? Are there any police around here?

KAYLEE

Not since yesterday. What's going on?

DAYTON

Have they been here?

KAYLEE

(hesitating)

Malcolm thought the cops had been across the street watching the front door.

DAYTON goes to sink, attempting to wash.

DAYTON

I was right then. They didn't close us down, 'cause they figured I'd come back here. I don't have long.

KAYLEE

What is going on, Dayton?

DAYTON

Karen was murdered and I'm being setup.

KAYLEE

(flustered)

Who, why, I don't understand.

DAYTON turns off the water, grabs a handful of paper towels then heads to the door.

CUT TO:

INT. CLUB ELECTRA OFFICE — CONTINUOUS

104

At his desk, DAYTON removes the .45 from his waist and places the weapon down. He takes his KEYS from his pocket and opens the top desk drawer that in turn unlocks the rest of the desk.

(CONTINUED)

KAYLEE looks on anxiously as he digs into the bottom. Removing the .25 SEMI, TWO SPARE .25 CLIPS, the BLACK CLIENT DIARY and the VIDEOTAPE from the secured hiding place, he arranges the items before her.

INSERT: Four items on the desk together; a.45, a smaller .25, a DIARY and a VHS TAPE.

DAYTON

Had 1969 Kings Road not stuck in my head, I
may never had put it all together.

Dayton flips the DIARY PAGES.

INSERT: we see only the name RICK listed for the address 1969 KINGS ROAD.

We also see a CELL PHONE NUMBER.

DAYTON

Eva Stockwell's manager is Karen's former john named Rick, AKA Richard Meyers. I saw him on TV last night and finally recognized him as our *mystery man* on this here security video...I only watched it a thousand times. After I paid visit to Ms. Moneybags to find out how she was involved, I followed *Rick* home to his 1969 address. Richard had also established a relationship with Karen as a john. Using Eva's cash, he hired killers then set a meeting with Karen, convincing her it was a sexual rendezvous. When she met with him, they killed her then made it look like an accident. If suspicion did grow, Eva had Richard open the bank box with the frame items that Eva posed for convincing, even Karen's own drug-dealing friends who probably loaning her cash to buy me out. Only the LAPD can help me now...

KAYLEE

Eva Stockwell? You think Eva Stockwell killed Karen and is framing you? Do you think the cops are going to buy that? Dayton, I'm your friend and I can hardly buy that story.

DAYTON

With my diary and security tape, I have a better chance of convincing them than I do staying on the street.

(CONTINUED)

KAYLEE

This is crazy, Dayton...you have to think of who you're accusing. She's loaded and an upstanding citizen. The LAPD will lock you up for good. Why don't you at least stay at my place for a while and think about things, clean up, I mean look at you.

DAYTON

No, Kaylee, but thanks...I can't have you do an aiding and abetting wrap for harboring a known felony suspect. Besides Perez and Olson would eventually track us down. It's time I learned that my life of putting women in harm's way for my benefit is over. (beat) Maybe in a way I did have a hand in Karen's death, at least not directly...no, my going to the police is the only way out of this, for everyone.

KAYLEE

At least let me drive you there. Anyone following you won't know my car...and it's not safe to wait here for them, right? You know how long the LAPD takes to respond to 911.

DAYTON

Alright, Kaylee, if there's no unmarked unit outside for me to surrender to, I'll have you drive me to the Hollywood Station on Wilcox.

DAYTON takes the .45 from the desk and places it slides it in his belt. He smiles to KAYLEE and she returns a nervous one.

CUT TO:

INT. ELECTRA BAR INTERIOR NEAR FRONT ENTRANCE — CONTINUOUS 105

The club is dark and empty as DAYTON walks toward the front door using his flashlight to illuminate a path. Looking out one of the front windows, from his P.O.V. we can see that no unmarked police units are parked where Perkins had been the night before.

CUT TO:

INT. CLUB ELECTRA OFFICE — MOMENTS LATER 106

Stepping back into the office...

(CONTINUED)

DAYTON

I don't think we should wait around much longer,
Kaylee. (attempts lightness) But after you drop me
off, I think you may have to find a new employer...

DAYTON notices that KAYLEE has just stuck her CELL PHONE inside her tight jeans.
Next he looks at the desk, staring for a moment—the .25 SEMIAUTOMATIC is missing.

INSERT: Only the DIARY and the VHS TAPE remain.

DAYTON'S eyes travel up from the desk as does our P.O.V—KAYLEE is now pointing
the .25, answering one question raising many more.

KAYLEE

You can't go to the police, Dayton.

DAYTON focuses on her DETERMINED EYES.

DAYTON

Oh, Kaylee...not you too?

KAYLEE

Don't talk, just take out your .45. Place it down
on the desk then back away.

DAYTON does as instructed. While KAYLEE walks over to retrieve the weapon, she
activates her CELL. Pressing her speed dial, into the phone she says:

KAYLEE

Yes, I borrowed a friend's car and I'm ready to
leave now...with some very, interesting things.

CUT TO:

EXT. CLUB ELECTRA EMPTY VALET LOT — MOMENTS LATER

107

We watch as a SINGLE WHITE CAR pulls out of the lot then turns west on Sunset.
Into the stream of traffic they travel—leaving us to only guess their dire destination.

CUT TO:

EXT. CLUB ELECTRA FAÇADE ON SUNSET — LATER THAT EVENING

108

When PERKINS alone parks across the street in his stakeout position, we see as he does
that employees are arriving, yet none able to enter.

(CONTINUED)

PERKINS checks his watch...

INSERT: We can see the digital watch face READING '10:30 P.M.'

Looking through his infrared binoculars, we hear him mumble:

PERKINS

Where's your crowd to blend in with? Are you going to sneak into your club or are you already heading out of town, Dayton Smith?

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

EXT. EVA STOCKWELL'S BEVERLY HILLS ESTATE — LATER THAT NIGHT 109

DAYTON is driving KAYLEE'S car while she has the .25 pointed at his ribs. On her lap, the VHS TAPE and DIARY. Upon reaching the security gate:

KAYLEE

Turn here in the driveway then dial 5-3-0-9.

DAYTON

Kaylee, it's not too late to turn back. I don't know how much Eva Stockwell is paying you, but you're crazy to trust her...*we'll all* end up like Karen.

KAYLEE

You don't know the half of it...just shut up and enter the code.

CUT TO:

INT. LAPD UNMARKED ADJACENT TO EVA'S ESTATE – AT THE SAME TIME 110

We see CUNNINGHAM and LUPE in their stakeout position, adjacent to the estate, obscured from view. Using her infrared binoculars, CUNNINGHAM attempts to ID the driver. She has no luck—he's only a distant blur.

LUPE

Do we know that vehicle, detective?

CUNNINGHAM

No...run the tags on your computer.

(CONTINUED)

CUNNINGHAM reads while LUPE types.

INSERT: The COMPUTER SCREEN mounted in front on the dash reads: ‘California registration 718E7JT, registered to JOHN KELSO, NO OUTSTANDING WARRANTS...’

CUNNINGHAM

That white car could be anyone, but whose this?

EXT. EVA’S ESTATE GATE — CONTINUOUS

111

The familiar RED BMW with the MEYERS plates screeches up to the gate—obviously Eva’s manager is in quite a hurry to enter.

Using a KEYCARD, RICHARD enters not even bothering to close the front door.

CUT TO:

INT. LAPD UNMARKED ADJACENT TO EVA’S ESTATE – AT THE SAME TIME

112

LUPE

Her party’s growing...

CUNNINGHAM

Yes, but whose on the guest list?

LUPE

Should we inform Detective Perkins?

Appearing FRUSTRATED, she’s already wrangling her CELL PHONE.

CUNNINGHAM

I’m not getting a good signal inside this bulletproofed unit and I don’t want to go outside and blow our cover.

LUPE

What about over the radio?

CUNNINGHAM

Not on an open frequency. We’re not supposed to be here, remember. When and if something big goes down, I’ll call then.

CUT TO:

INT. EVA'S ESTATE LIVING ROOM — MOMENTS LATER

113

KAYLEE leads DAYTON into the living room with the .25 at his back. The INTERIOR is dark other than a few soft living room lights casting menacing shadows on the CAPTORS.

RICHARD MEYERS is pacing like a hysterical wreck, taking away the intimidation factor.

RICHARD

(simpering)

What does he know? Did he tell anyone?

EVA

Calm yourself, Richard.

KAYLEE motions for DAYTON to sit on the SOFA, which he does, reluctantly. EVA steps out of the darkness, revealing herself to DAYTON and KAYLEE, asking:

EVA

Were you followed?

KAYLEE

He snuck through in the back of the club. I think we're safe. If anyone spotted the car, they'll be running the tags on my sex-starved ex-boyfriend, John.

KAYLEE hands EVA the .45, DIARY and VIDEOTAPE.

KAYLEE

He was going to take the diary and security tape to the LAPD.

EVA checks the .45, confirming it loaded status—we see the golden glint of brass.

DAYTON

There's gotta be some way we can work this all out before anyone else gets hurt. I'll leave town for good with my mouth shut...let the LAPD believe what they want and you keep the security tape.

EVA

You had your chance to leave town, Dayton. You should have taken it then.

(CONTINUED)

Upon hearing the voice, DAYTON appears confused, until instantly he makes some kind of realization—we can't wait for him to reveal it...

DAYTON

(blunt)

Why, Karen?

With the .45 prone, EVA steps closer to face him.

EVA

You think you have it all figured out, don't you?

Well, you're wrong.

RICHARD

(flustered)

What the hell is he talking about? Why did he call you Karen?

DAYTON

Cause that's who she is...how can you of all people not know that? Jesus, I should have known.

EVA

Nonsense Richard, and nothing more.
Desperate words from a desperate man.

RICHARD

(from one subject to another)

The tape...the security video...do you have it?

EVA

Calm down, Richard.

KAYLEE

The tape *and* his diary.

RICHARD

Diary of what? Christ, what is going on here?

KAYLEE

He has a diary with all his johns, and guess who's in it?

(CONTINUED)

RICHARD

Let's just get rid of the fucking stuff then!

KAYLEE

Don't worry, we'll bury all of it with him.
Juanita the housekeeper will have eternal
company.

EVA

(raising her hand)

Kaylee, please.

DAYTON is staring down TWO GUNBARRELS. He looks directly at RICHARD—putting his hands behind his head DAYTON SIGHS CASUALLY, taking a new tact.

DAYTON

You don't honestly think you have the only
copy of the tape, do you, Karen?

RICHARD, appearing to take DAYTON seriously, turns to EVA.

RICHARD

Why does he keep calling you Karen? What
the hell is he talking about?

DAYTON

That's who she is, Ricky...ask her, she'll tell you.

EVA steps closer, waiving the .45 as she speaks.

EVA

What should I tell him, Dayton? That I'm really
Karen Dunn? How could that be? You killed her,
Dayton. You killed Karen Dunn when you met her,
by making her part of your life. Like all the women
in your life. How many women have you exploited,
Dayton? As for the VHS tape...Kaylee told me
about the bad quality. You could have fifty copies
and it wouldn't convince anybody of anything.

DAYTON

(nodding)

Tell him why you really did it, Karen...beyond your
hatred for me. How you used Richard...how you staged
this whole thing.

(CONTINUED)

RICHARD

(beyond himself)

What is going on?

EVA

(icy smile)

Should I tell Richard that Eva Stockwell actually hired Richard Meyers's coke friends to kill Karen Dunn and make it look like an accident? He already knows that. So what do you want me to tell him?

DAYTON

The rest of it.

EVA

What do you think is the rest of it, Dayton? Do you want me to tell him that Eva was so fucking desperate after losing the trial, she wanted Karen Dunn murdered? Like you've said so many times Dayton, this is a small town. So small that Karen actually knew Richard's coke friends through her porn connections...the same men who were hired to kill Karen. They tipped Karen off ahead of time, and for a little more cash and a nightclub deed, they killed Eva Stockwell, and let a look-alike Diva take her place?

RICHARD

What are you saying, Eva?

EVA

I'm playing with a dead man, Richard, relax.

DAYTON

She played you like a card, Richard.

EVA

Richard, in turn, tells his idiot coke friends he knows Karen because he's hired her services before. Quite kinky if you ask me, sleeping with his client's look-a-like. And it was far from lovemaking.

RICHARD

Please, stop this...

(CONTINUED)

EVA

So, all Richard has to do is meet Karen at her club and set up another late-night rendezvous. Richard keeps his hands and conscience clean, knowing his coke friends will be waiting at the agreed spot to *screw Karen permanently*.

RICHARD

Why are you telling him this, Eva?

EVA

Call it his last request.

DAYTON

That's really what went down. The frame job photos were just to punish me...it wasn't enough that you took over the life and fortune of a celebrity. You had to make me suffer as well.

EVA

(ignoring his conclusion)

And without even Richard knowing, these money hungry coke dealers would kill Eva Stockwell and place her body in Karen Dunn's 911 and the fire would destroy any evidence. And as far as the cops were concerned, with one less Karen Dun around, the world is a better place.

DAYTON

What about Kaylee?

EVA

In a year or so, Kaylee becomes a rich movie actress. Believe it or not, Eva Stockwell has some connections in this business.

EVA looks around the room and LAUGHS.

EVA

Nice place, huh? Now Dayton, please, you don't think my manager, the great Richard Meyers, is actually gullible enough to believe such a wild story?

(CONTINUED)

DAYTON

You really lost it somewhere along the way.

RICHARD

(ten shades of gray)

Oh my God, are you saying...?

EVA

Please, Richard, you don't honestly believe my little tale? It was just for fun. I'm one of the highest paid actresses, remember?

DAYTON

(to Richard)

There's one thing you should believe, Richard. I made a couple of copies of the video with you meeting Karen, and the quality is better than Kaylee has told you. She would have taken it if she could have gotten in the desk without raising my suspicion. If I turn up missing, the extra copies will be sent to the police. The LAPD will make a solid connection, believe me.

KAYLEE

Don't believe it. He just figured the whole thing out tonight.

EVA

(scoffs at Dayton)

And I suppose you made copies of the diary too?

KAYLEE

Bullshit! When I met him at Electra tonight, he wasn't even sure Richard was in the book until he checked his entries.

RICHARD

She's right. Let's just get it over with. Get rid of him and his...evidence.

EVA

You're always so eager to take your fifteen percent of my money. Why don't you earn it for once.

EVA passes RICHARD the .45 and he instantly backs away.

(CONTINUED)

KAYLEE

What's wrong Richard? Are you really in this or not? If it hadn't been for your coke-dealing friends screwing up, it would never have come to this.

RICHARD

This wasn't my fault. I can't do this...don't ask me to do this.

EVA

It's this and your cut, or jail, Richard. Make a choice.

RICHARD steps forward to take the .45.

When EVA passes him the gun, his hand drops a few inches from the weight. DAYTON stares on as KAYLEE has the .25 pointed, leaving him few options.

EVA

It's already cocked, Richard. Just click off the safety, point, and shoot.

RICHARD raises the shaking .45—pathetically pointing it at DAYTON.

DAYTON

Don't be their pawn any longer, Richard. You're just gonna end up like me and Eva once they're through with you.

RICHARD

Shut up...I've heard enough of your lies!

He pulls on the trigger yet the weapon FAILS TO DISCHARGE.

EVA

Hey, the safeties on, Bat Masterson.

RICHARD stares at the WEAPON dumbfounded—HE HASN'T A CLUE.

EVA

The safety, near the trigger guard. The little switch that reads *fire and safe*. You wanna make it sometime tonight.

(CONTINUED)

As RICHARD fumbles with the .45 and Kaylee momentarily turns to see what's the delay.

In that instant, DAYTON lunges forward at KAYLEE'S feet. She reacts with two quick shots, yet unbalanced, both slugs hit a PICTURE WINDOW, exploding in glass storm

CUT TO:

EXT. EVA'S BEVERLY HILLS ESTATE FAÇADE — AT THE SAME TIME 114

INSERT: From the outside, we see a middle floor window EXPLODE OUTWARD.

CUT TO:

INT. LAPD UNMARKED ADJACENT TO EVA'S ESTATE — AT THE SAME TIME 115

ANGLE ON: Both CUNNINGHAM and LUPE see the window shatter.

CUNNINGHAM

That wasn't Eva Stockwell throwing a vase.

LUPE reaches for the SHOTGUN positioned in a floor-mounted rack.

LUPE

Call it in? Shots fired?

CUNNINGHAM is already out the car door.

CUNNINGHAM

We'll scale the gate then confirm the shots fired.

CUT TO:

INT. EVA'S ESTATE LIVING ROOM — CONTINUOUS 116

Before KAYLEE can correct her line of fire, she's knocked down and tumbles to the floor. EVA tries to grab the .45 from a trembling RICHARD, but his hand is locked on the grip.

EVA

Give me the gun, you fucking idiot!

RICHARD releases his grip but it is too late for a shot—DAYTON has sprinted around the corner into the kitchen.

CUT TO:

INT. EVA'S ESTATE KITCHEN — CONTINUOUS

117

DAYTON presses his back against the wall-sized refrigerator, getting his bearings. Sneaking past a dark corner, the light is very dim, but enough for him to see an open PANTRY DOOR. He squeezes inside then remains perfectly still, listening for his CAPTORS.

CUT TO:

INT. EVA'S ESTATE LIVING ROOM — CONTINUOUS

118

EVA

We have to find him.

KAYLEE

(To Richard)

Fucking idiot! All you had to do was pull the trigger.

EVA

We don't have time for this. We have to find him and finish the job. Kaylee, take the .45 and wait by the stairs. I'll search the second and third floors with the .25 and *Richard the Lionhearted* here.

KAYLEE

You own a big house, *Eva*.

EVA

I'll turn on lights as I go...he'll turn up.

CUT TO:

INT. EVA'S ESTATE KITCHEN — CONTINUOUS

119

We can hear VOICES growing distant—his CAPTORS are on the move.

DAYTON slips out of the pantry and rounds a dark corner. Spotting a FLIGHT OF STAIRS, we follow as he jogs upstairs then slips into nearby GUEST BEDROOM.

CUT TO:

INT. EVA'S GUESTROOM — CONTINUOUS

120

Outside and down the hall a LIGHT SWITCHES ON—FOOTSTEPS CREAK the floor.

(CONTINUED)

DAYTON scans the room for a weapon; he finds a FIREPOKER in front of the fireplace.

DAYTON can hear RICHARD'S voice then EVA shushing him. He presses his body against the wall behind the door, raising the FIREPOKER above his head, waiting...

Through the crack in the doorframe, DAYTON sees a WOMAN'S HAND reaching into the room, feeling for the light switch. Preparing to hurtle his body out and swing the POKER, in the same moment, a DISTANT VOICE is heard.

CUNNINGHAM (V.O.)
(muted but audible)
LAPD! Drop your weapons!

An EXCHANGE OF GUNSHOTS follows.

CUT TO:

INT. EVA'S UPSTAIRS HALL OUTSIDE GUESTROOM — CONTINUOUS

121

EVA
Fuck! That's all we need, the LAPD.

RICHARD
(hysterical)
What was that?

EVA
Stay right here, Braveheart.

CUT TO:

INT. EVA'S GUESTROOM — CONTINUOUS

122

Without a reply, DAYTON hears as we do, FOOTSTEPS moving AWAY down the hall.

In an instant, a SINGLE DARK FIGURE charges into the GUESTROOM. DAYTON kicks the door away from his body while swinging the POKER in a face-level swipe. The BRASS HOOK catches RICHARD in the temple. He drops to the floor with a dull thump. A stream of BLOOD flows from his temple as his eyes, roll up in his head, freezing there.

INSERT: We see the grotesque image of blood spewing from a gaping HEADWOUND.

DAYTON
Why did you have to come in, you dumb fuck!
I didn't want to kill you, you fucking idiot!

(CONTINUED)

DAYTON retrieves the bloodied poker and races down the hall toward the increasing sound:

CUNNINGHAM (V.O.)
LAPD, drop your weapons!

At the end of the hallway overlooking the stairs, DAYTON runs directly toward her.

INT. HALLWAY OVERLOOKING CENTRAL STAIRWELL — CONTINUOUS 123

It's a gruesome sight—LUPE is faced down, surrounded by a POOL OF BLOOD, shotgun lying at his side. The young officer is showing no signs of movement.

DAYTON watches the other officer from his interview, CUNNINGHAM ducking for cover as slugs impact around her. Shielding herself behind a wall overlooking the stairs down to the front door escape route, she appears pinned—DAYTON has a clear line of sight to her.

INSERT: From inside the living room overlooking the main stairwell leading down to the front door and up to the bedrooms, we see KAYLEE firing the .25.

As CUNNINGHAM thunders off TWO rounds from her 9MM, DAYTON puts his HANDS UP then steps DOWN THE STAIRS towards her.

DAYTON
(hoarse whisper)
Detective...Detective Cunningham...

CUNNINGHAM looks up to see DAYTON—she has hate and anger in her expression upon facing him. She levels the 9MM to take him out.

DAYTON
No, no...don't shoot!

Another slug slams the wall near CUNNINGHAM, forcing her to duck for cover. Scowling, she hesitantly NODS back.

DAYTON
I want to help you.

CUNNINGHAM appears confused as DAYTON pantomimes having the shotgun. He then points to the weapon LYING BY LUPE, well beyond reach.

DAYTON
(mouthing the words)
Cover me, I'll cross for the shotgun.

(CONTINUED)

CUNNINGHAM nods affirmatively, still with hesitation. Pointing to her 9MM, she holds up four fingers then makes a slashing motion across her neck—she’s nearly out of ammunition.

DAYTON

(mumbles)

Great...four shots left...this should be fun.
What the hell are you doing, Dayton Smith?

DAYTON nods to CUNNINGHAM, takes a deep breath and then throws himself into the line of crossfire—rolling to the floor, grabbing for the shotgun.

CUNNINGHAM fires her last four rounds at KAYLEE, covering Dayton’s exposed body.

Bullets fly—while KAYLEE hides behind her cover wall across the living room, DAYTON pulls the shotgun free from LUPE’S twisted fingers.

DAYTON rolls back to safety just as CUNNINGHAM clicks on an empty magazine and KAYLEE returns fire across the room.

DAYTON

I’ve got you covered...get out of here and
radio your backup!

CUNNINGHAM attempts to escape while DAYTON wields the shotgun. Before she can take a step, and to our complete surprise, EVA steps into frame, pointing the CHROME .45.

DAYTON turns to cover CUNNINGHAM with EVA cutting off her only route to freedom. EVA is less than TEN FEET away, with the .45 pointed at CUNNINGHAM’S chest. She raises her empty 9MM as a ruse.

With the shotgun at his side, DAYTON charges ahead of her, directly at EVA. She turns the .45 on DAYTON, however he’s already got the SHOTGUN pointed—we hold our collective breath as he pulls the trigger.

INSERT: DAYTON’S finger pulling on the bloodstained trigger—it’s jammed.

At full charge, he raises the SHOTGUN like a club, but before he can swing it, EVA fires the .45 nearly POINTBLANK. DAYTON flies forward, knocking CUNNINGHAM in a tumble.

EVA

(adrenaline charged)

Kaylee, Kaylee...I got ‘em!

KAYLEE rushes over from her position on the far side of the living room.

(CONTINUED)

We see LUPE'S stained LAPD shield on his belt.

KAYLEE

(panicked)

Oh my God...it *was* a plainclothes cop!
I killed a fucking cop.

We see CUNNINGHAM, stunned but applying pressure to DAYTON'S chest wound. He's conscious, but barely. There is already much BLOOD soaking his shirt and the carpeting.

EVA

(calculated)

Don't lose it now, Kaylee. We're going get
outta here and the other cop's gonna help us.
Get me her phone.

KAYLEE retrieves the CELL PHONE from the floor between LUPE'S body and the spot where CUNNINGHAM was making her desperate stand. EVA studies the CELL.

INSERT: We read the LCD, as EVA does— '*No Reception Available*'.

EVA shakes her head then steps toward CUNNINGHAM.

EVA

That's what the LAPD gets for using budget
wireless. Can't get a signal out here in Beverly
Hills? You're not expecting backup, are you?
Too bad my security system has been shutdown.
Not even the Mega-Tech rent-a-cops will show.

EVA discards the CELL in the bloody pool between DAYTON and LUPE.

CUNNINGHAM

(loathingly)

Oh, my backup units are on the way...believe me.

EVA

Hmm...I'm willing to bet you charged in here
without backup, expecting to call for it once
inside. Sorry this estate has such thick walls.

(CONTINUED)

CUNNINGHAM

I don't understand any of this, but it's not too late for all of you if there is no more killing...

EVA

I really didn't mean for this to happen, you know, and I don't want to hurt you...but giving up now is not an option.

We see things from DAYTON'S P.O.V. as VOICES are hollow sounding, and his VISION is out of focus. Kaylee passes the CORDLESS PHONE to EVA whose keeping the .45 on CUNNINGHAM. DAYTON squints his eyes as EVA speaks into the phone:

EVA

(powerfully)

This is EVA...things have gotten worse, much worse, but I have a plan and proposition for you...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PERKINS SEDAN IN FRONT OF CLUB ELECTRA — AT THE SAME TIME 124

We see through his infrared binoculars—the club is dark and closed. There is no red velvet rope or employees working the CLOSED FRONT DOOR.

INSERT: Perkins again checks his digital watch—'11:30 P.M.'

PERKINS activates his CELL PHONE.

PERKINS

Come on Cunningham, answer, dammit...

The MESSAGE CENTER activates.

MESSENGER (V.O.)

The cellular subscriber you're trying to reach is currently unavailable...

PERKINS tosses his CELL onto the front seat, starts the car then blasts onto Sunset. Using his BLUE STROBE, he races westbound—we're dying to know what he'll find there.

CUT TO:

EXT. CUNNINGHAM'S UNMARKED OUTSIDE EVA'S ESTATE — LATER 125

(CONTINUED)

PERKINS pulls up to the empty vehicle—there’s no one inside. Revving his V-8 pursuit engine, PERKINS whips his unmarked around.

CUT TO:

EXT. EVA’S ESTATE GATE — SECONDS LATER 126

The FRONT END of the sedan explodes through the barrier—sparks and metal fly.

CUT TO:

INT. EVA’S ESTATE FRONTDOOR HALLWAY — SECONDS LATER 127

With 9MM drawn and proceeding with hasty-caution, PERKINS calls out:

PERKINS
LAPD! Ms. Stockwell? Is anyone here?

There is no response, just an eerie silence.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY OVERLOOKING CENTRAL STAIR FLIGHT — CONTINUOUS 128

PERKINS reaches a grisly sight—both LUPE and DAYTON lay motionless in pools of blood, but we can see DAYTON IS STILL BREATHING. Also, the silver .45 EVA used to wound DAYTON has been strategically left in his hand—the crime scene appears staged.

PERKINS first kicks the .45 away from DAYTON then goes to LUPE, checking for any signs of life. The shotgun WAS PLACED back in the dead OFFICER’S hands.

PERKINS
Oh, Jesus no, Juan...

With his service 9MM pointed and a look of rage, PERKINS moves toward DAYTON.

PERKINS
You cop killing bastard. Where’s Detective
Cunningham!? Upstairs somewhere? (beat)
You’ll die like the dog you are if you don’t
tell me.

When it appears PERKINS is going to begin searching the house... a single word stops him:

(CONTINUED)

DAYTON
(weak but audible)

Airport...

PERKINS surges back, dropping to his knees over the DYING MAN, demanding:

PERKINS
What airport? Who took her? Tell me!

DAYTON
Santa Monica...and Karen was...

Those are the last words we hear as DAYTON slips into unconsciousness.

CUT TO:

INT. PERKINS SEDAN SPEEDING DOWN 405 SOUTH — MOMENTS LATER 129

Weaving through traffic with his BLUE STROBE, PERKINS commands into his CELL:

PERKINS
I have an officer and suspect down at the
Stockwell estate, and send all available
units to the Santa Monica Airport for an
officer-hostage situation...

CUT TO:

EXT. SANTA MONICA AIRPORT HANGER ROW — AT THE SAME TIME 130

The airport is quiet and aircraft are parked near darkened hangers, except...

CUT TO:

INT. SANTA MONICA AIRPORT AZTEC HANGER — AT THE SAME TIME 131

PEREZ and OLSON are pre-fighting a pair of four-seated CESSNA 172 SKYHAWKS

JORGE and VICTOR (both 30's) Hispanic triggermen, work in the hanger with them.

EVA and KAYLEE enter the hanger with CUNNINGHAM at gunpoint.

PEREZ
What took you so long?

(CONTINUED)

EVA

(sarcastic)

L.A. traffic. Are we ready to go?

PEREZ

You sure you weren't followed?

EVA

We're wasting time, Perez...

PEREZ

(glancing at Cunningham)

You said you and another...who the hell is she?

EVA

An unlucky LAPD visitor.

PEREZ

Let's talk...

While the THREE MEN continue to preflight the TWO planes and KAYLEE keeps CUNNINGHAM at gunpoint, PEREZ pulls EVA aside.

PEREZ

What do you expect me to do with your cop?

EVA

A midnight swim in the Pacific, what else?

PEREZ

Taking out Dayton Smith and flying you out of the country is one thing, we're businessmen. But killing a cop...that's something else. Our organization is too well established in L.A.

EVA

You're a businessman and I'll pay you for my services, minus the discounted airfare had you taken out Dayton Smith in the first place.

PEREZ

You think it's that easy, killing a cop? You do it and then hide the body. We'll be waiting here.

(CONTINUED)

EVA

It is easy, Perez. She was our hostage in case the cops showed up or followed us here; they didn't. And she's the last witness that saw or knows anything about what went down tonight. Her partner, Richard Meyers and Dayton are all dead with the murder weapon in his hand. Have your company get rid of her and Kaylee's white car parked outside and the LAPD will never be able to prove what happened to any of us, including the missing detective. We'll weight her down then drop her in the Pacific. There's no time for anything else.

PEREZ

The whole job will cost you one million, including a long stay at our families safe house in sunny southern Mexico.

EVA

My bank accounts and contract advances have already been wired to an overseas bank account just incase you and your *family* hadn't been able to deliver the first time. Let's just hope you can deliver...us...this time.

PEREZ

(sarcastic smile)

Jorge, Victor, I've got an extra job for you two.

CUT TO:

INT. PERKINS SEDAN AT SANTA MONICA AIRPORT – MINUTES LATER

132

Perkins pulls up to a waiting SANTA MONICA POLICE CRUISER, with OFFICERS WALLACE and ERICKSON (both white, 30's) in the SPITFIRE GRILL parking lot.

PERKINS rolls down his window—his tone is SUPERCHARGED.

PERKINS

Perkins, LAPD. Any more backup coming?

(CONTINUED)

WALLACE

Watkins and Erickson...the SMPD and FBI have been alerted. When we got the call we were closest to the airport. Support units are coming. There's a noise abatement takeoff ban after eleven pm...likely the next plane we see are your suspects.

PERKINS

Can we get onto the tarmac from here?

ERICKSON

Follow us through the maintenance gate.

The TWO UNITS race through the eastern most utility gate then down the tarmac, past ROWS OF TIED DOWN AIRCRAFT and HANGARS.

A BRIGHT YELLOW MAINTENANCE TRUCK speeds across the tarmac to meet them. The DRIVER pulls up then and rolls down his window.

WATKINS

I'm Watkins, with airport FBO maintenance. The control tower notified me of your situation. There's some activity around the Aztec Aviation Hangar. Follow me that way.

CUT TO:

INT. SANTA MONICA AIRPORT AZTEC HANGER – AT THE SAME TIME

133

JORGE and VICTOR escort CUNNINGHAM to the second Cessna 172.

JORGE

We can't have you fighting us on takeoff, so this can be easy or difficult, it's up to you.

Under the Skyhawk wing there's an OIL DROP CLOTH, presumably for blood and the wrapping of her body. JORGE pushes CUNNINGHAM over the center then removes a 9MM WITH A FIXED SILENCER from his flight jacket.

CUNNINGHAM

Please, you haven't been involved in this so far. It's not too late to let me go.

VICTOR draws his 9MM and grabs her shoulder.

(CONTINUED)

VICTOR

Just close your eyes and turn around. It'll all be over soon.

CUNNINGHAM faces both men, though her eyes scan the HANGER. Like her, we're desperate for backup to arrive—will they in time?

CUNNINGHAM

No...that would be too easy. I'll let you two cowards shot an unarmed woman face to face.

JORGE

Have it your way.

VICTOR and JORGE raise their 9MMs and we FOCUS ON CUNNINGHAM'S EYES. She is somehow unflinching—after an incredibly tense moment, SHOTS FOLLOW...

Miraculously, CUNNINGHAM is still standing. Around her, the SIX CONSPIRATORS are scrambling around the two PLANES, returning fire.

Beyond the HANGER DOOR, PERKINS, WALLACE and ERICKSON are exchanging shots with OLSON and PEREZ.

CUT TO:

EXT. SANTA MONICA AIRPORT AZTEC HANGER — AT THE SAME TIME 134

From PERKINS' P.O.V. CUNNINGHAM appears uninjured and running for cover.

PERKINS

She's alive and inside...watch your fire!

CUT TO:

INT. SANTA MONICA AIRPORT AZTEC HANGER — CONTINUOUS 135

JORGE and VICTOR have turned their attention from CUNNINGHAM, as a several yards away, PEREZ and OLSON are embattled. EVA and KAYLEE appear momentarily stunned, unable to act—they were so close to getting away.

PEREZ

Olson, hold them off while we start up!

(CONTINUED)

With his rapid fire MP5K, OLSON is able to keep the THREE OFFICERS checked, while EVA and KAYLEE finally scramble to the first SKYHAWK with PEREZ.

CUNNINGHAM finds cover behind crates, as JORGE and VICTOR man their plane. Both SKYHAWKS are quickly started. The engine noise along with gunfire inside the hanger is deafening—we want to cover our ears.

CUT TO:

INT. SKYHAWK ONE COCKPIT — CONTINUOUS

136

Seated in back, KAYLEE and EVA are seated, crouching behind the pilot and co-pilot backseats as PEREZ works the controls.

OLSON lays down cover fire OUTSIDE THE SKYHAWK ONE. We hear the METAL FRAME rattle as some POLICE BULLETS hit their mark.

INSERT: CESSNA ONE ENGINE COWLING — A SINGLE HOLE DIMPLES AND BROWN FLUID BEGINS TO SEEP OUT.

INSERT: PEREZ hits a garage door-like device, and the HANGER door begins to open.

INSERT: PEREZ gooses the THROTTLE.

CUT TO:

INT. SANTA MONICA AIRPORT AZTEC HANGER — AT THE SAME TIME

137

SKYHAWK ONE begins to roll forward, prompting OLSON to hurry over to the co-pilot door. Maintaining his suppression fire, he throws himself inside the cramped CABIN.

Behind them, SKYHAWK TWO with JORGE and VICTOR is revving its engine

CUT TO:

EXT. SANTA MONICA AIRPORT AZTEC HANGER— AT THE SAME TIME

138

From PERKINS' P.O.V. we have to get down as the MUZZLE FLASHES from the MP5K broadcasts a deadly steel rain—the SLUGS are ricocheting around us.

CUT TO:

INT. SKYHAWK ONE COCKPIT — CONTINUOUS 139

OLSON fires his MP5K through his opened CO-PILOT window, keeping the OFFICERS PINNED near the hanger door.

PEREZ steers SKYHAWK ONE safely outside onto the airport APRON.

CUT TO:

INT. SKYHAWK TWO COCKPIT — CONTINUOUS 140

Through the windscreen, we see as JORGE and VICTOR do—PEREZ and OLSON have cleared the hanger. Using the same drill from his opened co-pilot door, VICTOR attempts suppression fire at the OFFICERS with his 9MM.

CUT TO:

INT. SANTA MONICA AIRPORT AZTEC HANGER — CONTINUOUS 141

Unlike the MP5K, VICTOR'S lone 9MM is not enough to pin the OFFICERS beyond the hanger door. Numerous 9MM POLICE bullets riddle SKYHAWK TWO.

CUT TO:

INT. SKYHAWK TWO COCKPIT — CONTINUOUS 142

A SLUG passes through the windscreen, hitting pilot JORGE in the chest. Bloodied, he slumps forward while VICTOR continues SHOOTING out his CO-PILOT DOOR.

INSERT: JORGE'S extended hand pushes THROTTLE TO FULL as he slumps into the instrument panel.

CUT TO:

INT. SANTA MONICA AIRPORT AZTEC HANGER — CONTINUOUS 143

SKYHAWK TWO is at full power and begins careening toward the three OFFICERS.

CUT TO:

INT. SKYHAWK TWO COCKPIT — CONTINUOUS 144

VICTOR turns to see his PILOT is SLUMPED behind the CONTROLS.

(CONTINUED)

VICTOR

Lookout! The hanger wall!

INSERT: With a set of full controls for the CO-PILOT, a panicking VICTOR jams his foot on the LEFT RUDDER PEDAL. It's too late...

EXT. SANTA MONICA AZTEC AIRPORT HANGER — AT THE SAME TIME

145

PERKINS

Take cover!

The three OFFICERS scramble away from the oncoming SKYHAWK TWO. Clipping off its wing against the hanger wall, it veers into a ROW OF PARKED AIRCRAFT.

INSERT: SKYHAWK TWO PROP chews into the PARKED PLANE'S WINGTANK.

A massive explosion follows, enveloping SKYHAWK TWO in flames.

CUT TO:

INT. SANTA MONICA AIRPORT AZTEC HANGER — CONTINUOUS

146

Running around the FLAMES, PERKINS charges inside, spotting CUNNINGHAM through the thick black smoke.

PERKINS

Thank god you're alright. I'm sorry I didn't get here sooner.

CUNNINGHAM coughs from the smoke, hurrying back outside with PERKINS.

CUNNINGHAM

I'm alright and your timing was perfect.

PERKINS

I was at Eva's estate and I wish I had been *there* sooner.

CUNNINGHAM

Then you know about Lupe. Lieutenant, I'm so sorry. It's my fault for not calling for backup sooner. We went in to help Eva when we heard shots fired then fell into an ambush. Lupe went down and before I could contact you on my cell...

(CONTINUED)

PERKINS

These things happen and you can't blame yourself.

CUNNINGHAM

What about Dayton Smith. If it weren't for him...

PERKINS

He got what he deserved...

CUNNINGHAM

No...you don't understand. For some reason, Dayton Smith risked his life for me. After Juan went down, I was trapped. Dayton tried to help me out of the house...he took a bullet for me.

PERKINS

(skeptical)

None of this makes sense to me. As for Dayton, he was still breathing when I left him. Maybe paramedics got to him in time. We'll debrief the details later. Right now, we have Eva Stockwell to deal with.

CUT TO:

INT. SKYHAWK ONE COCKPIT ON THE TARMAC — AT THE SAME TIME

147

EVA and KAYLEE are strapped in the two backseats while OLSON keeps his weapon out the door and PEREZ works the controls. RED and BLUE police light seem to be all around the airport. EVA attempts a quiet reassurance:

EVA

We're gonna be fine Kaylee; everything is going to be fine

Through the windscreen before PEREZ we see unobstructed roll space for takeoff. He pushes the throttle to full and we're accelerating down the runway with them.

POLICE units are attempting to cut them off but they're seemingly too late.

PEREZ

Come on you bitch...roll, roll.

The NOSE WHEEL comes up briefly, bouncing back down again. The deadly end of the RUNWAY is quickly approaching—we're beyond the point of no return.

(CONTINUED)

INSERT: AIRSPEED INDICATOR—The gauge reads 40 knots, 45, 50, 55 knots.

PEREZ

She's sluggish...power, more power!

PEREZ pulls back on the YOKE as they cross the large white THREE painted at the end of the runway. Finally the plane begins to rise.

PEREZ

That's it, come on!

Suddenly we hear the ENGINE SKIPPING at the critical takeoff point.

OLSON

What the hell's wrong?

INSERT: OIL is now STREAMING from the engine cowling BULLETHOLE.

PEREZ is unknowingly shaking his head as we're not climbing. TREES and HOUSES are directly in front of us. PEREZ scans the INSTRUMENT PANEL.

INSERT: OIL PRESSURE GAUGE DROPPING BELOW 30 P.S.I.

PEREZ

Christ no...!

EVA and KAYLEE are holding each other silently awaiting their fate as the STALL INDICATOR sounds a terrible high-pitched WHINE—TREES are LOOMING.

PEREZ

No, no, no, goddamn you!

CUT TO:

EXT. RUNWAY EMBANKMENT BEYOND AIRPORT— CONTINUOUS

148

INSERT: The NOSE WHEEL catches a lone PALM TREE.

INSERT: THE PROP chews through the LEAFY BRISTLE of another clipped tree.

CUT TO:

The ENGINE RACES when the LINKAGE SHEERS. There's a loud CRACK, as if a mower blade hit a rock, then—UTTER SILENCE, until...

CUT TO:

INT. SKYHAWK ONE COCKPIT — CONTINUOUS

149

Terrifyingly, we drop straight down with the FOUR PASSENGERS as the AIRFRAME breaks apart. A WING sheers off and the TAIL SECTION breaks away, until finally we hit GROUND.

BLODDIED, EVA and KAYLEE are both alive and conscious in the backseat. From EVA'S POV we see that PEREZ and OLSON were not so lucky—they've both been crushed against the engine firewall and instrument panel.

With the SKYHAWK pointed down and with the starboard WINGTANK ruptured, EVA is on top of KAYLEE with AV-GAS raining into the CABIN.

From EVA'S POV, we see an escape route where the TAIL section tore away behind her.

EVA
(removing her own seatbelt)
Kaylee, we have to get out of the plane.

KAYLEE cries out as EVA UNSNAPS her seatbelt, touching her shattered upper body.

KAYLEE
I can't move! My God...it hurts so badly.

Severely weakened, EVA tries to free KAYLEE'S legs twisted and pinned under the pilot seat. Both WOMEN fight to breathe as the fuel vapors overwhelm them. Instantly, a SPARK in the exposed circuitry causes a flame behind the warped INSTRUMENT PANEL.

EVA continues to pull on KAYLEE, again looking at the opening—alone she could escape the FLAMES.

EVA
Kaylee, you have to help me. Try to twist your feet out.

KAYLEE
I can't move them! Oh God...it hurts...

The FLAMES are growing, LICKING BACK into the AFT CABIN.

KAYLEE
Go, get out. Just leave me.

(CONTINUED)

EVA
(resolve)

No...I'm getting you out of here.

EVA yanks one of KAYLEE'S shattered legs from under the seat, then finally as we hold our breath—the second is pulled out as well. EVA drags KAYLEE toward the opening.

EVA

You're free Kaylee, I've got you...you're free.

At that same moment, the unyielding FLAME reaches the stream of leaking AV-GAS.

EXT. SKYHAWK ONE WOODED CRASH SITE — CONTINUOUS 150

We watch in horror as the SKYHAWK fuselage erupts in a massive FIREBALL.

CUT TO:

EXT. SKYHAWK ONE WOODED CRASH SITE — LATER 151

MOS—SOMBER THEME MUSIC PLAYS IN THE AFTERMATH

We see FIRE TRUCKS spraying fire-retardant FOAM on what remains of the wreckage. The MEDICS place yellow TARPS over the debris. News CHOPPERS hover above.

INSERT: steaming aluminum, twisted metal, covered bodies—there are no survivors.

CUT TO:

EXT. SANTA MONICA AIRPORT AZTEC HANGAR — AT THE SAME TIME 152

MOS—SOMBER THEME MUSIC PLAYS IN THE AFTERMATH

Yellow TARPS cover SKYHAWK TWO and the remains of JORGE and VICTOR.

PERKINS and CUNNINGHAM give statements to the flurry of police INVESTIGATORS crowding around the tarmac in front of the hangar. The PRESS is held the behind tapelines.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST LAWN CEMETARY — LATE AFTERNOON 153

MOS—SOMBER THEME MUSIC PLAYS IN THE AFTERMATH

(CONTINUED)

An LAPD HONORGUARD salutes LUPE as CROWD attends the a service.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FITZGERALD'S BAR — THAT EVENING

154

FRIENDS and FAMILY gather after LUPE'S service. PERKINS and CUNNINGHAM enter together. They approach the CROWDED bar where DIANE eyes her new patrons.

DIANE

I've just got to say, I'm so sorry about Juan, but what you all did was...incredible. I'm sure you've told the story a million times.

PERKINS

At least...and that was just to internal affairs.

DIANE

So what happens now?

PERKINS

Captain Mills wanted us both suspended for failure to follow *proper police procedures*, but after the mayor told the press he planned on decorating us for our *outstanding police work*...well, gotta love city politics, I guess.

CUNNINGHAM

The lieutenant certainly showed me how things are done at the Hollywood Station.

Detective ROBBINS making his way through the CROWD from the men's room, and still adjusting his zipper, pushes into the conversation.

ROBBINS

(tipsy)

And I thought I was gonna get your corner cubicle and your lieutenant's slot, Perks.

PERKINS

Maybe next year, Detective Robbins.

PERKINS winks at DIANE then smiles to CUNNINGHAM, prompting an embarrassed ROBBINS to glance up at the TV.

(CONTINUED)

ROBBINS

I see your fifteen minutes of fame haven't ended.
Isn't that your ugly mug up there, Perks?

EVERYONE within earshot looks. DIANE takes the remote and quickly turns up the volume. We are all tuned in to the evening broadcast of 'FACT FINDERS'.

GUY

Having uncovered one of the most infamous murder conspiracy's to hit Hollywood in recent years, decorated LAPD Detectives Perkins and Cunningham could give no official statement...(fades)

There's a resounding CHEER when they're named, gathering the attention of the bar.

CANDI

Still many rumors and intrigue surround the death of Hollywood starlet Eva Stockwell and her alleged conspiracy to eliminate adult film nemesis Karen Ann Dunn. With the death of Dayton Smith, estranged husband of Dunn, most of the answers investigators sought may never be uncovered.

GUY

In an even more bizarre twist, Calvin Racine, displaced love interest yet long time consort of Eva Stockwell, has made accusations that it was really Karen Dunn killed in the plane crash earlier this week and that Eva Stockwell was the real victim of foul play.

CANDI

In his soon to be released book, *Catch a Burning Star*, Racine describes his last week with Eva, the week after Karen Dunn's death. The woman living in Eva's house, he claims he did not know...

ANGLE on ROBBINS looking down from the screen. He turns to CUNNINGHAM.

(CONTINUED)

ROBBINS

Ah, I'm not buying it. No two women look that much alike. This Racine joker just wants to sell books like every other fame seeker.

ROBBINS turns to PERKINS for confirmation.

ROBBINS

What do you say, Perks? This guy Racine is wet behind the ears right? There's no way Karen Dunn could have taken the place of Eva Stockwell, right?

PERKINS exchanges looks with CUNNINGHAM as the crowd awaits his opinion.

PERKINS

Considering what both of these women were capable of...and how they both ended up, I think *some* mysteries are best left unsolved.

PERKINS casually raises his glass to TOAST as we see the bar while ZOOMING OUT. Even in mourning we see that for the surviving OFFICERS and FAMILIES, life goes on.

DISSOLVE TO:

END CREDITS: