

THE REVENGERS[®]

AN ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY

BY

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EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

JOHN PHILLIP LAW (30's-white, chic, stylish, handsome) leaves the trendiest bar in town. It's after midnight. He dials his cell phone.

JOHN PHILLIP LAW

You know, being constantly late was cute when I didn't know you, but standing me up like this, when all I wanted was a fucking truce, is pretty far down the shallow side of shitty. I mean, I've only been here two hours.

(beat)

Taxi! Shit.

(beat)

You need to figure out who's running your life, honey, because I have no doubt your brother talked you out of this evening too.

(hangs up)

Blue-haired bitch.

Suddenly, a pair of STRONG HANDS shoot from the shadows, grab him, and pull him into darkness.

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

On an opposing roof a sniper watches John Phillip Law get pulled into an alley. The sniper is BRAND (18, attentive, dry, methodical). The young man pans the street through his scope looking for witnesses.

He sees a black Lexus LS 460 (Touring Edition). He tries to identify the driver, but all he can see are blue fingernails on the top curve of the steering wheel. The driver lights up a cigarette, but there is not enough light to reveal the MYSTERY WOMAN's face. Brand moves his scope down to the license plate and jots it down before he swings his rifle back to the entrance of the alley.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

John is slung into the ally by THE HANDS (early 20's, silent, muscular, dexterous). John is not an easy victim and drops into a boxing stance before throwing a series of punches he paid \$99/month to learn. The Hands effortlessly blocks and captures John's futile assault in a blur of Northern Shaolin hand traps. Apparently bored, The Hands throws John further into the alley with little effort.

EXT. ALLEY BEND - NIGHT

Before John can find his balance another member of The Revengers—LONE (late teens, blond, overconfident, snarky)—presses a nickel-plated 9mm against the back of John's head. John freezes. From the push of the gun, John knows to kneel, and does.

A fourth Revenger, TILT (late teens, thoughtful), frisks him, finds his wallet, opens it and pulls John's driver license and hands it to...

SAGE (late teens, dangerously intelligent and leader of The Revengers) who accepts it, kneels to face John.

SAGE

John Phillip Law: Some people are very upset with you.

JOHN

What? You want money or something—

SAGE

Don't talk, Mr. Law. By necessity of our presence it's clear you possess no insight worthy of words, and whatever feeble defense you would offer us would only demonstrate the ideological void that has brought you to this moment.

JOHN

Huh?

SAGE

You see, John, we're here to do unto you...

(beat)

As you have so willfully done to others.

John looks around nervously.

SAGE (CONT'D)

Social equilibrium. Judicial symmetry. Or in language of laymen, such as yourself: revenge.

JOHN

Revenge. For what?

Tilt steps up to the terrified man as he puts on surgical gloves, meshes his fingers, and checks the laminated card.

LONE
(injects)
Are you named after the actor?

JOHN
What?

LONE
John Phillip Law. The actor.

John stares blankly.

LONE (CONT'D)
Whereas he starred in several unremarkable films, John Phillip Law is best remembered for his portrayal of Pygar, the winged ally of Jane Fonda in Roger Vadim's 1968 sci-fi cult classic *Barbarella*.

JOHN
I, uh, I did not know that.

LONE
Well?

JOHN
Well, what?

LONE
Are you named after him? John Phillip Law. The actor.

JOHN
No. I don't think so.

LONE
Because the odds would be—

Lone falls silent as there is movement within the group of hit men: pay back time. Tilt steps up to John.

SAGE
Alright, do it.

JOHN
Wait!

Tilt steps in front of John and cracks his knuckles.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Whatever you want!
(MORE)

JOHN (CONT'D)

I'll give you whatever you want but
I swear to god! I have no idea what
you want-

Tilt raises his left hand. Sage checks the card.

SAGE

Other hand.

TILT

Sorry.

The tense moment escalates as John begins to freak out.

JOHN

God! NO!

Tilt slaps John.

TILT

Just one?

SAGE

(checks card)

Yes.

John begins to recover his wits. The Revengers move out. Law
is slack-jawed, borders on angry.

SAGE (CONT'D)

You should be more careful when
walking at night, Mr. Law. There are
dangerous men about.

As The Revengers retreat, Sage looks up at the sniper and
then down the street at the car.

SAGE (CONT'D)

Don't hit her again.

LONE

(thrown)

He also played Sinbad.

The Revengers vanish into the night like unclaimed shadows.

INT. REVENGERS VAN - SAME NIGHT

The Revengers pile into the van and divest themselves of
their weaponry and their ski masks.

MARCH (early teens—white, late teens, untrained) is asleep at the wheel SNORING loudly. The minute Sage SLAMS the door, March breaks from his sleep, leans forward and starts the engine. Brand darts into the van last.

SAGE

We got Brand?

BRAND

I don't know why you bring me along on these little vindications, Sage. You know I'm no good up close. Should have let me snipe him.

SAGE

Tit for tat, Brand. No mark up.

BRAND

He hits chicks.

SAGE

In a former life.

TILT

Still, it's pretty low key, Sage. He was hardly worth the gas it took to drive over here.

SAGE

Queensbury, gentlemen: First come, first serve. No minimum drink order.

LONE

Tilt's right. Twenty miles just to slap somebody?

SAGE

You're a lot closer, Lone.

BRAND

(grouses)

You should have let me snipe him.

SAGE

A capital idea, Brand, for capital offenses.

BRAND

Then let's find some.

TILT

All things considered, it went smoothly.

SAGE

Textbook. Tomorrow we're meeting at
the new safe house.

Sage notices March is weaving erratically through the
darkness.

SAGE (CONT'D)

Turn the head-lights on, March.

INT. WAREHOUSE - MORNING

Through a focusing video camera lens, we see MAGS
(40's-muscular, bored, worth his paycheck) punch a young
man, FLEET (late teens-white, fit, beaten) who is strapped
to a chair. The thug recoils and shakes his hand like he
hurt himself. His boss, LAKUDE (late 50's-white, weathered,
stubbled), shakes his head. We pull away to see another
lowlife, DeRISTA (30's-white, Italian, incompetent) recording
the interrogation. A BEEP cues DeRista to check the batteries.

DERISTA

Batteries.

Lakude nods as DeRista leaves the room to find more batteries.

LAKUDE

Mags, take five.
(to Fleet)
Alright, tough guy...

Lakude swigs a last drink then places the big empty glass on
a table next to Fleet.

LAKUDE (CONT'D)

Know what that's for? Your balls.
Because I'm thinking about cutting
them off with a pair of dull pruning
shears. Then, after that, I'm gonna
feed you to a wood chipper. Feet
first. So you can enjoy it.
(beat)

What do you think about that?

Fleet spits a tooth into jar.

FLEET

I think you're going need a bigger
jar.

INT. WAREHOUSE - VIDEO ROOM - MORNING

DeRista enters a storeroom, opens a video cassette drawer, and sorts through batteries. DeRista is obviously uncomfortable with his shoulder holster and the 9mm in it. He tries to adjust it and the gun slips out and falls noisily on the floor.

He looks down and sees a large gap in the video cassettes. Tapes 42-64 are missing. He thinks a moment, but dismisses it and leaves.

INT. WAREHOUSE - MORNING

CUPRIO PRAIN (late 20's-white, Italian, dimwit) hobbles into the harsh light of the interrogation lamp on crutches. DeRista returns, fidgets with the camera.

CUPRIO PRAIN

Fuck-you're just one fearless bastard, aren't you? Got to be to just walk into my lieutenant's bed room with only duct tape and a baseball bat.

(crushes cigarette)

You know you scared that hooker into getting a real job.

(to Lakude)

Too bad. She was the only person in the room with a gun. Why is that again, Lakude?

Fleet CHUCKLES.

CUPRIO PRAIN (CONT'D)

Granted he's old, laments the death of disco and farts a lot, but he's the least ridiculous fuck-up on the payroll. Regrettably, that makes him almost irreplaceable.

(beat)

Almost.

LAKUDE

Somebody has to wipe your ass when you shit your pants.

CUPRIO PRAIN

Shut the fuck up! You shut the fuck up! Wiping my ass? You better start remembering how to kiss it old man!

(MORE)

Lakude clouds over and leaves. Cuprio cues one of his men, VASSAL (30's-Italian, uneducated) to follow Lakude.

CUPRIO PRAIN (CONT'D)

Vassal.
(to Fleet)
Alright, where were we?

INT. WAREHOUSE - PARLOR - MORNING

Lakude enters an adjacent parlor where a beautiful hooker, RHONDA (teens-Asian, busty, bubble head) watches and stabs a salad. Lakude's personal aide, PRET (30's-seedy, efficient), raids the refrigerator.

LAKUDE

Pret.

Vassal storms into the parlor after Lakude.

VASSAL

Boss didn't say you could leave.

Lakude ignores him.

LAKUDE

Pret.

VASSAL

Hey, old man, I'm talking to you-

Vassal shoves Lakude's shoulder. The old man's answer is to grab the young thug's balls and squeeze. The kid SQUEALS helplessly.

LAKUDE

You are in the wrong sandbox, little boy.

With a final jerk, Lakude sends Vassal to the ground. Lakude looks back to Pret and snaps his fingers. Pret jumps up and scurries over to his boss.

LAKUDE (CONT'D)

I'm out of here.

RHONDA

Baby, I thought-

Lakude shuts her up with a side cast glare. She goes back to her salad,

PRET

Where you going?

Vassal staggers to his feet, but Lakude clocks him with a stiff jab. Vassal sinks back to the floor.

LAKUDE

(cryptic)

I'm going to frolic in the autumn
mist in a land called Hona Lee.

PRET

When you get back you should whack
Cully.

LAKUDE

When I get back I'm going to buy a
mini-van. And it wasn't Cully.

PRET

You sure?

Lakude turns around and kicks Vassal while he's down.

LAKUDE

It was that bitch, Rain.

The seasoned killer kicks vassal again.

PRET

Awfully slick for two sets of lips.

LAKUDE

It ain't the smart people who get
you killed, Pret, it's the stupid
ones who don't know they ain't playing
by the rules.

PRET

Cuprio likes her.

LAKUDE

I refer you to my previous comment
about stupid people.

(beat)

This place ain't safe so you better
get to The Pocket until I get back.
You need me, you know where to reach
me.

Lakude turns, hits Vassal one final time for good measure,
and leaves. Vassal moans.

INT. SAGE'S APARTMENT - PRE DAWN

We descend into an apartment where we find Sage asleep. He wears an expression of peace and contentment. A long wave of blond hair, obviously not belonging to Sage, winds out from underneath the blanket: the GIRLFRIEND he has time for.

The ALARM CLOCK BUZZES and the young man's eyes pop open. He sits up in bed. He is alone. He has no girlfriend. He rises.

Breakfast: a bagel and water. Then, oddly, he puts a bag of popcorn in the microwave, gets dressed. The popcorn POPS, microwave PINGS. He gets a drink and pours the popcorn into a bowl.

INT. SAGE'S APARTMENT ROOF - MORNING

Sage climbs upon his roof, faces a dark horizon. He reclines comfortably in an anchored lawn chair, takes a drink and a handful of popcorn.

SAGE
Show me the magic.

Sunrise.

INT. SAGE'S CAR -MORNING

Sage sits in his car, viewing activity down the street...

In front of the house The Revengers live in, a car is slowly pushed into frame. Behind the wheel is MIRK (30's-Italian, sluggish). The car comes to a stop, and another thug walks up to the passenger side and gets in, clearly exhausted. DELL (30's-Italian, slow) sighs, reclines his chair.

Sage eventually slips his car out of park and passes the two men indifferently and enters the safe house from the rear.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

In a makeshift lobby sits the MYSTERY GIRL (20's-white, Italian, beautiful, moody). She sips coffee, dressed in the latest trendy fashion, exudes the well-rehearsed indifference of most beautiful women when they are someplace they don't want to be, among men they don't want to meet.

Sage passes the Mystery Girl without a word, turns a corner, and enters...

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - COMPUTER ROOM - MORNING

The computer room where the Revenger's resident hacker TWELVE (20's—looks like Rasputin, entirely too odd) resides. The hacker stands in a shadow.

SAGE

Twelve.

TWELVE

Vir capricornus.
("Fellow capricorn.")

The day begins for vigilantes like it does for everyone else.

SAGE

Let's see, how many hits today?

Twelve's eyes shift to a post-it note.

SAGE (CONT'D)

"Somebody put six shots through the Camaro and two through the Pacer?" I meant the web site.

TWELVE

Decem rogare. Duo atheos
("Ten supplicants.
Two defilers.")

SAGE

Any requests?

Twelve looks to the laser printer. Sage checks the device. It's empty.

SAGE (CONT'D)

(shrugs)
As in empty.

TWELVE

Motificare Arboreus.
("Slay the trees.")

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - CONFERENCE ROOM - MORNING

Sage walks into the main conference as Brand brushes by him going the other way with a piece of pizza in his hand.

BRAND

Friendly fire ahead.

Other Revengers are sitting in adamant ideological confrontation. MARCH and LONE seem to be arguing over a hand of cards. Behind them, THE HANDS is playing chess against Sage's last move from days before. TILT is doing a New York Times crossword.

There is a palpable tension March and Lone. Tilt notices the moist dots on Sage's shirt.

TILT
Did you walk through the sprinkler
again?

SAGE
No. I can only sweat through a very
select number of pores.

TILT
Ass. 9-letter word for "resentful."

SAGE
Acidulent.

TILT
Fourth letter is "e."

SAGE
Oh. *Splenetic.* Fleet back yet--no?
(Beat)
Controversy. Need.

LONE
Comic books.

SAGE
Which universe?

MARCH
Marvel.

Sage approaches The Hands, scans the chess board.

SAGE
Ah, Kasparov. That'll buy you four
more moves.

TILT
(sage)
Literature: *Leviathan.*
(counts)
...eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve
letters.

(MORE)

Sage focuses, considers moves, prepares to shift his bishop. Since Sage is absorbed momentarily, Tilt leans back, cues The Hands' attention. Lone and March glare at each other and keep playing cards.

TILT (CONT'D)
(to The Hands)
Literary work *Leviathan*. Twelve letters.

The Hands, apparently deaf, signs something.

TILT (CONT'D)
Thank you: *Thomas Hobbes*.

Sage moves his bishop.

LONE
Silver Surfer vs. Thor. Full powers, no friends. Destroy what you need to.

MARCH
Who'd win?

SAGE
The Surf.

MARCH
No way.

SAGE
All the way.

TILT
Overruled.

MARCH
Thor is a god of thunder.

SAGE
Power Cosmic. Done.

TILT
Sustained.

MARCH
Thor is Norse.

TILT
It might look good on a resume; but Surf was imbued with the primordial
(MORE)

TILT (CONT'D)

life force of the universe itself
by...

(beat)

What's-his-name-

EVERYBODY BUT TILT

Galactus.

TILT

Yeah. The guy with the big purple
hat.

(beat)

Mythology. Odin's Son's mallet.
Seven letters.

MARCH

You're forgetting Thor's hammer!

LONE

Mjolnir? That piece of shit?

TILT

(scribbles)

Thank you...

(beat)

How do you spell that?

SAGE

Surf would use it to nail Thor's
coffin shutty-shut.

MARCH

The Norse don't bury you, they burn
you. And to do that, you need fire.

LONE

On tap, and it's the purple kind.
Burns in space. Extra hot. "K" is
for Kelvin, bitch. Hail, John Buscema.

SAGE

Today's episode was brought to you
by the letters S-A-G-E. Thank you
very much. Be here all week. Try the
pheasant.

(to Tilt)

Who's the chick with the PMS 286
photo glossy bob?

TILT

Tutor of Saul of Tarsus?

SAGE

You know I would take you to Damascus
if I thought you'd see the light:
Gamaliel. And I meant the girl.

Everyone perks up.

TILT

girl?

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

The Mystery Girl sits there, sips her coffee, reads a trashy
tabloid magazine. The Revengers poke their heads around the
corner like the Three Stooges.

RAIN

So do all actresses come with seams
these days?

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - CONFERENCE ROOM - MORNING

The Revengers face the young woman, RAIN, who sits in a chair.
Tilt still has his crossword puzzle. The Hands is behind
her. Brand has rejoined them.

RAIN

It wasn't hard to find you. The
directions to the "bat cave" here
are encoded in your web site. Letter
trans-positions based on prime
numbers. Shift pairs and anagrams.
Word games, basically.

The Revengers all look at Sage.

SAGE

Not bad.

RAIN

I speak Nerd.

SAGE

So what do you want?

RAIN

I have a job for the club.

TILT

What club?

RAIN

This never had a date, geeks only,
tree house, pay back-club you're
running here.

LONE

We don't take walk-ins.

RAIN

How about runaways?

TILT

What are you running away from?

RAIN

A world run by lawyers, a legal system
owned by celebrities and politicians,
and the conspiracy of high heels.

The Revengers all look at her long legs and the sneakers on
her feet.

LONE

(injects)

Oh, really.

RAIN

(to Lone)

You...

(long beat)

Are not important.

SAGE

How do we know you aren't just a
groupie who wants to be "in the band?"

RAIN

If I was I'd be on my knees right
now.

The Revengers are humbled by the profundity of her point.

BRAND

That's true.

MARCH

Yep.

LONE

Truth has blue hair today. And it's
rude.

Sage leans forward.

SAGE

There's a cover charge.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - ROUGH ROOM - MORNING

Rain is standing on a mat in a garage. Brand, their sniper, faces her. Rain takes off her jacket and earrings. She presses on the mat with her feet, testing its grip. She has a toe ring.

RAIN

What are re the rules?

SAGE

Street rules: make them up.

RAIN

How do you win?

TILT

Don't get knocked out.

RAIN

How long's this audition?

SAGE

Until you impress us. Or you start crying.

The other Revengers sit down to watch. Brand throws up his hands.

BRAND

Pony up, B-cup.

Rain, clearly buxom, scowls at the remark as Brand advances; Rain counters swiftly. There is a sudden shift in the tempo of the fight as we hear several SOLID BLOWS land and a SHRILL WOMANLY SCREAM.

TILT

Oh my god! Somebody get her off him!

Lone intercedes and breaks up the sparring match and brings Rain before the main members of the group. In the background, Brand staggers over to a beanbag and collapses, dazed by the young woman.

TILT (CONT'D)

Where did you learn to fight that way?

RAIN
Catholic Boarding School.

SAGE
I thought I recognized the style.

The Revengers all stand, unimpressed, and form an ideological skirmish line.

MARCH
So she pimp-slapped Brand, big deal.
Let's put her up against The Hands
and see how long she lasts.

LONE
Have any questions before we reject
your offer?

Sage watches the exchange.

TILT
Okay, so you can give fist jobs.
That it? Honey, you got to bring
more to the table than blue hair and
the tasteful absence of panty lines.

CLOSE UP: RAIN'S BUTT.

No panty lines.

TILT (CONT'D)
We don't just rough a guy up because
he forgot to buy you flowers for
Valentine's Day. Sorry, but you just
haven't impressed us.

Rain smugly unbuttons her blouse and flashes the geeks. At the sight of her large perfect breasts they are all spellbound, except Sage.

SAGE
Okay, two minutes.

INT. WAREHOUSE - CUPRIO'S OFFICE - DAY

He room is dark and hazed with drug use. Cuprio is seated, leg on an ottoman, a HOOKER (teenage-white, hot, leggy) on his arm. Mags checks the bandages on his left foot. Cuprio winces.

CUPRIO
Ow! Fuck!
(MORE)

CLERQUE (20's-white, stoned, incompetent) walks in. Time for the entertainment to go. Cuprio opens his arms wide.

CUPRIO (CONT'D)
Shop talk, baby.

The hooker rises, collects her purse. Cuprio gives her a smack on her ass and follows her out the door with undisguised lust. Clerque starts to say something, but Cuprio silences him with palm. Cuprio looks down at Mags.

CUPRIO (CONT'D)
So?

Mags is defeated by the ritual.

MAGS
Still swollen, boss. And looking a little green.

CUPRIO
So why the fuck does it hurt?

MAGS
Probably because you haven't taken them out yet.

CUPRIO
They aren't coming out. My grandfather, fought in World War I-the first one-and got shot in the head, point blank range, by a German rifleman. Did he die?

EXT. THE WESTERN FRONT - WORLD WAR I - DAY

FLASHBACK...

A young SPINOZA PRAIN (20's-Italian, insane, fierce) break from a trench under penalty of ARTILLERY FIRE, rush a bank, and get SHOT in the head. The blast knocks his helmet his head, the young Italian teeters and falls back into a sewage trench.

INT. WAREHOUSE - CUPRIO'S OFFICE - DAY

CUPRIO
Hell no.

Mags is stunned.

MAGS
What'd he do?

CUPRIO

Well the first thing he did is kill that German. You kidding? Get shot in the face like that.

(taps skull, reflects)

Right here, I remember seeing the scar when we used to go post his bail. You know where that bullet is now?

MAGS

(dryly)

In a jar?

FLEET

A locket?

CUPRIO

In his head, you muppets!

MAGS

But didn't your grand-father go insane and jump off a four story building because he thought he was Green Lantern?

CUPRIO

You got a problem with the Green Lantern? He's got that fucking ring! Besides those fat people broke his fall.

(beat)

And my father, he also got shot point blank range by Johnny "Two-tone" Manello, New York, 1993. Do you know where Johnny Manello shot my father?

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

FLASHBACK...

A famously grim MERCURIO PRAIN (50's-Italian, white, wealthy, shriveled by greed) steps out of an elevator only to be SHOT point blank in the head. He stumbles back and collapses between his two escorts, a HOOKER (teen-brunette, hot) and Lakude, who nonchalantly looks down at his boss, then pulls a big gun and shoots JOHNNY "TWO TONE" MANELLO (40's-Italian, white, psychotic) dead.

HOOKER

Baby, you okay?

Mercurio just MOANS below frame, spurts blood.

INT. WAREHOUSE - CUPRIO'S OFFICE - DAY

MAGS
Um, in the head?

CUPRIO
In the head, that's right! Except his was over here. Now, I ask you, did my father have it 'taken out?'

FLEET
Hell no!

CUPRIO
Hell no. He plays golf every Sunday and he only has a handicap of 24.

MAGS
That's not very good handicap, boss.

CUPRIO
He got shot in the head. Besides, he hates golf. That's the legacy of my father. God rest his soul.

MAGS
Your father isn't dead.

CUPRIO
The human parts are.

Mags nods: like father, like son.

CUPRIO (CONT'D)
So no, they aren't coming out. I got two bullets. One in each leg. They ain't going anywhere.
(fumbles)
I don't have to stand like a man so long as I can...wait...How's that go?
(to Clerque)
What!?

CLERQUE
Found her.

CUPRIO
Where?

CLERQUE
Crack house on Coil.

CUPRIO

One of ours?

CLERQUE

Don't think so. The yard's been mowed.

CUPRIO

Where is Lakude?

Clerque shrugs.

CUPRIO (CONT'D)

(to DeRista)

Call Pret and find out where the hell Lakude is.

(to Clerque)

Who she with?

CLERQUE

There's about ten guys there.

CUPRIO

Who's watching her?

CLERQUE

I don't know: all of them?

CUPRIO

No. Who's watching the house?

CLERQUE

Oh, Mirk and Dell. You want they should burn down the place?

CUPRIO

No. Just keep an eye on her and let everybody know to leave the place alone. Nobody whacks nobody. Not yet anyway. Did you hear from Cully?

CLERQUE

Yeah. That kid ain't one of his. Said if he wanted you or Lakude dead you'd be dead and he wouldn't waste his time, uh...

(checks notes)

"Insulting the good name of baseball by beating you to death with a bat." Said it, uh, "wouldn't get you to hell fast enough."

(beat)

Oh, and that you're a "bitch."

CUPRIO

Uh-huh.

CLERQUE

"A steaming ziggurat of sloth shit-

CUPRIO

The fuck is a ziggurat?

CLERQUE

With the IQ of Pauly Shore, or that guy Britney Spears married." He can't decide-

CUPRIO (CONT'D)

Got it! So if he ain't north-side muscle who is he?

CLERQUE

Nobody. Probably just some punk boyfriend who found out that 50% of those sloppy \$40 blowjobs ten guys a night line up to get from his girlfriend goes to her pimp.

Cuprio just stares at him, silently trying to do the math on the example.

MURO

Her pimp being Lakude in this case, sir.

CUPRIO

Thank you.

(beat)

Fine. Whatever. Start shaking down the hookers, see if they know anything.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - SAGE'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Rain sits in Sage's office. This is the office of an active mind. From the way Rain is scans everything in the room, it is clear she was not expecting the corpus of literature and science that litters the room. She approaches a grease board which has been vandalized with daunting, incomprehensible mathematics. She walks by a bookshelf: *Moby Dick*, *The King James Bible*, Immanuel Kant's famous *Critique of Pure Reason*, Lessing's literary achievement *The Education of the Human Race*, Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*, *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, *Law of the Ancient Romans*, etc.

Sage arrives in the doorway, followed by The Hands. Her first question surprises him.

RAIN
The New Atlantis?

SAGE
Francis Bacon, Viscount of St. Albans.
Lived in controversy. Died in
disgrace.

RAIN
Of—?

SAGE
Bronchitis. 1626.

RAIN
I've had bronchitis.

SAGE
Yes, but did you get yours from trying
to stuff snow into a live chicken?

RAIN
Dead people are strange.

SAGE
Where you from?

RAIN
I'd rather talk about where I'm going.

SAGE
We don't need people with records.

RAIN
I don't own any.

Rain raises an eyebrow. Sage nods. No past works for him. Introductions begin. The Hands listens.

SAGE
Sage.

RAIN
Rain.
(beat)
Who is he and why is he here?

SAGE

This is The Hands, and he has an uncanny sense for detecting insincerity.

RAIN

Insincerity?

SAGE

Yeah, like a living lie detector. Don't take it personally. Trust is a process.

Rain thinks a moment.

RAIN

I don't believe you.

The Hands' right hand jerks and scribbles a "spike". Sage looks over at the paper.

SAGE

(confirming)

No, you don't. Either that or we're about to have an earthquake.

RAIN

Your web site says you fix problems.

SAGE

Depends on the problem. We're not plumbers.

RAIN

So what kind of problems do you fix?

SAGE

The kind with names.

RAIN

I'll assume the rest of this consultation is free, or do I have to beat somebody else up?

The Hands scribbles. She's got spunk. Sage is impressed.

SAGE

Are you familiar with *The Principia*?

RAIN

Is it a magazine?

We hear something BENDING inside Sage's head.

SAGE

Third Law of Thermodynamics. Actions.
Reactions. One as equal as the other.

RAIN

Only you apply it to law.

SAGE

No, the lawless.

RAIN

How biblical of you.

SAGE

The whole do unto others as you would
have them do unto you thing.

RAIN

Eye for eye and all that.

SAGE

And all that.

RAIN

What about the police?

SAGE

They looking for you?

RAIN

No, but I imagine they're looking
for you.

SAGE

Looking is not the same as finding.
Besides, we're discreet.

RAIN

How discreet?

SAGE

Batman discreet.

RAIN

He could afford to be. Bruce Wayne
was a millionaire.

SAGE

Billionaire.

RAIN

What about money?

SAGE
Got plenty. Silent partner.

RAIN
I thought vigilantes were supposed
to be charitable.

SAGE
We are. We beat people up for free.

RAIN
Well you won't have to. I can pay
you.

SAGE
We're not bouncers.

RAIN
I don't want him beat up.

SAGE
Sounds like you've forgiven him.

RAIN
I want you to kill him.

The Hands scribbles in large spikes.

SAGE
We're not assassins either.

RAIN
My life's in danger. He's out to
kill me. What? I have to die before
you'll do something?

The Hands SCRIBBLES.

SAGE
It'd help.

RAIN
Does he have to keep doing that?
It's really annoying.

SAGE
Don't take it personally. It's simply
as issue of clarity.

RAIN
Clarity?

SAGE

Clarity.

RAIN

What's the fuck is that supposed to mean?

SAGE

Killing somebody just because you don't like them, well, that presents what we in the industry like to call a *major moral complication*. It's very Martin Scorsese.

RAIN

And waiting for someone to die before you do anything doesn't?

SAGE

Imperfect solutions. They abound.

RAIN

I can pay you in cash. I make a lot in my line of work.

SAGE

Based on this conversation, the best I can do is call a cab for you.

Sage points out a window to a black, parked car.

SAGE (CONT'D)

Or you can have your friends take you home.

RAIN

They aren't my friends.

Sage hardens.

RAIN (CONT'D)

You do not know who I am, and you do not know the kind of people that are in that car. I walk out that front door I could get shot.

SAGE

(mocks)

We have a back door.

(MORE)

Rain is out of options, turns from Sage.

SAGE (CONT'D)

We don't work this way. We're not a drive-thru.
Wendy's. Wendy's is a drive thru.

Rain says nothing. After a time, Sage budges.

SAGE (CONT'D)

Give me a name.

Rain takes a pen and scribbles a name down on a small sheet of paper. She hands it to Sage.

SAGE (CONT'D)

We're half there. Now, give me the reason.

RAIN

When you find out who belongs to that name, you'll have plenty to chose from.

EXT. REVENGERS HOUSE - AFTERNOON

We see Mirk and Dell in their dead car. A cell phone RINGS and Mirk answers dryly.

MIRK

Yeah? Oh, hey Clerque. Uh, yeah.
Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Mirk hangs up. Dell naps in the passenger seat. He doesn't even perk up.

DELL

So who's the guest?

MIRK

He ain't talking.

DELL

He'll talk. They always do.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - ROUGH ROOM - AFTERNOON

Sage walks in where Tilt is bandaging up Brand, who seems out of it.

TILT

Hey, Grand Husnock.

Reflects on the moniker.

SAGE

(humbly)

I am the Grand Husnock, aren't I?

TILT

According to sensors.

(beat)

Um, you're kidding, right?

SAGE

What?

TILT

She could be a cop!

SAGE

Definitely not a cop. They have bigger pores. Besides, she's too "Catherine Bell" to be a cop.

(beat)

Exfoliates.

TILT

Two words: Police Woman.

SAGE

Angie Dickenson. Very shabulous.

TILT

Risk unnecessary an is She. Take it that way.

SAGE

Boldly ventured is half won. Now, call Cube and start a tab. I want to know who she is, who this is—he sounds familiar—and who those two guys across the street are.

Sage holds up a piece of paper. Tilt memorizes the name on it, refuses the note. Sage picks up Brand's second rifle. He looks through the scope to the two men outside in the car. They are in his sights.

SAGE (CONT'D)

We'll keep her in the shrine for twenty-four hours

TILT

Judas starts with a "J."

SAGE

Only in English. Besides, sacrifice
is bitter but its fruits are sweet.
Where's Fleet?

TILT

Hasn't checked in yet.

SAGE

He's late. Did you call him?

TILT

A "fart sloth" but that was Monday.
(reflects)
Tuesday, I called him "The Booger
Pope."

SAGE

Hi. Welcome to the chain of command:
call him.

TILT

Sage, if he was in trouble, he would
call.

SAGE

And to a fool the ocean is knee deep.

Tilt blinks.

TILT

I called him. Yesterday. When I was
writing an essay on how you were
personally responsible for mediocrity
of the Ford administration. Got
voice mail. It's Fleet. He'll call.

SAGE

Part of being "in trouble" is not
being able to call. I want to know
where he is. Call Twist. He's off
today.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - SHRINE - AFTERNOON

Rain approaches the "shrine" with Lone behind her, who ogles
her ass. She walks in to The Shrine.

LONE

(suave)

So...

(MORE)

SLAM! Door closes in his face. Lone sees March.

LONE (CONT'D)

Did you hear the news? She's crashing here tonight: said Sage.

MARCH

Ex cathedra, huh?

LONE

Ex cathedra.

MARCH

Shall we?

LONE

Shall!

The two Revengers perform their secret handshake, unimaginably pleased a real live woman might become a common sight.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - SHRINE - AFTERNOON

Rain throws her bag down on the bed. The entire room is plastered with SALMA HAYEK pictures and an altar.

RAIN

Oh my god.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - ROUGH ROOM - AFTERNOON

Tilt dials a number. It RINGS once. Then again. Someone picks up. Exactly what is making the BANSHEE-LIKE SCREAMING on the other side, we do not know, but it has a MIDDLE EASTERN ACCENT. We can only guess it is an Arab boss.

PAKISTANI STORE MANGER (V.O.)

Get off phone now! You get off phone now I think, Mister Man! You! Get off phone!

Tilt hangs up.

TILT

Nix. He got called in.

SAGE

What about Strobe?

TILT

He house-sat here for three days before the heating got turned on, so he still has that chest congestion thing.

SAGE
Chest congestion thing?

Tilt motions to a door which Sage opens. We never seen STROBE (another Revenger) but we HEAR him. WHEEZING and GURGLING like a disemboweled yak with emphysema. Sage waits for a pause in the THROATY BURBLING.

SAGE (CONT'D)
Strobe.

Strobe GURGLLES.

SAGE (CONT'D)
Strobe.

Strobe GURGLLES

SAGE (CONT'D)
Strobe

Strobe GURGLLES.

Sage closes the door.

SAGE (CONT'D)
That's not good. Okay, name Brand,
you're on deck.

BRAND
(delirious)
I can smell colors.

SAGE
Okay, Brand, listen up here. I want
you go out the back door and hook up
with Cube and figure out where Fleet
is.

(to Tilt)
The hell you give him?

TILT
Morphine. Eight letters.

SAGE
How much?

Tilt sticks a lawn dart in Brand's arm; Brand doesn't even flinch. Tilt gives Sage a "that much" look. March walks in.

MARCH

The flame-thrower just arrived, but the catapult won't be in for another three weeks. So, the chick is really crashing here?

SAGE

He lying?

TILT

No.

(beat)

The flame-thrower just arrived, but the catapult won't be in for another three weeks.

Behind them, Brand slowly falls back into a dazed heap.

SAGE

Imperial.

MARCH

Why did you ask Tilt? I *just* told you that?

SAGE

I hate to send you straight to DVD like that, but I inherently don't trust short people: you're farther away from God than I am.

MARCH

Sage, you would be wise to remember, that six hundred years ago, when the Earth was cooling—

SAGE

March, talking just reminds me you're here.

MARCH

I see.
(holds Carmex)
Want some?

SAGE

Sure.

(MORE)

March's expression sours. He crushes the Carmex applicator, heaping a golf-ball sized blob of Carmex on Sage's open palm. Sage just looks at Tilt and wonders as March storms out.

SAGE (CONT'D)

We could have gotten a dash board
Jesus for the same price.

TILT

(lights cigarette)
They were out.

INT. REVENGERS SHRINE - AFTERNOON

Rain is in the bathroom. She quickly slips out of her disguise and into the shower, where the past comes to haunt her again. Head under the spray, a flashback steals the color from the moment.

FLASHBACK...

INT. RAIN'S APARTMENT - DAY

We see Rain surprised by her LOVER. They LAUGH and GIGGLE, paw and nuzzle. She is happy. Happier than she has ever been. We see a FIGURE burst through the door. We don't see his face. There is a glint of a gun barrel. A shadow passes over the lovers. Confusion. A flash of light.

Rain snaps to the present and wipes the water away from her face.

EXT. REVENGERS HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Mirk and Dell sit there, staring blankly forward. Mirk hears the front door open and stiffens a bit.

EXT. REVENGERS HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - AFTERNOON

Lone goes out to the mailbox and glances over at the car with the two hit men in it.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - COMPUTER ROOM - AFTERNOON

Sage is PLAYING a guitar as Tilt enters, monitors various field members of the Revengers. Sage is wearing a headset and staring a monitor where various stocks are being displayed.

SAGE

Still upstairs?

TILT

And still a bad idea.

SAGE
(checks watch)
Alright, let's wrap every body up
and put a call on SiscoTel at 34.50.
One thousand shares.
(beat)
How's LM-Isophase?

TILT
Holding at \$37.25/share.

SAGE
It'll drop.

Tilt complies. Sage checks the clock—almost 3:00 p.m. He turns back to the Revengers web site to see an anonymous e-mail being written to his team.

SAGE (CONT'D)
What are those?

TILT
Three more requests.

SAGE
Summary.

TILT
Embezzlement. Out of state.

SAGE
Denied. Cite jurisdiction. Next.

TILT
You'll like this one. Guy wants us
to revenge God because he's offended
by the concept of prime numbers.
Especially the numbers 3, 631 and
3,057.

Sage thinks a moment.

SAGE
3,057 isn't a prime number. Denied.
Cite our Bertrand Russell Idiocy
Clause. Next.

TILT
Number three: No name.

SAGE
Let me guess: another ex-boyfriend.

TILT

Nope. From the spelling it looks like some high-school dropout. Probably a cosmetologist. Hold on. Shit, it's a kid.

SAGE

Are you sure?

TILT

Unless you know any cosmetologists who are angry at Santa Claus for not getting them what they asked for.

SAGE

No minors, Tilt. Deny and erase.

TILT

It's a girl.

SAGE

No minors.

TILT

Says her step-dad beats her mom.

There is a long pause as Sage focuses on his guitar PLAYING, periodically looking at his stock picks in an over-calculated effort to avoid the issue.

TILT (CONT'D)

Wants to know if we can ask him to stop. Well? Drop her?

Sage doesn't answer. After a moment, Tilt begins to delete the entry. Sage takes a deep breath.

SAGE

Flag it. Send it to Cube for confirmation. Tell him to check it out.

TILT

What happened to "no minors?"

SAGE

(sophistry)
The step-dad's not a minor.
(about stocks)
There it goes LM-Isophase. Told you.
Alright, it's 3:00 o'clock. Bring everybody online.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - CONFERENCE ROOM - AFTERNOON

Inside, March is irritably drawing on a sketch book. Lone sifts through the mail as Brand enters. Lone lifts a large box and tosses it to Brand.

LONE
Your panties came in, Brand.

BRAND
Give it a rest, okay? I couldn't concentrate.
(feebly)
She was *jostling*.

LONE
Whatever. Hey, assbag: you got a box and a letter. It's from the Joe Kubert School of Art.

Lone hands the box to March, who opens it to find a hammer wrapped in plastic. He pulls it out.

MARCH
Must be my new art kit!
(beat)
Hey! It's a hammer.

Lone reads the accompanying letter.

LONE
"Dear March, if that's really your name: we regret to inform you we cannot accept your disturbing submission at this time. Enclosed you will find a 20 oz. steel hammer. Please use it to break your hands."

March snatches the rejection letter from Lone's hands.

MARCH
What? Who wrote that!

LONE
"Sincerely, Joe Kubert."

March shudders as he finds Joe Kubert's signature at the bottom of the letter. Brand checks his box: it's his camouflage suit. He picks it up and turns to leave the room, but Rain descends the stairs dressed to the nines. Brand freaks and turns abruptly—into a door jamb. THUD!

He collapses cold as a wedge. Rain steps over him. March is mortified and feebly holds up his sketchbook for validation from the beautiful stranger.

MARCH
(feebly)
I-I'm an a-artist.

Rain picks up the sketchbook and looks at it.

RAIN
No you're not.
(to Lone)
Where's the Alpha Nerd?

Lone throws his head over shoulder. Rain hands March's sketchbook to Lone coldly.

RAIN (CONT'D)
Burn that.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - COMPUTER ROOM - AFTERNOON

Rain enters the computer room, leans against the doorjamb, watches. Sage is talking to yet another member of The Revengers—PATH.

SAGE
Now our unsuspecting Mr. White knows how it feels to be stood-up on a first date by someone who doesn't have the courtesy to pick up a phone.

PATH (V.O.)
Now what?

SAGE
Keep the digital video running until he leaves the restaurant. I promised our client she'd get the whole show on YouTube. No commercials. After that, wrap it up.
(beat)
Oh, how'd the geometry test go?

PATH (V.O.)
Damn cosines!

SAGE
Yeah, they're a pain. Good work, Path.

(MORE)

SAGE (CONT'D)
(changes channel)
Talk to me, Slide. How's that shoe
polish coming along?

SLIDE (V.O.)
Got the windshield.

SAGE
Good. Now move in an orderly clockwise
rotation around the vehicle. Nice,
broad strokes.

Rain walks over and pulls the cable out of the computer,
cutting everybody off from Sage.

RAIN
What the hell do you think you're
doing?

Sage gives Rain a "who me?" look.

RAIN (CONT'D)
Yes, I am talking to you! What are
you doing?

SAGE
(looks at guitar)
Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring by Bach.

EXT. REVENGERS HOUSE - AFTERNOON

We see Mirk and Dell sit in the car. A cell phone RINGS and
the driver answers.

MIRK
Yeah? Oh, hey boss. Uh, nope. Nope.
Nope. Nope. Nope.

Mirk hangs up.

DELL
Why don't we whack him, again?

MIRK
His dad.

DELL
Right. Right. His dad.
(MORE)

Mirk gets out of the car and walks up to The Revengers' house.

DELL (CONT'D)
Where you going?

MIRK
(shaking the cell
phone)
Get the girl.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Rain and Sage argue.

RAIN
Shoe polish?

SAGE
You would be surprised what a little
shoe polish can do. Vengeance comes
in all sizes Rain, is it?

RAIN
I am not here so you can toilet paper
someone's house! I have a serious
fucking problem!

SAGE
Rudeness: by all appearances. Tilt!
Tilt is right behind him.

TILT
Yeah?

SAGE
Take over. Bring everybody in.

TILT
Math. Measure of the absence of
relationship between two variables.
23 letters.

Rain storms off into the living room, Sage follows

SAGE
(over shoulder)
Coefficient of Alienation.

RAIN
Fuck! Crosswords! You're doing
crosswords?

SAGE
Slow day.

RAIN

Who does a girl have to suck to get something done around here?

SAGE

Turn your tricks on your own time.

RAIN

Listen to me, you fucking little geek-

There is a LOUD KNOCK at the door.

TILT

Uh, Sage...

Sage anticipates Tilt's concern.

SAGE

(jokes)

Did you order a pizza?

TILT

Actually, yeah.

SAGE

Really? What kind?

SAGE

Meat lovers. Extra cheese, thick crust.

SAGE

When?

TILT

This morning.

SAGE

So that's probably her friends at the door.

TILT

Chances are good.

They both look back to Rain. She wears a smug look.

RAIN

Think fast.

Sage ponders a moment, notes how uncomfortably Rain watches the moment unfold.

Sage opens the door and sees Mirk—both say anything. There is a long, palpable pause. Almost a staring contest. Finally, Mirk goes to form a word on his lips.

SAGE

No.

Sage SLAMS the door shut.

EXT. REVENGERS HOUSE - HEADQUARTERS - AFTERNOON

Mirk thinks a moment and walks all the way back to his car and leans in to Dell.

DELL

What happened?

MIRK

He slammed the door in my face.

DELL

He slammed the door in your face?

MIRK

He slammed the door in my face.

DELL

That's very disrespectful.

(beat)

And having thought on the matter further, I am forced to disapprove.

MIRK

On this, I concur.

Mirk straightens back up, walks back to the Revengers' headquarters. He KNOCKS again. Sage opens the door and Mirk pulls out his 9mm. However, Sage grabs the gun, produces his own 9mm and pins Mirk head to the jamb. He COCKS the handle.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Rain is uncharacteristically nervous, arms folded, fidgets with her necklace.

EXT. REVENGERS HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Mirk opens the car door and gets in. He's got a shiner of a black eye. Dell looks at him.

DELL

What happened?

MIRK
He took my gun.

DELL
He took your gun?

MIRK
He took my gun.

The two hit men sit there for a moment. Quietly weighing the event and the options it has left them.

DELL
Well, we have the pipe back there.

Both Mirk and Dell look over shoulder at a portable RPG in the back seat. Mirk thinks a moment before his cell phone RINGS. He answers it.

MIRK
Yeah, it's me. Still in there. Maybe.
Maybe. Maybe. Maybe.

Mirk listens and SCRIBBLES down a number. He hangs up and DIALS the number.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - CONFERENCE ROOM - AFTERNOON

Inside the house, Sage and Tilt are looking through blinds. Sage gestures for Lone to secure the back door. Lone skirts over to another window and peeks out. He sees nothing.

TILT
They ain't moving.

Sage inspects Mirk's gun.

SAGE
9mm. Numbers have been filed off.
(surprised)
It's empty.

TILT
What?

SAGE
(pulls gun slide back)
There's no round in the chamber and
there's no clip.
(beat)
*There's no round in the chamber and
there's no clip.*

TILT

Lone, what are they doing now?

Lone looks out through the scope of a deer rifle. Out in the car, Dell has gone back to sleep and Mirk is just staring forward.

LONE

Just sitting there.

Sage begins to walk towards the front door.

TILT

So, what do we do now.

EXT. REVENGERS HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Sage walks out of the house, approaches the two thugs in the car.

LONE

Oy, vez mear.

Mirk and Dell tense up a bit. Rain and Tilt watch from the house through blinds. Sage walks up and KNOCKS on the window. Mirk rolls it down. The two men stare at each other for a moment.

SAGE

There's no round in the chamber and there's no clip.

(beat)

This gun is empty.

Sage hands the gun to Mirk who takes it. Sage peruses the car and sees the RPG. Dell reaches into his jacket, but as he does, we see he forgot to bring it. Sage turns and walks back to the house.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - CONFERENCE ROOM - AFTERNOON

Sage enters the conference room, sees only Lone and Tilt. Rain is gone.

TILT

What kind of guy brings an empty gun to get a girl?

SAGE

A guy who realizes the girl is more afraid of him than his gun. Lone, where's the Ass of Nations?

LONE

I'm going to need a predicate on that, chief: If you mean the Jack Ass of Nations, March is that way. If you are talking about that firm, thong-worthy Sweet Ass of Nations, well, she's that way too.

Sage follows Lone's direction to the kitchen.

TILT

(to Lone)

Keep an eye on them.

Tilt follows Sage. March walks up.

MARCH

(non sequitur)

You know, Sage, if the Decepticons had built the Death Star, it would have had landing gear.

Tilt approaches and gestures towards the front door.

TILT

Why didn't you shoot him?

SAGE

I want to.

TILT

Why don't you?

SAGE

Where am I going to dump the body?

TILT

You dump bodies in dumpsters. That's why they're called "dumpsters."

SAGE

Then who would Lone have to argue with?

Tilt sorts through the error.

TILT

(about March)

Not ass fungus! The sneeze fetus outside.

(MORE)

Sage waves both Tilt and March off and goes into the kitchen where Rain is.

March and Tilt stand in the hallway. Suddenly, March FARTS. Tilt's hair blows forward. He turns around.

TILT (CONT'D)
(coldly)
You intellectual charlatan.

March looks puzzled. He FARTS again, then again, then again. As he does, he tilts forward, back, like a deflating doll. The last FART topples him out of frame.

INT. CUPRIO'S WAREHOUSE - AFTERNOON

Cuprio and his men are eating Chinese food. Cuprio has a thought. A small one.

CUPRIO
I've been thinking...this kid...and
Cully...We better get some extra
muscle of our own.

MAGS
We got Lakude.

CUPRIO
Fuck that old man. No, I've a strange
feeling...Right here in the pit of
my gut.

DERISTA
Keep eating, maybe it will go away.

CUPRIO
Things might get bad. Real bad. No,
we're going to need somebody who's
ruthless. An unfeeling
abr-harveng-binging-Guy of death. A
mass-murdering fiend who, if left to
his own perverted will, would
extinguish all life as we know it on
this planet: plant, mammal, mineral.

For such devastation, there is only one name that dared be uttered by mortal men.

CUPRIO (CONT'D)
Get Syd.

MAGS
Can't. He quit.

CUPRIO
What? Why?

MAGS
He got religion.

CUPRIO
Religion?

MAGS
Yeah, religion. They're like a philosophy. Only with cool hats.

DERISTA
We still have those? Well, did he pick the one with the fat guy?

MAGS
"Fat guy?" Oh, no, that's...um...What's-his-name.

DeRista opens up a fortune cookie. It reads "Buddha disapproves."

DERISTA
"Buddha?"

MAGS
Yeah, the Buddha. Nah, not that one. No, it's the other guy. Walked on water. Invented the oar. What's-his-name? The guy who played Ming the Merciless played him.

FLEET
Ming the what?

MAGS
If you don 't know then shut the fuck up.!

FLEET
(murmurs)
Jesus Christ.

MAGS
That's him. Yeah. He converted to Christianity.

We notice Fleet is still tied to his chair, amused at the conversation.

CUPRIO
Doesn't that mean he's just more bloodthirsty that he was before?

DERISTA

Actually, I think they frown on shit like that. They got amendments. Just like in the Declaration of Independence.

MAGS

"Commandments", you rock.

CUPRIO

How many?

MAGS

I don't know: twenty?

CUPRIO

I think I've heard of those. "Thou shalt kill...people...who covet graves?"

MAGS

Well, I think there's a "fucking better not" in there somewhere.

DERISTA

Isn't there one like "thou shalt not fly?"

CLERQUE

No, it's cutlery. You can't omit cutlery.

Fleet perks up.

CUPRIO

What do you mean "don't kill?" All Christians are homicidal pedophiles, right?

MAGS

Only in the movies, boss. That kind of shit ain't in their book.

CUPRIO

They have a book?

MAGS

It's a brick.

DERISTA

I've seen it. Thing's like this thick and it, like, stops bullets.

CUPRIO

So what's their racket?

CLERQUE

Soup kitchens. Charity. Shit like that.

CUPRIO

Charity?

(beat)

How am I supposed to tell how much money I'm making if I don't have a city full of drunks, crack addicts and whores to compare to?

(beat)

Fuck! Fine. Lakude. Just find Lakude.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - SAGE'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Rain paces. Sage begs an explanation with his stare. It takes a while for Rain to surrender to his silent request.

SAGE

What's going on?

Rain takes a moment to consider whether or not she should tell Sage. She looks away, but from the sly look that comes over her face, we can tell she is not being entirely honest.

RAIN

I shot someone, but not just anyone.

SAGE

The name on the paper.

RAIN

I shot him but I didn't kill him.

SAGE

Why not?

RAIN

It certainly wasn't for a lack of enthusiasm.

SAGE

But you did hit him.

RAIN

In the feet.

SAGE

You mean in the foot?

RAIN
I mean in the feet.

SAGE
Both feet?

Rain nods.

SAGE (CONT'D)
Wow. Two bullets; two hits. That's pretty good.

RAIN
No, one bullet out of nineteen.

SAGE
Nineteen? What the hell were you firing?

RAIN
9mm, I think. I reloaded.

SAGE
Yeah, you're right. That sucks.

RAIN
I was aiming for his heart.
(shrugs)
It's a small target.

SAGE
So you know him.

RAIN
You could say I work for him.

SAGE
Why?

RAIN
Because...
(beat)
I shot him...because... because he...

INT. RAIN'S APARTMENT DAY

FLASHBACK...

We see a romantic, close-up moment between Rain and a her lover, who's face never seems to fall in frame.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - SAGE'S OFFICE - SAME MOMENT

Sage computes her grim expression.

SAGE
Because he shot somebody too.
(beat)
Only he didn't miss.

Rain trembles, but withholds her feelings.

RAIN
No. He did not miss.

SAGE
And now, you want us to kill him.

RAIN
That's what you do isn't it? Life
for a life?

SAGE
And foot for foot.

RAIN
I'm an eyewitness.

SAGE
Do you have a police report?

RAIN
I didn't go to the police.

SAGE
Why not?

RAIN
They have a tendency not to believe
girls in my line of work. It's
complicated.

SAGE
Certainly can be.

Rain is exhausted. She stands there, unable to counter. There is a long silence. Tilt pops in.

LONE
We have a problem.

SAGE
What kind of problem.

LONE

The kind with a name.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - CONFERENCE ROOM - AFTERNOON

All the Revengers are present. Lone is perched atop his rifle, aimed out the window, listening over shoulder.

TILT

Who're we missing? Never mind.

(beat)

About a month ago, a Ms. Sandra Frost, 22, mother of one, was viciously beaten and hospitalized by an "unknown" assailant. Broken arm, dislocated jaw: the works. Police determined someone used her for batting practice but no charges were filed because she couldn't positively ID her attacker.

(beat)

Two weeks later she comes to us, claiming to actually know the name of her attacker. A guy named Lakude, her pimp. So far, everything's on the up and up. This guy is small-time but his rap sheet has half the penal code stapled to it.

(beat)

Anyway, we got his patterns, then tapped Fleet to pay him a visit. Score the even: use him for batting practice with his own bat, which is apparently this Lakude's weapon of choice.

LONE

Some assembly required, bitch.

TILT

Now, here's where it gets Kubrickian. Lakude is old school. Worked for Mercurio Prain in the late 80's and 90's.

Sage suddenly perks up. He starts to softly pad himself down, looking for the piece of paper Rain wrote a name on.

SAGE

The east side Prain?

TILT

Same, as in the.

LONE

I hate the east side.

MARCH

Why do I have a sneaking suspicion we're going to hear the words "U.S. Air Force" before this conversation is over?

No one comprehends March.

TILT

The Prains run our local mob.

MARCH

Shazbot.

Sage find the piece of paper and unfolds it.

TILT

Or "The Outfit" if you follow the new branding strategy. Eventually Mercurio had a falling out with his only son, but got promoted to the east coast when he reached his quota of dead people.

(to Sage)

Lakude now works for his fuck-up son, Cuprio Prain.

Sage reads the name Rain wrote: CUPRIO PRAIN. He gives her a knowing look.

SAGE

Cuprio Prain. What do we know about him?

TILT

On "Moh's Scale of Criminal Hardness" he's like a 2 or 2.5. Maybe 3. You can scratch this guy with a copper penny. Disowned, but by all accounts still dangerous.

LONE

And the girl?

Rain is watching intently.

TILT

Prostitute. Worked for Lakude. Keep up, Lone.

MARCH

Slang. To assassinate. 5 letters.

LONE

"Whack".

MARCH

Has to have five letters.

LONE

"Whack" has five letters, toe baron.

MARCH

(sinks in chair)

Thank you.

Sage stares at Rain.

SAGE

So we got wrapped up in a feud between
a hooker and her piece of trash pimp.

(beat)

And we sent Fleet in-why?

TILT

It looked on the level.

SAGE

As in past tense. Where's Sandra?

TILT

Having her organs weighed. She OD'ed
yesterday.

LONE

Something tells me it's not being
filed as a homicide.

TILT

Of course not. Cops are political
creatures. Word on the street says
it was Lakude.

(beat)

He must have somehow caught Fleet
and went to work on him.

MARCH

What'd they do to him?

TILT

Ever see "The Passion of the Christ?"

MARCH

Yeah.

TILT

Probably that.

SAGE

Call Cube, and tell him I'm going to kick his ass when I see him. This is the kind of mess we don't pay him to keep us out of.

TILT

Maybe he's angling for a raise.

SAGE

So what's the shake?

TILT

Depends on who has Fleet. Word is Cuprio takes his trash to a pig farm third Wednesday of every month. Naturally, that's tomorrow.

(beat)

On the up side, he probably isn't expecting heavy cavalry.

LONE

He might be, as in trap.

Sage stands up and drags his eyes over the features of his fellow Revengers.

SAGE

Who is Cuprio Prain, gentlemen? He's Joe Pesci in Casino; Jeffrey Jones in Ferris Bueller's Day Off; Christopher Lloyd of Star Trek III: The Search for Spock—limited and box sets—Doctor Doom in any given Fantastic Four Anniversary Issue.

(beat)

In short: he's the asshole of the plot. Ergo, we storm the Siege Perilous, once we find it, like a bunch of underpaid UN Peace-keepers, and get our man.

TILT

What's the first move?

SAGE

The goal is find Fleet. Cuprio might have him, He might not. This could just be a pet project for Lakude. We find him, we find Fleet.

LONE

Where is this "Lakude?"

TILT

Nobody knows. Even Cube can't find him.

SAGE

Fleet found him. It can be done.

TILT

Fleet's half bloodhound and Cube only travels in certain circles. But this Lakude...I mean, the man's a ghost.

Sage thinks.

RAIN

Ghosts have a tendency to haunt certain places.

EXT. REVENGERS HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Mirk and Dell sit in the car. Mirk then opens the door and gets out. He stretches, gets back in the car and resumes staring forward.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - SAGE'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Sage gives Tilt an uncomfortable look. Lone eavesdrops. Rain volunteers an option...

RAIN

You aren't looking for Lakude. You'll never find him. You are looking for Pret.

TILT

Pret?

RAIN

Pret. He's Lakude's last loyal lap dog. Gets things for him, girls mostly, sometimes boys. When Lakude takes long walks, only Pret knows where he's going.

TILT

We find Pret we find Lakude.

RAIN

And here I thought he was the smart one.

SAGE

Where is this Pret?

RAIN

He hangs out in a place called The Pocket. It's where he takes his dates, and he only dates the talent. He thinks it's romantic.

LONE

The Pocket?

TILT

I know the place. It's down south side. It's where all the local gangs call truces after they've lost enough guys.

LONE

And different gangs hang out there at different times?

TILT

Yeah, it's like a time-share for mean people. Four city blocks where they don't allow guns. Colloquially referred to as the Switch Yard because of all the damn knives down there. Also known as The Pale.

LONE

The Pale?

TILT

Yeah.

LONE

Pale?

TILT

As in the same.

LONE

As in that's a noun. "Pale" is an adjective.

SAGE

Pale is also a noun. Ever heard of an English Pale?

LONE

No.

SAGE

How about an Irish Pale?

LONE

Uh-uh.

SAGE

See, this is why I lament genius. Mine specifically. If I had an eighth grade education like everybody else, I would be infinitely more complacent, I dare say blissfully unaware of my own dwindling significance in the grand scheme of human affairs, and far less loathing of the general citizenry whom I nonetheless endanger myself to avenge.

TILT

You would not be the heavily armed misanthrope that stands before me.

SAGE

No, I would not.

TILT

You would be March.

SAGE

Yes I would.

TILT

And you could, indeed, after years of failure, finally be able to smell what The Rock was cooking—

RAIN

You better have a plan! There are twenty guys in that building at any given time.

SAGE

Would it be better to actually say that "discretion is the better part of valor," or just go for the oblique reference?

TILT
You hurt my brain.

SAGE
Twenty guys, huh. We'll send The
Hands.

RAIN
Scribble boy? Give me a break!

SAGE
When you need to kick entire zip
codes full of ass, go with The Hands.

TILT
So, let me get this straight: we're
going to send The Hands down to The
Pocket also known as "The Switch
Yard", also known as "The Pale" in
order to find this guy Pret, who can
tell us where to find his boss Lakude,
who in turn will tell us where to
find his boss Cuprio, so we then can
go find Fleet.

SAGE
Nice chain.

LONE
Good construction.

TILT
Thanks.

SAGE
So when will he be there, Rain?

RAIN
Oh, I matter again?

SAGE
Time.

RAIN
Midnight.

SAGE
You are getting what you want, Rain.
Until we find out what you're really
up to.

(MORE)

Rain gives Sage a cold look and leaves. The other Revengers slowly trickle out of the room. Only Sage and Tilt are left.

SAGE (CONT'D)

So what was The Rock cooking?

TILT

Truffles.
(beat)
Truffles.

The young men nod.

INT. THE POCKET - BEDROOM - EVENING

Pret opens the door and steps into his room to find fifteen guys laid out on the floor and a very scared hooker on the bed.

PRET

Paris, my little Estonian cuddle
monkey?

PARIS (teen-black, slutty) looks past him to The Hands, who is suddenly behind the informant.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - SAGE'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Sage is on a cell phone. He scribbles down something on paper.

SAGE

Good work, Hands. Yeah, I got it.

Sage hands the paper to Tilt

LONE

So where's Lakude?

Tilt hands the paper to Lone who inspects the address.

TILT

Make that happen.

Lone smiles.

EXT. THE CITY - AFTERNOON

Two Revengers, SPAR (late teens-white, lanky) and RENT (late teens-stocky) key a car to the exact degree the owner had keyed his ex-girlfriend.

SPAR

Less apex. No like this!
(MORE)

SPAR (CONT'D)

Asymptotic to the trim line. What are you epileptic? This looks like a seismograph.

RENT

I can key a fucking car!

SPAR's cell phone RINGS. He picks it up.

LONE (V.O.)

Spar. Rent. Wake up.

SPAR

Lone.

LONE (V.O.)

We want you two to get some drive thru.

SPAR

Who?

LONE (V.O.)

Guy's name is Lakude. Clear your evening. You're going to bag scab lord, bring him to the Fortress of Solitude. We're going to play Who's Got Talent.

SPAR

Do-able. Anything else?

Tilt hands the phone to March.

MARCH

Alright: we need four cheeseburgers...

INT. CUPRIO'S WAREHOUSE - AFTERNOON

Mags is talking to an unknown caller about the day's events.

MAGS

You know how he gets when he's really upset but having too much fun at the same time? Yeah, well, that's him. No, not yet. His feet, what do you think?

(listens)

Nah, they ain't getting any better. Just keeps going on about people getting shot in the head. And that

(MORE)

MAGS (CONT'D)

comic book guy with the ring. Yeah,
Green Lantern.

(listens)

Some kid. Dunno. Nobody knows. Nah,
it ain't Cully. Thought it was Cully,
but it ain't. No, Lakude skipped out
this morning. Dunno. Pret would know.

(listens)

No girl, ain't time for that yet.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - THE SHRINE - AFTERNOON

On the other side of the phone is the back of a beautiful
girl. We pan around the figure: it's Rain.

MAGS (V.O.)

Give it some time, why you want to
know?

RAIN

I was thinking about maybe dropping
by later.

MAGS (V.O.)

He ain't happy, honey. Maybe you
should bring some friends.

RAIN

I think I will.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - AFTERNOON

A Camaro pulls up with duct tape that conceals the bullet
holes. Spar and Rent all get out carrying drive-thru orders.
There is a brief exchange of orders as Tilt approaches.
EXCHANGES are thrown. Rent opens the trunk and see a very
irritable, bound, gagged and beaten up Mr. Lakude.

RENT

One scab lord.

LONE

Would you look at that trunk space?

MARCH

Where's my fries?

Rain watches as The Revengers pull Lakude out of the car,
visibly surprised by Lakude's capture.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - SAGE'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Sage is field stripping an M-16. Tilt is looking out a window.

TILT

Lakude's here.

(checks watch)

About time. I think we're getting into an issue of scale here, Sage.

SAGE

It was inevitable. Like Amy Winehouse.

TILT

We cap Cuprio, and I'm pretty sure Mercurio is gonna take the first flight down here himself.

SAGE

Exhilarating prospect, isn't it?

TILT

He'll bring friends.

SAGE

Not nearly enough.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - ROUGH ROOM - AFTERNOON

Rain opens the door a crack. From her P.O.V. we see Lakude tied to the chair.

TILT (V.O.)

What about Rain? You tuck Cuprio into a dirt nap, she just might shack up with the next guy. Maybe we better treat her nice.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - SAGE'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Sage snaps a part on the rifle into place.

SAGE

You can't step in the same river twice, Tilt.

TILT

No, but you can step in the same shit twice.

SAGE

If you're tired of listening to Limp Biskit, you shoot Fred Durst in the face. If Sam, John and DJ Lethal keep playing, you just reload. Eventually Wes will get the point.
(beat)
Jacksonville won't mind.

TILT

Sage...

Tilt is obviously trying to get through to Sage. He collects himself and continues but March bursts into the doorway. We hear the CRACKLING OF FLAME and the BURNING OF HUMAN FLESH AND BONE in the background.

MARCH

Hey guys, the new flame thrower works great. Um, where's the fire extinguisher?

SOMEBODY BURNING (V.O.)

Oh, The Humanity!

Tilt irreverently slams the door in his face and continues.

TILT

Has it occurred to you this could be a setup?

Tilt looks at his crossword.

SAGE

It is a setup, the only question is "who's?"

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - ROUGH ROOM - AFTERNOON

Lakude notices Rain through the sliver of the door. A commotion makes her close the door.

TILT (V.O.)

She's playing us like a "small guitar-like musical instrument."

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - SAGE'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Sage finishes assembling the rifle.

SAGE

"Fiddle."

TILT
Seven Letters.

SAGE
"Ukulele"
(beat)
Yes, but unfortunately, we both like
the tune.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - CONFERENCE ROOM - AFTERNOON

We see Spar and Rent walk into the living room where Brand is putting on his furry camouflage suit.

SPAR
So, how's it feel?

BRAND
How does what feel?

RENT
Having some girl wear your balls for
earrings.

BRAND
Fuck off! Alright, how do I look?

SPAR
Like a short, bitch-slapped yeti.

RENT
It wasn't that chick we saw in the
kitchen was it?

BRAND
She's tougher than she looks.

SPAR
Unlike you.

Brand darts into a corner of the room.

BRAND
Can you see me?

SPAR
(dryly)
Yeah.

Brand runs into another corner, tries to conceal himself.

BRAND
How about now?

SPAR

(dryly)

Yeah.

Rent nods at Spar as Rain walks into an adjacent room. They decide to confront the shapely stranger.

BRAND

(to nobody)

How about now?

SPAR (V.O.)

Yeah.

Rain walks the room and props herself up against the wall and lights up a cigarette. Spar and Rent walk in and evaluate her. Rain is impenetrable.

SPAR (CONT'D)

You don't look so tough to me.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - SAGE'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

TILT

I got to tell you Sage, there's not a lot of people who would consider this a sane course of action.

SAGE

"So often we find that only one individual, resolved to truth, can deny what the many have wrongly concluded. And to explore an idea that nobody else has even bothered to consider is half-way to knowledge."

TILT

Leave Voltaire alone and let dead philosophers lie.

SAGE

As for you second point: "Let us also consider that it is a heroic obedience to obey the laws of Truth simply because they are Truth's laws, and not because It has promised to reward those who obey them, now or hereafter; to obey them even though there be an entire despair of future recompense, and uncertainty respecting a temporal one."

Tilt sighs. He's getting flustered.

TILT

The hell did you just say?

(beat)

Okay, here's the short-hand: I like Fleet, but we may have only his dead body to gain, and everyone else's life to lose. These guys are hookers and hit men. Honestly, are you willing to trust even one of them, and go to war with the rest of them for just one man?

(beat)

Even Fleet?

Sage is genuinely hurt Tilt has not realized the depth of his monastic dedication.

SAGE

Always.

TILT

Well if you're so bright, why does it seem like we're always in the dark?

Sage leans back and points to a scribbled phrase on his grease board. It reads: "Olbers Paradox." Tilt is exhausted of counterpoint.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - CONFERENCE ROOM - AFTERNOON

We see Spar crying on Rent's shoulder.

RENT

You cold-hearted bitch!

Rain tastes the air and takes another hit off her cigarette.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - SAGE'S OFFICE- AFTERNOON

TILT

Sage, it isn't like we're ignoring people screaming for justice or anything. I mean, they're all dead. And the girl? She's is a prostitute. So, up here, right now they have to know...

SAGE

You mean *you* have to know.

TILT

Yeah. I have to know. Why are you doing this?

SAGE

There was a case, an old case, about this guy who killed his own brother, which, in and of itself is not remarkable. But what I did find remarkable about this particular case was neither the man nor the parents sought to bring the matter to justice.

TILT

Is this the one with the guy with the parrot and the panty-hose fetish?

SAGE

No, before that.

TILT

I don't remember this. What happened?

SAGE

The man was finally confronted by a third party concerning the murder.

TILT

What'd the third party say?

SAGE

The third party said: "What have you done, Cain? The blood of your brother, Abel, whom you have slain, cries up to me from the ground."

Tilt hardens, realizing he's been tricked into another of Sage's proverbs.

TILT

What's the point?

SAGE

Sometimes, Tilt, it's the blood that screams.

(beat)

Bring Rain to the Rough Room.

Tilt reluctantly nods. Whether he agrees or not he knows there is no way of changing Sage's mind once it has been set. At the door, he turns back.

TILT

And exactly when, Sage, do we beat our swords into plowshares?

SAGE

As soon as farm tools come with stylish cowhide leather holsters and scope guards.

(beat)

And Tilt, it's Lessing. Voltaire was pompous, soul-bashing zealot.

TILT

Yeah, I know the kind.

Sage considers the barb as he sets down the M-16. He starts to put on a pair of headphones, but stands instead. The First Revenger walks over to a window and looks out. From the odd fit of the look of perplexity on his face, we can tell Tilt's words have sunk very deeply. Sage takes a deep breath and looks down, remembering something he read very long ago. The words bring him comfort.

SAGE

"Until that hour, a revelation had guided their reason..."

(beat)

But now, all at once, a reason gave clarity to their revelation."

Sage sees Mirk and Dell still sitting in the car.

EXT. REVENGERS HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Mirk checks his watch.

MIRK

You know, we're out of gas and out of bullets.

DELL

Yeah.

MIRK

Maybe we should call for back-up.

DELL

We could do that.

MIRK

Who should we call?

Dell thinks a moment.

DELL
Call Cuprio.

Mirk goes to dial the phone RINGS only once then dies.

MIRK
You're not going to believe this.

INT. CUPRIO'S WAREHOUSE - AFTERNOON

DeRista holds his cell phone, looks over at Mags.

MAGS
Well? Who was it?

DERISTA
Dunno. They hung up.

Mags just sighs and looks back at Fleet.

FLEET
Not a first round draft pick I gather.

Mags chuckles, sighs, checks his watch.

MAGS
So I guess your friends are late.

FLEET
Friends?

MAGS
The ones that must be looking for you. You're too calm not to be expecting back-up. That's why we've being a loud kind of quiet about this little slumber party. Hell, they might be outside right now.
(beat)

Watching. Waiting. Wondering if they can take a warehouse full of twenty guys. Which tells me, they probably don't have warrants. And in turn, that you ain't nobody that somebody else is going to miss.

Fleet just looks around as DeRista hangs the phone up.

Mags chuckles.

MAGS (CONT'D)
I think the word you are looking for is "fucked."

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - CONFERENCE ROOM - AFTERNOON

Sage walks towards the Rough Room, is joined by Tilt.

SAGE
Hey, Gamma Fetus.

TILT
Hey, Space Ghost. I just got some good news, and I just got some bad news.

SAGE
A veritable Gordian Knot of expectation. The good?

TILT
Well, I forgot to mention earlier that the other day while I was out vandalizing various places of worship in my anatomically correct rubber Sage suit, I picked up the latest issue of *Maxim*.
(supremely reverent)
Salma: as in Hayek.

SAGE
Salma: as in Hayek!

TILT
I'd like to show her the *Hayek Maneuver*.

Both men stand there in silent worship of Salma Hayek.

SAGE
The bad?

TILT
Our paper doll

SAGE
Rain.

TILT
Right, Rain. Well, Cube found some dirt on her. She ain't no hooker. Ready?

SAGE
Hit me.

TILT

Interesting choice of words. Mob princess: she's Cuprio's sister.

SAGE

(flat)

That's impossible. That would mean her name is *Rain Prain*. You don't do that to somebody.

TILT

That's why they're the mob.

Sage begs Tilt with a harsh look. Tilt doesn't budge, silently confirms the claim. Sage is displeased.

SAGE

This is why I listen to Johnny Cash.

Both Sage and Tilt pause a moment, lower their heads and cross themselves in honor of the Late Man in Black.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - ROUGH ROOM - AFTERNOON

Everyone enters the Rough Room. There is a look of recognition on Lakude's face—he knows Rain, and she knows him. Without saying a word, Sage puts on some headphones and starts listening to something remarkably upbeat. Lakude blows him a kiss and chuckles.

SPAR

Not a word. Even Hands can't crack him; but in Hands' defense, we kept everything PG-13.

LONE

Was he armed?

Rent shows Sage a baseball bat.

RENT

Adirondack.

Lakude smiles broadly. Sage plants a chair in front of the thug. He extends his hand and Lone gives him a box of cigarettes and a lighter. Listening to his music, Sage extends the pack to the bound Lakude. The thug smiles—they can't crack him so it must be negotiation time: *fucking lightweights*.

Lakude shrugs his shoulders and gives Sage a "what the hell" look. The lead Revenger slips a cigarette into Lakude's lips and lights him up. Cuprio's lieutenant has apparently been

in this very position before because he enjoys the cigarette without his hands. Sage places a tiny hourglass on the table and pulls out a Rubik's cube. Lakude notices but pays no attention to it. It's odd, but so is plaid. Lakude smokes and Sage works the cube, listening to his MUSIC. The Revengers exchange glances: *what is Sage's play?*

LAKUDE

You must be the new kids on the block
(beat)
You see, I don't know you, and I
know every-body. But still, if I had
to guess, I'd say you're about one
pair of balls short.

Sage is unflappable.

SAGE

So you like bats.

Lakude evaluates the young man before him, not entirely sure what to make of him. He looks back at the bat, then to the circle of young men around him.

LAKUDE

Yeah.
(beat)
She's simple. No moving parts. No
scopes. No straps. Just wood. Oldest
friend man ever had. But you know
what the best thing about her is?

Sage knows the source of Lakude's preference.

SAGE

She's not a cheap date.

The old man is impressed.

LAKUDE

Sharp kid. That's right. She ain't.
You take this girl to a dance and
you got to lead all night. The lady
never lets you cheat, and she never
goes dutch.

SAGE

Anything else?

Lakude, having picked his handcuffs, tosses them to Sage and straightens his jacket. *It might be time to kick some ass.*

LAKUDE
Yeah. Want a job?

SAGE
Let me think about it.

DING! A distant timer goes off.

LAKUDE
Oh, is the popcorn ready?

SAGE
Coincidentally, yes.

Sage stands up, grabs Lakude's bat from Rent, and smashes the hit man in the face with his own weapon—HARD. Lakude's cell phone slides out of his pocket and into a dark corner. How the old man isn't killed outright is a testament to the thug's hardness.

RENT
Fuck!

SPAR
Oh, shit! Bat-a-gram!

A liberal plume of blood arcs into the air. The Revengers back away from their leader. The First Revenger casually hands the bat to a very stunned Lone, and calmly hoists Lakude back into the chair.

Lakude is beyond dazed. He is bleeding from every place he can on his left side: eyes, ear, mouth, nose. His face is clearly disfigured by the hit. Lakude is having a hard time BREATHING. He is jerking as minor tremors flirt with him. SNORTING, Lakude spills teeth out. Sage puts the cigarette back in his mouth as March walks in with some popcorn.

SAGE
Who told you you could live among
civilized people?

Lakude spits up blood.

SAGE (CONT'D)
Who told you that I wouldn't notice?

LAKUDE
Cuprio!

SAGE
Ah, Cuprio. The very name I didn't
ask for.

Lakude has regained some equilibrium, but he is still visibly shaken and gravely injured.

LAKUDE
...no idea who I am.

SAGE
I know that you are not special. I know that you are not unique. And that it's time someone told you who you really are: a dumb, immoral clone of the last jackass who couldn't figure it out either.

LAKUDE
You're going to die, kid. I promise you!

SAGE
On a brighter day and in a better world. Probably listening to Blue Oyster Cult.

LAKUDE
Kill me and you become just like me!

All the Revengers sigh loudly and roll their eyes.

SAGE
Time?

LONE
(checks stop watch)
Fifty-nine seconds.

SAGE
My fellow Revengers, the punctuality of frail sophistry.

LAKUDE
What?

SAGE
What am I talking about?
(beat)
That on or about one minute into this conversation you would regurgitate some absurd Hollywood morality sound bite.
(beat)
You should not learn your truths from Mtv. It's a forgone conclusion, they'll get you killed.

LAKUDE

(labored)

You had better fucking kill me! You
had better fucking kill me! I am
made! You hear me, bitch? I am made!

Sage tosses the bat to March who makes no effort to catch it: he's eating popcorn. The bat CLATTERS to the ground. Sage pulls his 9mm.

SAGE

So's my bed.

Sage executes Lakude—a brain-spraying single shot to the forehead. Rain flinches, smiles nervously at the LOUD GUNSHOT. Sage looks back at his fellow Revengers, soliciting their opinion.

SAGE (CONT'D)

Too Joe Esterhaus?

The Revengers MUMBLE a bit as Twelve glides in and hands a piece of paper to Sage.

SAGE (CONT'D)

(reads paper)

Riverside district. Thanks Twelve.

Twelve dollies away. Almost a glide, like Dracula.

SAGE (CONT'D)

He casts a shadow, right?

TILT

Everybody clear the bridge. Nothing
to see here.

The Revengers all look at each other. They begin to file into the next room as Tilt waves them out like traffic cop managing a car wreck. Rain is not sure what is going to happen next. Her apprehension is obvious. Tilt looks back at all the brain matter on the wall.

TILT (CONT'D)

Jesus Christ.

SAGE

Close. His name was Lakude. No
resurrection scheduled.

(MORE)

Sage plants another chair in the same place behind Rain, on whom his hard stare comes to rest.

SAGE (CONT'D)

But then again, you knew his name.
Didn't you? Why don't you sit down.

Sage roughly shoves Rain into the chair. She flares angry.

TILT

(to Rain as he exits)

Congratulations. You've advanced to
the lightning round.

Sage watches Tilt leave and shut the door.

SAGE

Unlike Lakude's toy, my patience
does have lots of moving parts, Rain.
So unless you want the only evidence
of your ever being here to be the
other spent shell casing on the floor,
I suggest you grasp the fact that
you are exactly one wrong answer
away from an encore.

Sage COCKS his 9mm and turns the hourglass over. It's obvious
Rain has only one chance.

RAIN

Or what? You'll drop another
ideological depth charge on me?

SAGE

You're too shallow for them to be of
any real use in this conversation.
Now, talk.

Rain doesn't even flinch. That is, until Sage puts his gun
in her face.

SAGE (CONT'D)

Exclamation point.

RAIN

My name is Rain Prain;
I am the daughter of Mercurio Prain.
I am The sister of Cuprio Prain;
Lakude isn't my pimp;
I'm not a hooker;
I want my brother dead;
And he's holding your man.

SAGE

I know; I know; I know; I know; I
don't believe you; Why? And where?

RAIN

That's not my problem. Why do you care? And probably at his warehouse.

SAGE

Everything in this room is your problem. And because I don't like people having better reasons than me.

RAIN

What do you want to hear?

SAGE

Gospel.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - BACK YARD - AFTERNOON

The Hands, Tilt and Lone watch the silent conversation between Sage and Rain through a window. Between Rain's sudden animation and Sage's tense posture, The Revengers know something terrible is being confessed. Tilt looks to The Hands who is reading Sage's and Rain's lips.

LONE

Excommunicated like Albigensians again.

TILT

Huguenots in our own house. How's Brand?

LONE

He's regained the use of his legs. And he's forming complete sentences again, so that's a plus.

(beat)

Damn, that is one beautiful woman. Wonder what you got to bring on a date to impress somebody like that.

TILT

Your financial statement.

(beat)

When you're that pretty it's all about economics.

LONE

What are you saying: it's love by numbers?

TILT

I am saying that when it comes to the cult of the beautiful, you only get what you can afford. So finance wisely, and get a good interest rate.

Lone nods.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - ROUGH ROOM - AFTERNOON

SAGE

So you set up John Phillip Law as a test, and followed March back here last night. Fine. I can live with that. But that doesn't explain how you found out about us in the first place.

Rain reaches into her bag and pulls out a bound manuscript and tosses it on Sage's desk. The work is entitled: THE SYMMETRY OF MECHANICAL TRUTHS.

RAIN

It was all explained in your little manifesto there. You use too much Latin, anybody ever tell you that?

Sage begs her with a look.

RAIN (CONT'D)

It belongs to your friend, Fleet.

INT. LAKUDE'S HOUSE - DAY

FLASHBACK...

We see Fleet BREAKING into Lakude's apartment with a bat. Lakude is surprised. A HOOKER SCREAMS. A fight ensues. In the end Fleet is THRASHING and KICKING, being manhandled out of Lakude's apartment by five of Lakude's men.

RAIN (V.O.)

I have no idea how he managed to find Lakude, but I found it in the back of his car three days ago. The night after you sent him to visit Lakude

(beat)

If that girl hadn't pulled a gun on him, your friend might have gotten away with it. It took five men to drag him out of that house.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - ROUGH ROOM - AFTERNOON

SAGE
He's enthusiastic.

RAIN
Evidently.

SAGE
Wait—the night after? Why did you go
back?

Rain thinks a moment.

RAIN
Fleet wasn't the only one supposed
to visit Lakude that night.

SAGE
You hired somebody else, didn't you?

RAIN
The deal was arranged by phone.

INT. RAIN'S APARTMENT - DAY

FLASHBACK...

We see Rain on the phone. She is nervous.

INT. REVENGERS - ROUGH ROOM - EVENING

RAIN
I've never seen his face. So
naturally, when your friend showed
up...

SAGE
You mistook our man as the man you
hired. That doesn't explain why you
went back the next morning.

INT. RAIN'S APARTMENT - DAY

FLASHBACK...

We see Rain on the phone. We watch the young woman's face
ashen.

RAIN (V.O.)
Sunday. I learned the man Lakude
captured was not the man I had hired
(MORE)

RAIN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
to kill him. The man I had hired
never showed up.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - ROUGH ROOM - EVENING

SAGE
So let me get this straight:
(beat)
You hired somebody to whack Lakude.
The hit was set for Saturday. Your
man doesn't show up, but ours does.
You don't know the difference and
the whole thing goes to hell. Then,
Sunday, you find out my guy isn't
your guy and you go back to find...?

RAIN
Anything. *Something.*

SAGE
And you find Fleet's car.

RAIN
And everything inside it.

SAGE
What I don't understand yet, is *why*?
You told me you wanted your brother
Cuprio dead, not Lakude. Why put a
hit on Lakude, and not your brother?
It wasn't Lakude's name you wrote
down, but Cuprio's.

(beat)
Let me guess: Friday.

RAIN
There's a man called Cully.

INT. CULLY'S WAREHOUSE - DAY

FLASHBACK...

We see CULLY (30's-black, tall, brutal) surrounded by his
African-American crew, watching Rain as she presents her
case to him. Cully is glacial.

RAIN (V.O.)
He's the competition, runs the north
side. Friday, I arranged a meeting
with him night to ask for his help.

SAGE (V.O.)
To kill your brother.

RAIN (V.O.)
He refused.

We see Cully shake his head.

CLOSE-UP: CULLY'S MOUTH.

Cully declines: "No."

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - ROUGH ROOM - EVENING

SAGE
Why?

RAIN
My father is a very dangerous man.
You don't have to love someone to
justify avenging them. Cully knew
that if he even touched Cuprio, he'd
have to answer to my father for it.
Even Cully won't cross my father. So
he gave me a name.

SAGE
Who's name?

RAIN
The name of an assassin. A man of
absolutely no loyalty, and even less
conscience. A man who would kill
anyone for the right price, regardless
of who's son they were.

SAGE
But why Lakude?

RAIN
Cuprio doesn't know it, but Lakude
is the only reason why he's still
alive. He protects my brother.

SAGE
From who?

RAIN
Everybody.

SAGE
Why?

RAIN

Because my father tells him to, and
Lakude does what my father says.

SAGE

So Cully believed if Lakude got taken
out, it wouldn't be long before
somebody took out Cuprio.

Rain nods.

INT. CULLY'S WAREHOUSE - DAY

FLASHBACK...

We see Cully write a name down on a piece of paper. He hands
it to Rain, who looks at it.

CLOSE-UP: THE PIECE OF PAPER

We see the name "SYD" on it.

SAGE (V.O.)

Who did Cully refer you to?

RAIN (V.O.)

A monster called Syd.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - ROUGH ROOM - EVENING

SAGE

What happened?

RAIN

No one's really sure. Word is Syd
had an "experience," or something.

INT. SYD'S HOUSE - NIGHT

FLASHBACK...

We see SYD (age unknown—white, hulking, bestial) huddled
over a grinding wheel. He is SHARPENING a blood-smattered
meat cleaver against the wheel. He is a lice-infested mop of
matted hair and a knotty cloak of muscle. Suddenly a
brilliant, divine spotlight illuminates the room.

A hand leaps into view from off frame, pointing angrily at
Syd. The scarred hand has a nail mark through it. It is the
hand of an irritable and resurrected CARPENTER.

SYD

JESUS!

JESUS CHRIST

EXACTLY!

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - ROUGH ROOM - EVENING

SAGE

So when during all of this did you shoot Cuprio? Before or after?

RAIN

Um, Before.

(beat)

Yeah. It was before.

INT. CUPRIO'S WAREHOUSE - DAY

FLASHBACK...

Cuprio and his men MUSE around a television set. We hear a THUD. The men ignore it. Another THUD. Still no response. A third THUD. The men perk up. Our view dollies towards the nearest door. We see the latch thrown, the knob turn, and Rain bursts in, 9mm raised.

She pulls the trigger. Nothing.

Cuprio's men all look at each other: what is the boss' little sister trying to do?

Rain squeezes again. Nothing. Lakude, standing in the corner, gives the fatal counsel.

LAKUDE

(dryly)

Safety.

Rain throws the safety and open fires, sprays the room with bullets. Everyone ducks and flies for cover. A bullet TEARS threw Cuprio's crossed legs, EXPLODES both feet. The mobling SCREAMS and topples back out of his chair, out of frame. By the time she gets to Lakude she's out of bullets. Lakude's SIGHS—he could have checked out in style.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - ROUGH ROOM - EVENING

There is a long pause before Sage asks the inevitable question.

SAGE

(softly)

Rain, who did your brother kill?

INT. RAIN'S APARTMENT - DAY

FLASHBACK...

Rain enjoys the warm embrace of her lover. His name is unimportant. His accomplishments unremembered. In the simplest of terms, we see a man loving a woman unconditionally.

They LAUGH and GIGGLE, paw and nuzzle. She is happy. Happier than she has ever been. We see a figure BURST through the door. We don't see his face. There is a glint of a gun barrel. A shadow passes over the lovers. Confusion. A flash of light.

The lover crumples. Rain SCREAMS. We move back to the figure and up.

It's Cuprio.

Rain quietly produces a video tape and places it on the table.

EXT. REVENGERS HOUSE - BACK YARD - EVENING

LONE

They've been in there quite a while.
What do you think she's telling him.

TILT

Some perfectly rehearsed confession,
no doubt. Hands, What are they saying?

LONE

If Sage catches you two he'll shit
the Rock Of Gibraltar: apes and all.
(beat)
I'm not kidding, you it'll be your
ass.

TILT

Well, seeing it's been pre-chewed,
it should go down smooth.

The Hands just shakes his head. It is too terrible to relate. Lone watches Rain break down, which doesn't make any sense to him. Tilt knows the truth of the young woman's identity, but he has not shared it. Searching for his own answers, Lone begins to put it all together.

LONE

Why is she crying over a drug lord?
(beat)
Why is a hooker crying over a drug
lord?

(MORE)

LONE (CONT'D)

(beat)

Unless he's not a drug lord. He is
a drug lord.

(beat)

She's not a hooker.

(beat)

She's his *sister*.

(beat)

Fuck.

TILT

(trance)

Somewhere between the Jerry Springer
Show and the Twilight Zone lies this
shipwreck moment.

(beat)

This is going to be a mess. Come
on...

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - CONFERENCE ROOM - EVENING

Sage walks exits the Rough Room, holding a video cassette,
his 9mm in his belt. Rain stays behind, wipes away her tears.

TILT

Well?

SAGE

John Phillip Law was an audition.

TILT

And everything else?

SAGE

A midnight stroll in a torture garden.
Can I borrow you for a moment?

Tilt follows Sage back into the conference room as Rain
leaves. She walks out and is met by Lone, who just stares at
her.

SAGE (CONT'D)

How's morale?

TILT

Oh, they're up for it, Sage. They're
always up for it

SAGE

But you still have doubts.

TILT

I still have doubts. And I am sure
The Hands will too. You don't just
phone in that much kung-fu fury. The
Hands is not a pizza.

SAGE

Fortunately, our paper doll appears
to have anticipated the skeptical
mortar out of which we've built our
ideological air castle.

TILT

It's a one-room pad, Sage, and you
built it. The rest of us are just
out on the lawn getting our kicks
watching you play with the drawbridge.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - VIDEO ROOM - DAY

We do not see what is on the tape, but we can HEAR it. MEN
MOANING. WOMEN SCREAMING. BONES BREAKING. We watch the
expressions on Tilt and The Hands' faces harden. Both men
are quietly stunned silent by the brutality they watch.
There's lots of tape. Eventually, Sage collects his thoughts
and feelings, finally summarizing:

SAGE

(concludes)

I've been thinking...

(beat)

No more monsters.

TILT

(agrees)

No more monsters.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - PLANNING ROOM - EVENING

Sage and Tilt enters the planning room, as Lone is reviewing
the map. On their faces, a rare unanimity: *they're ready to
kick some ass*. Brand sways unevenly in the corner, heavily
bandaged.

LONE

Let's do this. Where's Fleet?

Rain arrives.

RAIN

Riverside District. You'll find your
friend there.

LONE

We better find all of him there.

SAGE

Well, we're four for four.

MARCH

Riverside district? Riverside
District?

(fingersnap)

That's probably near the, uh, the,
uh-

LONE

(raises hand)

The river. Permission to kill The
Prophet of the Obvious here.

SAGE

Did you have a chance to review the
plans?

TILT

(over map)

Frantically defended. Easily taken.

SAGE

Prain's own little Poland. What's
your analysis?

March confuses "your analysis" for "urinalysis."

MARCH

The chemical study of urine.

LONE

(to March)

No, seriously: why are you a quantum
ass-face?

TILT

We can get in here and here.

SAGE

Nice. Straight and serious. Where'd
you dream that up?

TILT

A little hunch back in the garage.

SAGE

There's a hunchback in the garage?

TILT

Yeah, there's a hunchback in the garage. Tired?

Sage shakes off his fatigue, continues.

SAGE

Okay, guys. Here's the deal. According to the late Mr. Lakude, Brand, Twelve, Rain, and Entertainment Tonight, Fleet is being held—and we're pretty sure about this—at Cuprio's warehouse down in the Riverside District.

(beat)

Tilt, Lone, and Yours Truly will come in from the west, through the adjacent office building. March, you will be ten feet behind us.

MARCH

Bringing up the rear?

SAGE

No. So my head doesn't explode. Brand, once you stop bleeding, I want you to recon the warehouse and set up a sniper position across the street.

(beat)

Hands, you come in from the back. You can "Bruce" anybody back there, but you have to cut the power to the main warehouse no later than 9:25. They may be expecting somebody to show up they just don't know who, how many, or when. So we're hitting them at 9:30 p.m. I figure that way we can be back here by 11:00 p.m. in time for pizza and the *Barnaby Jones* marathon. So, saddle up.

RAIN

What about me?

SAGE

You are the only person in this room who can walk towards this warehouse without being shot. So you are going to give the place a walk-through and let us know how many bullet bags are on the inside.

RAIN

So I'm a snitch.

SAGE
We prefer "insincerely aligned."

Almost frightened by Sage's spin doctoring, Rain offers another round.

RAIN
And betrayal?

SAGE
"Strategic divestiture of non-permanent loyalties."

Rain leaves.

TILT
Very William Jefferson.

SAGE
Eight years worth. Everybody suit up.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - GARAGE - EVENING

The Revengers prepare their weapons and their gear. In their black strike suits, sleek and deadly, they stand like a quintet of brooding war angels.

There is a long pause.

LONE
(whispers)
How long do we stand here posing?

Tilt looks at Sage who is in a state of Zen totally lost in his melodramatic pose.

TILT
(whispers)
Give it another five minutes.

INT. CUPRIO'S WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Cuprio, on crutches, enters room where Fleet sits beaten, dials the phone. It RINGS, goes to MUFFLED VOICE MAIL MESSAGE. We hear DISCO.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - ROUGH ROOM - NIGHT

Lakude's phone RINGS. The Caller ID shows "Cuprio Prain." We pan slowly across the desk to Sage, who is watching the call go to voice mail.

We slowly dolly around Lakude's cold body as Prain's anger gets shunted to voice mail.

CUPRIO PRAIN (V.O.)

Lakude, you faggot, where the hell are you? Take your dick out of whatever teen crack whore is sucking you and answer your fucking phone! Or I swear by whatever slut this prick calls his mother, you are going to look worse than he does!

INT. CUPRIO'S WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Cuprio hangs up and turns back to Fleet. He picks up the camera and aims it at the bound man. Fleet's chuckle infuriates Cuprio, who turns cold...

CUPRIO PRAIN

Don't worry, bitch, I've not forgotten you. You have no idea how boring this job gets. I've got to say, you're the most fun we've had in a long fucking time. That's why we're taking it nice and slow. No rush—look up. But to be honest, I'm beginning to get bored. So I think as soon as DeRista here runs out of knuckles, we're going to break out the tool box and start introducing you to things that plug into walls.

(beat)

Make an E-Hollywood Special that screams. War crime stuff.

DeRista comes in and WHISPERS something in Cuprio's ear. Whatever it is it sets the minor mob boss totally off.

CUPRIO PRAIN (CONT'D)

What—here?

DeRista points off camera.

CUPRIO PRAIN (CONT'D)

What did I tell you? What did I tell you?

DERISTA

Nobody gets in.

CUPRIO PRAIN

Except?

FLEET

Lakude.

CUPRIO PRAIN

And it's not Lakude, is it?

DeRista shakes his head negatively. Cuprio points to Fleet.

CUPRIO PRAIN (CONT'D)

I want you all to take a long, hard look at this guy because if you dumb, muppet-brained fucks do not stop thinking for yourselves, and start doing exactly what I tell you, we're going to have a look-like contest!

(beat)

And you know what the winner gets?

(beat)

To die still looking like a mother-fucking human being, and not the trash bags full of pre-chewed dog meat the rest of you faggots are going to look like!

(beat)

We clear? Fuck!

Everyone nods weakly. Fleet CHUCKLES.

CUPRIO PRAIN (CONT'D)

And you! You shut up, you...you...you shit. You... shit! You piece of shit!

FLEET

How's that new material working out for you, Rainbow?

CUPRIO PRAIN

Keep hitting him until looks like Sandra Bernhard and Keith Richards' kid. Rest of you—MOVE!

Cuprio limps slowly—amusingly slowly—from the room. DeRista steps up to Fleet again. Mags crushes out his cigarette.

MAGS

You better get comfortable. This going to take a while.

FLEET

One more dance, but then I have to go.

EXT. CUPRIO'S WAREHOUSE - BACK ALLEY - NIGHT

The Hands moves into position, spies power box to the main warehouse. However, between his position and the warehouse are FIVE THUGS. The Hands considers his next move as the men compare firearms.

INT. THE REVENGERS VAN - NIGHT

Sage and Rain are in the front seats looking at the warehouse.

RAIN
Cuprio's office is near the back.

SAGE
Just the four exits.

RAIN
Just the four exits.

SAGE
I think it is important at the point
to stress how important it is that
we find Fleet alive and well.

RAIN
And if you don't?

Sage ignores her. Rain says nothing, looks back to the warehouse. She knows what the stakes are.

SAGE
So, what's your favorite color?

RAIN
(shrugs)
Blue.

There is a tense pause...

RAIN (CONT'D)
Why did you ask me that?

SAGE
Ask you what?

RAIN
What my favorite color is?

Sage looks down her blouse and sees the rim of her blue bra.

SAGE

I wanted to hear what the truth
sounded like coming out of your mouth.

EXT. CUPRIO'S WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

The Revengers arrive and fall into position, slink through the adjacent building, enter the other building. Pulling up some binoculars, they collectively appraise the Cuprio's warehouse for access points, number the guards, and silently gesture their tactical opinions to each other. They pull back from their vantage point for a final huddle. Sage looks at his fellow assassins, silently focusing their collective attention on him. He has something to say. Tilt pulls out a plastic map card of the warehouse.

SAGE

Where's Fleet?

TILT

Ground floor. So, she on our side?

SAGE

Until further notice. Guards?

TILT

We don't have a count yet. But my
guess would be plenty. Everything
goes through them.

SAGE

As bullets are meant to.

MARCH

We're outnumbered again, aren't we?

TILT

Sustained.

SAGE

But not outmatched.

Sage breaks formation and heads towards a door where he stops and notices the warehouse entrance is locked with a chain. Lone and March carry on their debate within earshot.

SAGE (CONT'D)

(on radio)

Store Brand.

BRAND (V.O.)

About time you guys showed up.

(MORE)

BRAND (V.O.) (CONT'D)
You know how long I've been lying up
here?

EXT. WAREHOUSE ROOF - BRAND'S POSITION - NIGHT

SAGE (V.O.)
This party has a dress code, by the
way.

BRAND
Copper jacket required.

EXT. CUPRIO'S WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

MARCH
What are we doing again?

TILT
Take notes, March. Break, enter, and
go ATF on everybody. Ten feet.

Sage checks his watch: *not time yet*. A tense moment of waiting
follows.

MARCH
You know what we need? Wide beam.

TILT
Wide beam?

MARCH
Wide beam. Like in Star Trek. Take
the whole room out with one shot.
You don't see that anymore.

TILT
We have wide beam. It's called "auto."

LONE
Who needs wide beam when you can
vaporize someone? You're dirt-side.
Some blue piece of shit wants a fist
dance.
(snaps fingers)
Zap! Setting 6. And you are
officially a medical mystery. Quick.
Clean. Absolute. In a word:
"Orwellian."

(MORE)

Sage overhears this conversation and grumpily opens his cell
phone and DIALS Tilt.

LONE (CONT'D)

Fuck wide beam. The future is about
vaporization. It's about setting 6.
(chopping his arm)
Same as it ever was. Same as it ever
was.

March flips Lone off with only the first knuckle of his middle
finger.

MARCH

See? You're not even worth the whole
finger.

Tilt's cell phone RINGS.

TILT

Tilt.

SAGE (V.O.)

Put March on.

TILT

For you.

SAGE (V.O.)

The reason why you never see wide
beam settings in Star Trek anymore
is because it is dramatically
castrating. Why 'wide beam' the room
when you can have a ridiculous, Old
West shoot out with people ducking
behind bulkheads.

(beat)

Now put Lone on.

March sulks as he hands the cell phone to Lone.

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

As for vaporizing someone: it's bad
press. Star Trek is the clumsy,
intellectual Maginot Line of secular
humanism. The show is about
technolatry—the worship of
technology—and any thing that
tarnishes the good name and saving
grace of technology must be abandoned
in order to maintain the illusion
that its incapable of bad things.

(MORE)

Sage arrives at his fellow Revengers.

SAGE (CONT'D)

That being said. Shut up.

Sage first gives them a damning look, but it turns enthusiastic as the moment of justice is upon them. Everyone nods as Sage prepares to say something.

SAGE (CONT'D)

Gentlemen: let us praise at the altar of envy, look daggers, and give the voice of conscience it's proper shout. For it is time to wake justice from its slumber and pay this man in his own coin: measure for measure, a Roland for an Oliver, to raise high the banner of lex talionis, and give the wind something to play with.

The Revengers pause for a moment to appreciate the grandiloquence of their young leader.

LONE

Was it haiku? Not really.

TILT

Very William Blake.

MARCH

They call him Sage.

TILT

Who's walking out?

SAGE

We are.

TILT

And the home team?

EVERYONE

They're not cops.

LONE

Anything else?

SAGE

Good luck. Be careful. Aim low. Vote Republican.

EXT. CUPRIO'S WAREHOUSE - BACK ALLEY - NIGHT

A GUNSHOT is followed by a brief flash. Mags, stationed on the east door, draws his gun and runs towards the back alley.

We follow him as he sees MURO (30's-Italian, white, inept) and four other thugs, laughing, wiggling fingers in their ears. Muro is aiming at the ground.

EXT. WAREHOUSE ROOF - BRAND'S POSITION - NIGHT

SAGE (V.O.)
Brand! Who fired?

BRAND
Don't know. Hold on.

SAGE (V.O.)
Is Hands all right?

BRAND
Sage, I don't know. Hold on.

EXT. CUPRIO'S WAREHOUSE - BACK ALLEY - NIGHT

We see Mags walk over to Muro, who is CHUCKLING with his fellow thugs. Mags grabs the gun out of Muro's hand. He's endured this unprofessional behavior far too many times in the past.

MURO
Easy chief-

MAGS
Give it! Give it! Now how many of
you high school drop-outs are packing?
Give them up. Right here, right now!

Only three of the five men divest weapons. CURSING loudly, Mags collects the weapons and leaves the men unarmed. He turns the corner and disappears. As the men GRUMBLE to themselves, Mags appears around the corner and tosses them a baseball bat.

MAGS (CONT'D)
Here's something more your speed.
Dumb fucks.

EXT. WAREHOUSE ROOF - BRAND'S POSITION - NIGHT

SAGE (V.O.)
Before they carbon date me, Brand.

BRAND
(dryly)
Some big guy's walking around fairly
pissed. He's got a bat. He's waving
(MORE)

BRAND (CONT'D)
the bat. He's throwing the bat. I
think somebody fucked up. Misfire,
or something.

SAGE (V.O.)
Mob World doesn't make sense.

BRAND
I'll just keep reloading until it
does.

EXT. CUPRIO'S WAREHOUSE - BACK ALLEY - NIGHT

Sage DIALS up Tilt.

TILT
Commissioner Gordon's office.

SAGE (V.O.)
Get up here. And bring Dweezel and
Ahmet.

Tilt, March and Lone advance to Sage's position. March pulls
out some bolt cutters and grabs the door chain with them.
Sage cues him to wait.

INT. CUPRIO'S WAREHOUSE - CUPRIO'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Cuprio storms into his office, FULL OF BLUSTER, but calms
when he sees his sister Rain. He shuts the door as Mags
watches through the office bay windows. Again, the reasons
that exist only between Rain and Cuprio will be largely
unheard.

There sits his sister, Rain, eerily quiet. They both sit
down, cautiously, and say nothing. The awkwardness is
tangible.

EXT. WAREHOUSE ROOF - BRAND'S POSITION - NIGHT

Brand is scanning the guards through his scope when Sage
calls him.

SAGE
We're in position and it ain't
missionary.

BRAND
Hold on.

SAGE
What?

BRAND

Will advise.

INT. CUPRIO'S WAREHOUSE - CUPRIO'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Cuprio and Rain are still just sitting there, watching each other. There is nothing to say. There never was.

Rain makes an empty gesture.

CUPRIO PRAIN

I agree.

Cuprio gestures to Mags, who walks in. Cuprio and Rain continue to stare at each other for a while. Mags waits for instructions.

CUPRIO PRAIN (CONT'D)

Take her home.

Mags doesn't move, but just stares at Cuprio.

CUPRIO PRAIN (CONT'D)

Now!

Mags slowly, reluctantly, escorts Rain out. Furious, Cuprio waits until she is out of earshot then storms into the torture room. He grabs up a crutch and prepares to hit DeRista, but rather chooses his helpless victim, Fleet. He KNOCKS the Revenger over in his chair and beats him with the metal crutch until he is exhausted. He falls on the other crutch, glaring at Fleet. Cuprio's men grow still.

CUPRIO PRAIN (CONT'D)

(demented)

Get a chain saw and cut his fucking feet off. And get my camera.

EXT. CUPRIO'S WAREHOUSE - EAST DOOR - NIGHT

The door opens and Mags escorts Rain out.

MAGS

Why do you put up with that shit?

Rain ignores him.

MAGS (CONT'D)

Call your old man!.

RAIN

Exchange one warden for another?

MAGS

One of these days he's not going to stop, Rain. You should have aimed higher.

RAIN

He's my brother.

Rain flashes the number "14" to Brand on the roof across the street.

MAGS

(whispered)

And my boss. Something I think both of us could learn to live without.

Rain is surprised to hear those words from Mags.

MAGS (CONT'D)

You're always talking about Acapulco. Maybe you should go. Pack a bag. Get away.

RAIN

No. When I go to Acapulco, I'm not taking any baggage with me.

MAGS

(to Clerque)

Clerque, wherever she wants to go.

Clerque nods and begins to follow Rain.

EXT. WAREHOUSE ROOF - BRAND'S POSITION - NIGHT

BRAND

Moon Unit has left the club.

SAGE (V.O.)

How many opportunities?

BRAND

Fourteen according to the latest Gallup poll.

SAGE (V.O.)

Hold your position.

Brand watches as Clerque reaches into his pocket, presumably for his keys. He is behind Rain. Naturally, Brand assumes the man is pulling a pistol to shoot Rain.

BRAND

(dryly)

Gun.

Brand FIRES. The quiet bullet hits Clerque in the forehead: half his head disappears in a corona of bone and blood. Brand freezes as the man's hand jerks free, revealing a pack of smokes.

BRAND (CONT'D)

Marlboros actually. Menthol, I think.
My bad.

Mags immediately recognizes the attack and jerks Rain inside the east door.

MAGS

Rain! Get down!

The two men are looking around trying to figure out what is going on: too late. Brand stiffens and opens fire into the thugs. Three hits each. They die instantly as the rifle round paint the alley walls with human penetralia.

EXT. CUPRIO'S WAREHOUSE - EAST DOOR - NIGHT

Muro hears one of the guards at the east door SCREAM just as The Hands jumps out from the shadows, kills him and four guys in a blizzard of brutal Wing Chun, and cut the power with his bolt cutters. The Hands kills the fifth guard, pulls two handguns out, takes position at the rear of the warehouse.

INT. CUPRIO'S WAREHOUSE - WEST DOOR - NIGHT

Sage, Tilt, March and Lone are poised to advance. The power suddenly cuts out, flickers and comes back on. March snaps the chain and The Revengers advance into the main warehouse.

INT. CUPRIO'S WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

The Revengers burst in like an ATF raid and surprise the thugs, only half of which have managed to pull their weapons. There is a short stare off before Cuprio's men, mistaking The Revengers as an unmarked police force, voluntarily drop their weapons one by one.

VASSAL

Easy, pig.

(MORE)

Sage slowly lowers his MP-5 carbine and gestures for March's SPAS-12. Bringing the assault weapon to bear on Vassal, Sage nominates him as the first kill.

VASSAL (CONT'D)

What are you going to do cop? Huh?
Shoot an unarmed man, you fucking
pig.

Sage, for reasons he alone comprehends, slowly shifts his shotgun to the thug immediately to Vassal's left: GELD (30's-Italian, white, confused). Geld tenses. Sage then shifts back to Vassal and shoots him in the face with the shotgun, killing the criminal instantly.

GELD

Jesus Christ!

Geld is splattered with the vaporized debris of Vassal's skull. Barely has Geld registered the execution, then he turns to Sage who shoots him in the head too. The room explodes into chaos. Sage empties the shotgun into Cuprio's retreating men: killing some, wounding others.

A massive gunfight erupts. Cuprio's men, who at first seem ready to rumble, are quickly unnerved by the mechanical precision of The Revengers, who advance like seasoned SAS operatives.

Mags pops into the room dragging Rain. The Revengers see this and don't shoot. Mags is not so generous, draws down on Tilt and six rounds into his chest, two of which disable his weapon amid sparks. Tilt gyrates as each round slams into his bullet proof vest.

TILT

Stop shooting me!

The room, in strange obedience, falls eerily quiet. Mags ducks back out. Tilt, bruised but not wounded, rolls over to Sage behind cover as Cuprio's men reposition themselves, reload.

INT. CUPRIO'S WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

DeRista is trying to start the chain saw, fails and stands up.

FLEET

You could just rub it back and forth
and cut my feet off. That could work.

DeRista HEARS the distant gunfire for the first time. Bullets rip through the wall and he jumps, shocked.

INT. CUPRIO'S WAREHOUSE - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Sage turns a corner where one of Cuprio's men nervously clicks his empty revolver. The man's face falls blank—he knows he's dead. But Sage just stares at him. Nervously, the man opens the gun's cylinder, empties it, nervously fumbles his last round into place. Sage calmly reloads his two 9mm handguns and stands there. The thug slaps the cylinder back into gun, aims long and sure, fires at the immobile Sage. He misses. The bullet blows a huge hole in the wall. The man begins to break down. The gun falls from his weak grip as he cringes in a corner. Now he is ready to beg for his life. Sage just stares at him amid the raging gun battle.

Another GUNSHOT. Lone tenses but Sage leans around the corner and signals him to advance. The few stragglers of Cuprio's guards turn a corner and run. Lone has caught up. Eager to kill the guards before they can find a more fortified position, Lone jumps to the front of the Revengers.

TILT

Elian?

LONE

Queue up *Carmina Burana* and get the pigeons ready! I'm going Woo!

He jumps across the hallway, a gun in each hand...and lands loudly, painfully on his side. The guards have already fallen back. March steps over him.

MARCH

Ass.

INT. CUPRIO'S WAREHOUSE - OFFICE - NIGHT

The lights flicker, then go out completely. Muffled GUNSHOTS can be heard. Cuprio perks up. The GUNSHOTS continue.

CUPRIO PRAIN

So help me if Muro is fucking with those homeless bums again

More GUNSHOTS ECHO through the room. Everyone freezes, trying to decipher the nature of the nearing fire fight. Then the unmistakable CACOPHONY OF BATTLE sends everyone scrambling.

CUPRIO PRAIN (CONT'D)

Cops. Perfect end to a perfect fucking day.

Mags rushes Rain to Cuprio's office and throws Rain against the far wall. If looks could kill: *Cuprio, you bastard, you finally killed us all.*

MAGS

Get down!

Mags slams the door, locks it, hammers the door knob off with his pistol, turns and runs back into the fray.

INT. CUPRIO'S WAREHOUSE - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Tilt silently inquires of Lone: *do you see anybody?* Lone replies in the negative. Tilt turns over slowly and repeats the gesture to March, who is loading shells into his shotgun. March shakes his head. Tilt looks back to Sage and shrugs: *can't see anybody.* But they are there, hiding in shadows.

Sage pulls out his cell phone.

INT. REVENGERS HOUSE - COMPUTER ROOM - NIGHT

Phone rings. In the living room, Spar and Rent look up from their Xbox 360 game.

SPAR

Twelve, get that!

Twelve looks at his cell phone, but doesn't pick it up. It says "SAGE" on it.

TWELVE

Vidi supra.

He pushes a button on his computer. A list of the names and cell phone numbers of all Cuprio's men scrolls down the screen. Alongside each a tag that says "DIALING".

INT. CUPRIO'S WAREHOUSE - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Sage closes his cell phone and hides it in one of his many vest pockets. He alerts his fellow Revengers with a clenched fist. They get ready, look to each other, try to silently guess what their cue will be. It is the least dramatic of hints: Beethoven's *Ode to Joy* begins to CHIME SHRILLY from a shadow—cell phone no. 1 just got called. Tilt stands up and FIRES into the shadow. There is a GRUNT and WHEEZE as a dead thug falls from his hiding place.

Suddenly another cell phone CHIRPS, and is met by an advancing Lone and a SPRAY from his 9mm's. DeRista crumples and falls over as Lone advances past him.

Another CELL PHONE RINGS and March turns and SHOOTS through the wall, hitting Mags, who was trying to creep up on The Revengers. He takes a full SHOTGUN BLAST to the gut. March FIRES again. A shot to the leg, and Mags crumples.

Lone and March quickly crisscross and find each other's earlier targets.

DeRista lies bloody against a file cabinet. March walks up with his shotgun, loading it as he eyes the criminal like a hawk. DeRista seems almost offended at how young his killer appears. He scans down the stocky figure of March, ending at his shoes, which are untied. March loads the last shell, chambers one, leans forwards and BLOWS the DeRista's head completely off, then moves on.

Lone turns the corner and sees Mags WHEEZING against a wall, bleeding liberally, his leg all but blown off. His cell phone CHIRPING from underneath his jacket. Lone pulls the cell phone out, turns it over and sees a name etched on the back of it.

LONE
(sincerely)
"Magliochetti?"

Mags blinks.

LONE (CONT'D)
That is a cool fucking name.

Mags shrugs. Lone smiles and SHOOTS him dead.

INT. CUPRIO'S WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

The Revengers turn a corner and see the battered and bloodied Fleet. Sage follows his men in. A lone thug crawls slowly on the floor, struggling to hold on to life.

SAGE
(complaining)
Somebody shoot him.

Lone does, six times. The Revengers encircle Fleet reverently, still on guard, as Sage spies Cuprio's office. PRESTAL (30's-Italian, frenzied) and the younger SHELTON (late 20's-unkept, idiot) burst around the corner, spy the Revengers, and throw their arms up.

PRESTAL
Whoa! I give up! I give up!

Sage calmly SHOTS Prestal four times as Shelton turns and bolts. Sage routinely SHOTS him in the back as he walks towards Cuprio's office.

EXT. CUPRIO'S WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Two of Cuprio's men make a made dash out an unforeseen exit, run into a field. Far above, Brand notices.

EXT. WAREHOUSE ROOF - BRAND'S POSITION - NIGHT

BRAND

Violence.
(Beat)
More violence.

Brand shoots them down in the field behind the warehouse at 200 yards. Both are easy kills.

INT. CUPRIO'S WAREHOUSE - CUPRIO'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Cuprio stands beside his desk. To salvage his dignity, he tosses his crutches aside. If he is to face these guys, he'll do it standing on his own two, badly wounded feet.

CUPRIO PRAIN

Rain, stay down!.
(rehearsing to himself)
Fucking DEA monkey. My lawyer's are going have a field day with this shit. Bitches, I am bulletproof.

Sage opens the door, enters. He quickly clears the room.

CUPRIO

You guys have a lot of balls, I'll give you-

No preamble.

No drama.

No waiting for the bad guy to draw a weapon.

No monologue.

No lame Hollywood illusion of ethic.

No mercy.

Sage SHOTS Cuprio Prain in the forehead. It's over in half the time it takes a warm shell casing to hit the floor.

Problem solved: mankind now gleams 1% brighter.

Brains explode on the painting behind Cuprio, who drops where he stands. Though prepared for this all her adult life, Rain nonetheless flinches, wide-eyed, at her brother's sudden death.

Though expecting—even desiring—this moment, Rain is stunned. She approaches and leans over him.

What does one say to a monster you once loved?

RAIN

Later.

EXT. CHILDHOOD PAST - DAY

FLASHBACK...

Cuprio and Rain, as young, innocent children stare blankly into the lens of the camera through a haze of ill-lit memory.

The scene is not as short as we would like.

INT. CUPRIO'S WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Sage and Rain walk into the room where a savagely beaten Fleet lies limp and motionless, strapped to a chair. There is a somber moment of realization. Sage can barely bring himself to ask the inevitable question. Sage and Rain locks stares.

SAGE

He dead?

Slowly, March leans over and touches his fingers to Fleet's neck. Grimly, March shakes his head: Fleet is dead.. All the Revengers observe a moment of silence. Sage has no need to ask Tilt, and it is the first time he never questions March. The First Revengers lays his disapproving stare on Rain.

Shattering the tension, Fleet springs from his light nap.

FLEET

(yawns)

Hey, guys!

Sage gives March a look of disbelief.

SAGE

March, you bitch.

EXT. CUPRIO'S WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

The Revengers are in their van, ready to leave.

TILT
That everybody?

Lone walks up.

TILT (CONT'D)
Now, Lone, You didn't use any
unnecessary deadly force, did you?

LONE
I used so much unnecessary deadly
force I'm surprised you made it out.

MARCH
You smell that? Smells like character
development?

LONE
Could be pathos.

TILT
It's gasoline, guys.

Lone leaves.

TILT (CONT'D)
It's over.

RAIN
I didn't think you could pull it
off.

TILT
Yes, well, we're in the business of
raising expectations.
(beat)
What do you want to do now?

Rain looks perplexed.

RAIN
No one's ever asked me that before.

TILT
It's a big question. Take your time,
but I think your father Mercurio may
have some questions when he gets
here.

She registers the comment. The Hands and March are dragging a BABBLING Fleet to The Revenger's van.

FLEET

Those guys are lucky you broke in when you did. I was going to have to kick some ass.

Lone stops March and The Hands and RUMMAGES through Fleet's pockets and takes out five dollars.

LONE

What? He owed me five bucks.

TILT

Like brothers, aren't they?

(beat)

We'll keep the shrine open for you, just in case. Cuprio had a lot of money in a lot of places. Here are the account numbers and access codes for all of them, courtesy of Twelve.

(hands paper to Rain)

We took some-finder's fee. There will be a lot of cops and more questions. Twenty-four hours from now you might want to be some where else. Maybe even *somebody* else, Rain.

RAIN

Any suggestions?

TILT

Acapulco is only three hours by plane.

She takes a moment to say words she's not said in a long time.

RAIN

Thank you.

TILT

Maybe change your hair color.

RAIN

Why?

TILT

(nods towards Sage)

He likes redheads.

Tilt enters the Revengers' van and leaves Rain in front of her dead brother's warehouse. She looks around, as if she can't decide how she feels—lost or free?

INT. SAGE'S APARTMENT - MORNING

We slowly focus on one apartment and move into it. We pan through the living room, kitchen and office. We come to rest on a young man, SAGE, sleeping in his bed, on his face, an expression of peace and contentment. It the sleep only the just know.

END CREDITS.

INT. REVENGERS HEADQUARTERS DAY

Sage walks into a room en route to find Tilt. In the room we see three Revengers: Lone is staring intently at Brand (who is seated in deep contemplation). The Hands is squirming, hung from the ceiling in a noose. We see Sage fight the impulse to inquire about the odd moment, but he can't resist.

Sage points to The Hands. Lone offers the explanation.

LONE

Apparently the average time it takes for a man to die by asphyxiation and suffer total brain death during hanging is eight minutes and twenty-two seconds. So March bet The Hands he couldn't hold his breath that long.

SAGE

He's awfully red. What's the record, again?

LONE

A deep, cadaverous blue.

Sage nods as The Hands squirms.

SAGE

(indicates Brand)
And him?

LONE

Oh, Brand said he couldn't care less.

SAGE

About what?

(MORE)

Lone gestures to The Hands CHOKING to death.

SAGE (CONT'D)

Oh, right. And?

LONE

So we are seeing—if in fact—he can.

SAGE

Can what?

LONE

Care less.

It's all asymptotically scientific, and that is close enough for Sage. Everyone looks at Brand, who looks up and shakes his head sadly: apparently he can't care less, despite the effort. Sage looks back at The Hands, now a deep maroon, then back at Brand. Slowly, Sage surrenders to the absurdity of it all. He can say nothing. He just looks around: to the left, to the right, back at The Hands, at his nails, then right into the camera.

