

# They Fall by Night

by

Zachary Baylin

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"In the past, those who foolishly sought power  
by riding the back of the tiger ended up inside."

- jfk

OVER BLACK:

ARTHUR CODY (V.O.)  
Someone once said of New York,  
"it'll be a great place if they can  
ever finish it."

FADE IN: VIDEO FOOTAGE. ARTHUR CODY, SPEAKING AT A POLITICAL  
RALLY. THE VIDEO STOCK, CLOTHING INFORM: 1970'S.

ARTHUR CODY (CONT'D)  
But I know New York doesn't strive  
for completion. To be set in stone.  
We move always ahead, our sails  
never shored, in tireless pursuit  
of perfection.

Continues over...

EXT. NEW YORK HARBOR - NIGHT ESTABLISHING/VARIOUS SHOTS

New York City. The Hudson. The George Washington Bridge. The  
city lights rising from a lush darkness.

ARTHUR CODY (V.O.)  
America is not singular in the  
hardships it's faced, but in it's  
perseverance despite them. And  
nowhere is this exemplified more  
than New York, where this country's  
destinies were forged. Where kings  
are crowned in the alleyways. For  
when I look upon these spires and  
weaving neighborhoods, I see not a  
finality but a progress, and it  
fills my heart with such a quiet  
sense of awe that I thank the lord.

Just inside the city's shore, a sprawling limestone Chateau,  
encompassing an entire West End block, looks down from its  
godly mount. The last of the great turn of the century villas  
on Riverside drive. From with in...

A GUNSHOT ECHOES OUT.

TITLE CARD READS: **1988**

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRIAN LESPANE (V.O.)  
"At 8:40 PM, police responding to  
911 calls found screen legend  
Arthur Cody dead at the Monroe  
Stahr, his palatial estate over  
looking the city, often called "the  
most lavish home ever built on  
Manhattan Island."

EXT. MANHATTAN - ESTABLISHING

A Newspaper bundle flung to the sidewalk in Times Square. The  
headlines: "**CODY DEAD BY OWN HAND**"

A PAPER BOY cuts the ribbon, as all across the city...

Crowds flock bars and electronic store windows where TV's  
broadcast the news.

Businessmen look up from bar stools.

In midtown traffic, the reports sound from CAR RADIOS.

THIS VOICE CARRIES US OVER THE ENTIRE NEXT SEQUENCE. WNYC  
RADIO HOST. BRIAN LESPANE.

BRIAN LESPANE (FILTERED)  
"The exact cause of death, not yet  
released, but initial unconfirmed  
reports say suicide. As the city  
mourns the passing of the onetime  
presidential candidate, prayers  
already flock to the home of his  
daughter, Hollywood Starlet Vivian  
Lake, and her son Charles, the new  
keeper of his crown.

INSERT: NEWS MONTAGE/OBIT

Images of Arthur Cody. Scenes described in NEWS PRINT,  
ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE, FILM and POLICE STILLs.

BRIAN LESPANE (FILTERED) (CONT'D)  
"He was a titan of a bygone era. A  
luminary. A former Hollywood star  
who'd survived two heart attacks.  
Often described as the embodiment  
of the American male, Cody's life  
was the stuff of legend. But along  
with his triumphs, there were many  
hardships, and for the two time  
widower, few happy endings. Perhaps  
only the knowledge of legacy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Faded photographs of Young Arthur and Family in Dustbowl like settings. Young Arthur in a hospital cot. His legs bandaged. Despite this, he has the tall, gangly, jutting body that often fills out in heroic proportions.

BRIAN LESPANE (CONT'D)

Born to a poor family; Cody escaped the depths of the depression in the boxing arena, his success earning him influential fans at RKO studios.

Cody at 17, gloves up in the ring.

Photos of a large, husking film crew. Zoom in to see his young face among the crowd. In Film Stills on Bogart like sets, Arthur's young, half cocked face in the background. Now Arthur as lead. Arthur smoking a cigarette with great long fingers, arching back in a directors chair. His titanic face lingers.

BRIAN LESPANE (CONT'D)

But his rise to prominence would not come without a price. Few men's private lives were as public. His first marriage to screen actress Marianne Shelly ended tragically nearly as soon as it began.

Photos of this familiar crime scene. A beauty splayed naked across an opulent bed; a sea of scattered pills.

BRIAN LESPANE (CONT'D)

It would be another 15 years before he'd marry again and become a father. His romance with Vivian Irene DuPont would provide him entrance into the enclave of America's most storied families. Making him a quiet man of unimaginable wealth, and just 12 years later, a widower once more.

Photos of golden Irene. Of the grandest seaside wedding. Of yachts, and polo matches. Of their daughters birth. Of a horrific car crash. A Porsche demolished.

Dated news footage reports the accident. A Country Estate beneath a cover of fog and rain. An AMBULANCE races in, converging around the Porsche, violently crushed against a stone wall.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Arthur shields his YOUNG DAUGHTER from view of carnage as EMT workers begin to remove a IRENE'S body from the wreck.

NEWSPAPER HEADLINES: "*DuPONT LOST IN DEADLY CRASH*"

BRIAN LESPANE (CONT'D)  
In the lowest depths, he sought  
rejuvenation in his family. As  
father to a willful daughter, Cody  
orchestrated a career that would  
rival his own.

NEWSPAPER HEADLINES: "*A NEW STAR SHINES - VIVIAN CODY*"

Shots of a young captivating VIVIAN CODY on stage, on film,  
escorted from parties, night clubs, premieres, on the arm of  
her father.

BRIAN LESPANE (CONT'D)  
And so it is that his legacy lives  
on with Vivian and her husband,  
Senator John Lake, and through  
their son.

Scandal rag shots of VIVIAN LAKE (from here on out), and baby  
CHARLES LAKE. Dozens and dozens of fast flipping shots of the  
infant. A towheaded toddler. A Public obsession.

Her husband, JOHN LAKE, a figure cut from marble.

BRIAN LESPANE (CONT'D)  
Though before we look ahead, we pay  
a final homage to this cinematic  
life, brought to an end in the same  
fashion in which it was lived. On  
his terms alone."

The final image: Arthur, vibrantly alive, young and haunting  
in a black and white noir film clip. He smolders, clutches a  
willowy starlet channeling Marlene Dietrich.

ARTHUR  
"Honey, we live in a tough,  
dishonest world, but you got stars  
in your eyes. Maybe that's why I  
love you."

STARLET  
"Last time I looked, you had a  
wife."

ARTHUR  
"Next time you look, maybe I won't"

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

And he pulls in for the big kiss. She wilts in his arms.

BRIAN LESPANE (FILTERED)  
Arthur Cody. Dead today at 75. New  
York - another of your kings has  
fallen.

The image of Arthur freezes. End Sequence.

**TITLES:** *They Fall by Night*

EXT. MANHATTAN / ESTABLISHING - VARIOUS SHOTS: NIGHT

PAPER BOY  
New York Daily News! Get your New  
York Daily News! Cody dead! Vivian  
vows to retire!

The headlines match. The NEWS BOY in Times Square shaking papers. A MAN buys one. A line formed behind him. This is the New York in which this story takes place.

Pre Guiliani NY. Boomtime for some. Hard times for many others. Nowhere is this more true than...

Downtown. The East Side. Night over Tompkins Square Park, where fires burn as Homeless, Punks, Skinheads, Junkies, Squatters occupy the park in the shadow of growing condos. Some hold picket signs. "GENTRIFICATION IS CLASS WAR!" A city on the brink.

In Times Square 1988. Hookers. Dealers. Panhandlers hassling tourists. Neon on the strip joint marquees. Filth in the streets.

It's here we begin our story.

EXT. TIMES SQUARE /44TH ST AND 8TH AVE - NIGHT

DETECTIVE RYAN HALAS waits behind the wheel of a parked FORD TEMPO.

A handsome face. An air of class. Of education. Of epic dissatisfaction, surveilling an avenue of sex-shops and porn theaters.

He smokes, honing in on a single interaction. THREE MEN conspiring beneath the neon and howling traffic. Halas makes two of them as gaunt. Hard up. Junkies.

After a heated moment, the meet breaks off. The TWO JUNKIES crossing the avenue quickly in the other direction. We'll meet them again later.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The third man, a barrel chested, ex-cop crosses the street and gets in the car with Halas. This is RON KURKON.

HALAS

Where'd you get those two? Some shooting gallery in the village?

KURKON

It wasn't at Sardi's.

A moment of necessary levity. It passes quickly.

KURKON (CONT'D)

They left her at The Majestic. Babbitt's there. These two fucking...

(of the other men. Then)

We just need the pictures, Ryan. They can't get out.

HALAS

And the girl?

Silence. Halas, already knowing the answer.

KURKON

You gonna be able to handle this?

HALAS

Do I have a choice?

KURKON

You could run.

A moment, looking onto the street.

KURKON (CONT'D)

When we were kids, we'd come to the Penny Arcades up here. We went in groups cause you had a better shot against the muggers and the niggers. Denihan's gonna tear this place down. You along with it. In five years, Times Square'll be Disneyland. There'll be no more scary places in New York.

HALAS

You say that like it's a bad thing.

KURKON

For us, for you...maybe it is. You got a bill on you, kid.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (2)

KURKON (CONT'D)

I.A.'s got your face on a fucking milk carton and they wanna see you go away for a long time.

On Halas, he knows this is the hard truth.

KURKON (CONT'D)

But this family, Ryan, they can make it all go away. Your whole slate. Like it never happened. You can start over.

Kurkon places something on the dashboard. An unremarkable pistol glowing in the neon light. Halas regards it.

HALAS

This is the last of it, Ron. You can't call me with this again.

KURKON

I won't.

(then)

She's at The Majestic. It's just around the block on the North...

HALAS

I know where it is.

On Halas, his mind made for him. His eyes, unavoidably on the gun on the dash.

INT. 9TH PRECINCT - ESTABLISHING

A smoke filled police station. A multi-ethnic force pushing papers. Various shots of file stacks. Of Eastside neighborhood maps. Of want sheets. Of prostitutes and junkies lining the benches. Over top of this...

DENIHAN (O.S.)

Our initiative is quality of life. It's crime on the streets. It's dope and prostitution. It's homeless in the parks and squeegee men at red lights.

This heard, behind closed doors in...

BRIEFING ROOM

Where Commissioner RAY DENIHAN, flanked by his Lieutenants, MANCUSO and HODGES, addresses a mass of INTERNAL AFFAIRS OFFICERS. A bulletin board of pictures - "TARGETS" behind them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

For this kind of grass roots campaign to be effective; if we are going to ask the everyday citizens battling poverty, angered by gentrification, prone to small crime, suspect of corruption, to ask these people to hold themselves to a higher moral responsibility then we must hold ourselves to those same standards. These demands can only be implemented by a police force who's honesty and reputation is beyond reproach. That is why you are here today.

Slowly now, we push in on the Detectives.

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

It is my belief that there are two kinds of cops. The Grass Eaters and the Meat Eaters. The Grass Eaters being those who from time to time take minor cash favors from small business owners, bodegas, ticketmen, mostly under pressure and influence of their superiors. And the Meat Eaters, being the opposite. Those who take a much larger bite from considerably more unsavory enterprises.

Our focus continually narrowing now on a single Detective listening to the stump speech. An open, honest face. Cpt. JON MARGRAFF.

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

(of the "targets")

These are the men we are after. Before I leave this post, the curtain of dishonesty that has hung for too long over this institution will fall. Indictments will come down. Officers will go to jail.

(hold on Margraff)

My advice to those on this list is get your house in order, because we're coming after you with a sledge hammer and we will bury you.

End on the bulletin board. Among the targeted, DETECTIVE RYAN HALAS, who we meet back at...

INT. THE MAJESTIC - NIGHT

A CHANDELIER, high above the audience lights this decidedly anachronistic theater.

HOST  
And for tonight's final  
performance, we invite you to  
witness the final torrid hours at  
the Monroe Stahr.

The crowd howls...

People, at least here, are doing well. A gregarious audience of BANKERS and ARTISTS around candle lit tables of alcohol, all watching the vaudevillian stage where...

The showmen HOST exits. The curtain rising to reveal...

"ARTHUR CODY," or rather a TRANSVESTITE dressed as the man in heavy stage makeup, sits in a rocking chair. Piles of money on the floor. A shotgun by his side.

"ARTHUR"  
"Ah, it is in old age when a man  
thinks of his youth. Vivian, could  
you join me for a moment?"

Enter "VIVIAN." A huge chested facsimile of the real thing, scantily dressed. The audience applauds.

"ARTHUR" (CONT'D)  
"I'd like you to take a look at  
your inheritance."

"He" pulls aside his robe. A throbbing strap-on beneath.

"VIVIAN"  
"Father, I didn't expected it to be  
so generous."

The audience howls.

"VIVIAN" (CONT'D)  
"Now what have I told you about  
playing with guns."

...as she kneels before him and begins to service him. It is extravagant filth and the audience applauds, while...

BACKSTAGE, things are graver...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ryan Halas, found in intimate conversation with the proprietor, ADAM BABBITT. An older, tweed suited figure.

BABBITT

I said quiet and Kurkon sends two  
fucking hopheads, whose idea of  
quiet is banging pots and pans.

All around them, the sex circus of freakshow performers  
prepares. Twin contortionists, transvestites, *sword*  
swallowers, *fire* eaters.

HALAS

She's back there?

BABBITT

In a dressing room. I haven't seen  
her but Leanne says they worked her  
over pretty good and she wouldn't  
budge. She's young but she's tough  
as nails, this kid.

Halas looks to LEANNE. A street kid. A cute young prostitute  
standing nervously by a dressing room door. He smiles kind.  
She doesn't buy it.

BABBITT (CONT'D)

No one else's been through.

HALAS

There a back way out?

Babbitt points through the wings to the house. The decadent  
crowd applauding.

BABBITT

They must have you the hard way,  
huh? This was never your game.

Halas, ashamed. A last look to Leanne. He steels himself.

INT. THE MAJESTIC / DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

Halas enters. Mental notes of the whole scene. The room; a  
fuck pad. Smut on the walls. A cot unfolded. Empty.

But here, in the corner, broken bottles. Blood drips across  
the carpet to the foot of the cot.

Halas pulls back the comforter. Blood stains on the sheet.  
The trail snaking to the bathroom. Light on beneath the door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Quiet, Halas breathes deep. Catches his reflection in the mirror. The face that looks back is tired and sorrowful. Empty. He all but sighs.

There's still hard work to be done. He feels for his gun. Approaches the door.

HALAS

Hon, my name's Detective Halas. I'm  
a Police Officer. Are you all right  
in there?

(nothing)

He tries the door. Locked.

HALAS (CONT'D)

I'm gonna take you home. Those men  
are gone now. It's just us. There's  
nothing to be afraid of.

A moment. The sound of a chair removed, the lock unhatched. Halas opens the door.

INSIDE

Blood trails along the floor, leading Halas to...

The tub, where Kurkon's GIRL is crouched inside. She's small, 14 or 15-years-old. Her clothes are tattered. Her head held low, concealing the full extent of her damage, though it's obviously substantial.

For a moment, Halas is frozen at the sight of her, tiny and shuttering before him.

Finally, he summons resolve. Halas approaches, kneels. Brushes back her hair.

Her face is badly beaten but despite it, her features are immaculate and familiar. This is ELLEN GRAHAM. Halas takes her in. Then...

HALAS (CONT'D)

Where are the pictures, Honey?

(her hopes crushed)

Sorry, kid. I'm sure it's not fair.  
It's just the way it is.

She takes a moment. Cold reality setting in, but she stays silent.

Halas scans the room. The vanity, the garbage, the toilet.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He pops them open. Nothing. Removes the lid from the top of the toilet. Here. Inside, an envelope.

He retrieves it. While we don't see the contents, he does. It's something to be valued.

                  HALAS (CONT'D)  
Come on. I'll take you home.  
                  (handling her a napkin)  
You wanna write down where you  
live?

                  ELLEN  
Home? You're the police?  
                  (beat)  
You don't look like it.

As she begins to scribble the answer. "THE PEARL STREET THEATER."

EXT. SECOND AVENUE - NIGHT

Littered with abandoned buildings. Crazies with mangy dogs at their feet, carts pushed with discarded VHS'S and collected garbage. Here, times are not so plentiful.

A FORD TEMPO trolling south down the street. Inside...

I/E. HALAS' FORD TEMPO - THAT MOMENT

Halas drives. Silent. Ellen stares out the window. All nerves, broken hearts.

                  ELLEN  
I know you, right? I mean, you run  
a couple girls from the Majestic? I  
tried to work there once.

Halas doesn't answer. Drives on.

                  ELLEN (CONT'D)  
Hey, you just passed it.

The marquee for THE PEARL STREET THEATER vanishing behind.

Silence. Ellen, growing concerned at her familiar neighborhood slipping away.

                  ELLEN (CONT'D)  
Where are you...where are we going?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HALAS

Just a little further. We're almost there.

Now it hits home. She puts her hand to her mouth. Holding back tears.

EXT. THE SEAPORT - NIGHT

Halas' car rolls beneath the as yet, undeveloped docks. Shadows throw long from the overpass above. Halas knows the lay of the land. He parks deep in one of them and gets out.

He moves around to Ellen's door. She tries to hold it shut but he's too strong. He lifts her out.

Ellen is led to the water's edge, Brooklyn factories hazy across the river.

They stop in the quiet darkness. She shakes.

HALAS

Shh. It's all right.

He unsheathes the gun.

ELLEN

Please! You don't have to do this!  
You don't have to...Look. I have money.

(bills from her pocket)

Take it. I don't want it. It's yours.

(he's unmoved)

Whatever they're giving you, I can give you more. Wait! I can tell you things. I can make you rich. I know things about that family. More than the pictures. I know who has it all. More than you'd believe. More than...

She looks him in the eye. They seem untouched. Hollow.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

(at the end of it)

We had a deal. And they...I swear, I never meant for it to be like this...oh god! Please! Please! Please! Please! I don't want to die.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Halas cocks the gun. Reaching for resolve. He raises the barrel to her head.

HALAS

Shh.

And...A SOUND. SOMETHING SHATTERS in the street.

They freeze. Footsteps slapping away, a distant FIGURE passing beneath a street light.

Halas, turning back to her...the money pushed back into his hands.

ELLEN

Please! You're not a bad guy, I bet. I can tell. You could just let me go. No one would know. I'd never say a word.

(then)

I could be really nice to you.

Finally, Halas looks at her. He tilts her head to the light. The wounds on her face.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

(toughening up)

I've had worse.

Whatever it is, this kid has it in spades.

HALAS

How old are you?

ELLEN

19.

(then)

15.

HALAS

I'm old enough to be your father.

ELLEN

Never stopped him.

Halas looks at her. A turn. He hands her back the money.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

I don't want it. It's not mine even.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (2)

HALAS

Take it. It's the best you're going to get.

ELLEN

(collecting herself)

It was never about money, you know.  
It never was. Whatever they say.  
You wouldn't believe me if I told  
you...No one does.

(a moment, then)

Where am I supposed to go?

HALAS

I don't care. Away. But you can  
never come back here.

(she nods)

Don't make me have to find you.

A last look, and she runs off along the water. Her footsteps scampering away till she's gone.

Halas watches her, his opportunity gone. He walks back to his car. Slams the door.

INT. LOCKERROOM / 9TH PRECINCT - NIGHT

Halas, emptying his locker in the dead of night. Everything into a duffle bag. He pauses at a picture taped inside the door.

It shows Halas, a young boy in his first suit leaning on the hood of a gleaming Mercedes. The place is somewhere rural, far from the city. The look on his face is promise. Of someone who's just realized the whole world lies before him at his feet.

Halas, jumps as a cough comes from a back room. He buries his eyes as...

CAPTAIN MARGRAFF, seen in Denihan's briefing, enters from the sauna.

MARGRAFF

Can't sleep much these nights.

(a hand to his chest)

Things just, not yet right in here.  
Carla thinks it's good for my  
blood. What are you, working  
nights?

(eyes then on Halas' bag,  
his packing to run)

You know, you're a smart guy, Ryan.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARGRAFF (CONT'D)

I always thought that. Hoped you'd do well.

(a hand on his shoulder)

Don't run, kid. You face it like a man. On your own two feet.

HALAS

If I'm lucky, I'll spend the rest of my career on a traffic beat, in a fucking uniform at the tunnel. If I'm lucky. I can't go back to that.

MARGRAFF

Could be worse. It's honest.

(Halas, almost laughing)

At least you'd still be a cop.

Margraff exits. A beat. Halas rips the picture from the door. Stuffs it into his bag.

DENIHAN (FILTERED)

This week, with the passing of a great New Yorker, we are reminded again of the difficulties we now face.

INT. HALAS' APARTMENT - NIGHT

Heard from the Television in Halas' sparse apartment where Halas is packing to run. Only what he can take on his person. Only what he'll need to start over. Few clothes, few precious items, his own personal PISTOL, and rolls and rolls of cash pulled from various hidden spots.

DENIHAN (FILTERED)

Today, many Americans are facing the toughest financial crisis of their lives, and the gap between those with great means and those struggling to provide the barest necessities grows larger everyday. Well I say look to Arthur Cody as exemplar...

Halas considers his stash...not nearly enough. He puts the cash in his bag. Zips it shut. Just a few last things now.

DENIHAN (FILTERED) (CONT'D)

...we need upstanding citizens like Cody at our helm to remind us, that we all might thrive if this city's promise can once again be a right for all, not a privilege for a few.

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CONTINUED:

His badge. His service revolver. He stops. The folder of pictures taken from Ellen on the desk. Halas, considering it.

MOMENTS LATER

A drink in hand, the blackmail shots laid out in the lamp light. Halas' stare bores straight through them.

They are B+W. Grainy but unmistakable. TWO MEN have sex. One shot more compromising than the next. One face recognizable in each suck fuck scenario. We'll know him as SENATOR JOHN LAKE. Vivian's husband. The figure cut from marble.

Halas, pouring himself another long drink, calculating his odds when THE PHONE RINGS. AND RINGS.

A moment. He answers.

HALAS

Hello?

KURKON

You didn't call. Did something happen? Is it done?

(waits)

Ryan, is it--

HALAS

Yeah. It's done.

Hold on Halas, the photos on the night table. His badge gleaming beside them.

EXT. THE WESTSIDE HIGHWAY - NIGHT

His Ford Tempo speeding by the water. Up ahead, break lights line the horizon.

Halas puts on his sirens, exits the highway.

92 Street - Riverside Drive. Up on the hill, traffic, floodlights, a spectacle illuminates the night.

Halas heads for it.

EXT. THE MONROE STAHR - NIGHT

*"The most lavish home ever built on the Manhattan island."*  
National media assembled outside its gates. Fog rolls up from the river.

French manicured sculpture gardens and marble watering pools occupy the entire block.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Evidence of what once existed all along Riverside drive; the estates of competing Tycoons built at the boom of the century.

HALAS' FORD TEMPO travels the long straight drive to the chateau.

CUT TO:

Parked, approaching the house, Halas passes courtyards of fountains and extravagant topiary, all built to out do some rival millionaire. He stops at a modest area, just off the shadows of the house.

A cemetery. A collection of unassuming grave markers date back a century.

And Halas pauses to consider them. The names on the humble stones are unfamiliar, "Benjamin Lewis...William Humphrey..." but the dates which are interesting. Halas leaning in to read...

"Born 1895 - Died 1901," "Born 1884 - Died 1889." They are all children. As Halas considers one stone, a small marble cross. No name. No date. A closer look...

SINCLAIR

The block had once belonged to the city. The Asylum of New York Orphans. Mr. Cody had a touch of the macabre.

He turns to greet SINCLAIR, head of the family servants.

HALAS

They're children?

SINCLAIR

Orphans. Mrs. Lake is waiting for you in the library.

As Sinclair gestures the way to the house.

INT. THE MONROE STAHR - NIGHT

A folder beneath his arm, he waits in the cavernous foyer. Gilded ceilings. Masterworks on the walls. He watches a servant unfurl a white sheet and drape it over a credenza. All about, SERVANTS are shutting down the house, packing up. Packing things away...when footsteps echo toward him down the canyon.

Vivian Lake appears.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VIVIAN  
Sorry to keep you waiting,  
Detective. Things are...it's a busy  
time. Let's not speak in here.

A last look, but she's already leading him off.

INT. THE MONROE STAHR / PRIVATE LIBRARY - NIGHT

Vivian, smoking, peruses the pictures with little reaction.  
Silence.

In person, she's more human, though glamorous in a way that  
hardly exists anymore.

Halas, attempting an air of cool indifference, waits among  
the cloaked, white sheeted furniture.

For a long time, she's silent.

HALAS  
Mrs. Lake?

VIVIAN  
(indicating the photos)  
Have you seen them?  
(Halas nods)  
And what did you think?

HALAS  
They were none of my business.

Vivian smokes.

VIVIAN  
We've never claimed to be the  
picture of domesticity. That was  
them. I suppose it's very naive of  
me, but I still believe that  
people's private lives should  
actually be private.

HALAS  
You may be the last of that breed.

She stamps out her cigarette. Lights another. She offers one  
to Halas. He accepts. Considers the lighter she's handed him.

VIVIAN  
It was my father's. You want it?  
I'm ready to be rid of all this.

He lights his cigarette, hands it back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

We're leaving, you know. My family.  
We just want things quiet.

(she ashes)

It's a difficult time for us, you know. It's been hard on John. They were close, he and my father. For me...what's past is past. I don't look back. But for John...our marriage is complicated, but then it's only personal. He's a good man, my husband, and our privacy is very important to us. We just want to be left alone.

HALAS

You don't have to explain. I don't read gossip, Mrs. Lake.

VIVIAN

I bet you don't.

(she smiles)

Ron says you're in a bit of trouble. He said you're smart but you got yourself a bad reputation on the Bowery. Did they really call you Jack the Ripper?

HALAS

He had his names too. That was a long time ago.

VIVIAN

I'm sorry. I didn't mean to pry.

HALAS

Some things you'd just rather put to bed. Keep in the past.

VIVIAN

We can help.

HALAS

I'm not looking for a handout. I just want a fresh start.

VIVIAN

Of course. It's your privacy as well. I can't promise you anything, but I'll try. Denihan worked with my father for a long time before he came back to the police. I'm sure he owes us a favor or two.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HALAS

I imagine you can be pretty  
persuasive.

At this moment, CHARLES LAKE totters into the room and the two-year-old's sudden appearance is like an apparition. Golden haired, he bobbles in carrying a Teddy Bear.

Vivian gathers her child up in her arms.

Her husband now appears in the doorway. He wears a rough night, but JOHN LAKE still cuts an immaculate figure.

JOHN

He won't sleep. I got him up but he  
was calling for his mother.

(Pause. Then realizing  
Halas' presence)

Oh - excuse me. I thought you were  
still...I'm sorry.

VIVIAN

It's alright. Go on back up. I'll  
put him to bed.

A beat. John exchanges "Good Nights," and retreats from where he came. A moment.

Halas, his cool facade finally shattered at the full presence of this family, of this child.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

You thought he'd walk on water?

(then)

Let me show you to the door.

EXT. THE MONROE STAHR - JUST LATER

They pause at the steps before the courtyard. The baby in Vivian's arms. She sets him down and offers Halas her hand. They shake.

VIVIAN

It was nice to meet you, Detective.  
Good luck with your promotion.

HALAS

Thank you.

VIVIAN

(before he turns, a last  
question)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VIVIAN (CONT'D)  
Ryan. The girl? With the pictures?  
Did she...say anything?

HALAS  
About what?

Her eyes are tearing.

VIVIAN  
I don't know. Nothing.

HALAS  
You don't have to worry about her,  
Mrs. Lake.

VIVIAN  
That's not what I asked.

She smiles politely and Halas lingers a moment, caught in her presence. Neither noticing that CHARLES -

caught by some instinct, has tottered alone down the long drive toward the gates, behind which, the media's lenses stalk.

Vivian runs from the door to retrieve him, but she is too late.

Halas watches as the gates illuminate with exploding flashbulbs, capturing Charles, silhouetted, immortalized before the mansion.

Vivian scoops him up in her arms.

On Halas, watching from afar.

EXT. BENEATH THE FDR - SAME

Rain pours past the overpass. Halas' FORD TEMPO parked beneath. Halas stares out from behind the windshield. Racked with thought. With guilt.

Finally, two sets of headlights veer off from the passing masses, turn into towards him. Park.

The occupants of one vehicle emerge. Approach him.

Ray Denihan is flanked by his lieutenants, MANCUSO and HODGES.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

DENIHAN

You're in her good graces. You think you've made a good play here, son?

HALAS

I guess I made the one I had.

DENIHAN

At what cost? I know your file. You were one Bob McGuire's hatchet men. Is that wrong?

(Halas is silent)

What I don't quite understand Ryan. You finished college. You're an educated man. That's a luxury most officers haven't had. There must have been many opportunities before for you to advance in the department, honestly. Through your own merit. What was it then? The work or did you just lack the character?

HALAS

I hit a bad string of luck there for awhile.

DENIHAN

We make our own luck. Things are changing, Detective. This city will have honest public servants. I'm going to see to that. Will you be one of them? Do you think it's in your constitution to change?

HALAS

I do.

DENIHAN

I hope so. For your sake. There won't be another hand out from me.

Hold on Halas. A last thought.

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

Mrs. Lake asked to return this to you. You left it.

(Halas takes the offering)

You earn it from here, Lieutenant.

Denihan and his men head back to their car, and pull away into the rain, a stream of headlights.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Halas, alone beneath the underpass, considering Arthur Cody's lighter.

INSERT TV SCREEN:

News footage presents FIFTH AVENUE, jam-packed as far as one can see. Men hoist children on their shoulders before St. Patrick's Cathedral. Dapper NYPD line the streets where:

The first black limousines of Arthur Cody's funeral procession appear and roll down the street. The spectacle, the caravan is nothing short of presidential.

Among the procession, the camera finds HALAS. His place not among the rank and file guarding the pedestrians, where despondent UNIFORMS can be glimpsed, but rather on the steps of the cathedral with the high brass. Commissioner Denihan at his side. Halas' eyes, the eyes of the city all trained on...

THE LAKE FAMILY

in elegant mourning on the street. Our camera holds on Charles Lake, his Teddy close at his side. As the motorcade passes, the baby releases his mother's hand, steps forward and salutes the gleaming hearse. Flashbulbs explode. Hold on Charles' image:

FADE TO BLACK.

MONTAGE

INSERT TV SCREEN:

News footage of Police activity in Tompkins Park. Junkies and homeless, cuffed, escorted out of the park. As the Paddy Wagons pull away, bottles smash in the street.

INSERT TITLES: ONE YEAR LATER

NEXT STATION

Ray Denihan speaks before a grass roots crowd in Tompkins Park at a campaign rally. A now familiar speech.

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

You been out here! You know it!  
It's the street tax paid to drunk  
and drug-ridden panhandlers! It's  
the squeegee men shaking down  
motorist in Times Square!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

The trash storms, the drug deals,  
the vagrants and squatters in your  
parks! Well I'm here to say, no  
longer!

On stage, at his side, Ryan Halas.

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

So it is, I stand before you today  
on this spot where Arthur Cody  
dreamt so hopefully for this city,  
that it's with great honor and  
great humility, that I announce my  
candidacy for Mayor of New York.

A banner drops. "**DENIHAN FOR MAYOR**"

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

It will be a long, hard road, my  
friends. But we will prevail. There  
can be no turning.

Applause. Halas watching from the side lines. A team player  
now.

CUT TO:

AT THE MONROE STAHR, the great estate now sits dark and  
shuttered. Vacant on its lot. Its occupants, along with the  
Press and faithful once gathered outside. All have since  
gone.

Outside it's gates, Halas views through his windshield. He  
finishes his cigarette, and pulls off.

INSERT TV SCREEN: A PRESS CONFERENCE - JOHN LAKE. CITY HALL.

JOHN (FILTERED)

I've dedicated half my life to  
Public Service. To this city. I  
have a young child and a young wife  
and now I just want to be selfish  
for awhile.

The AUDIENCE of PRESS rabbles for more.

INSERT TV SCREEN: A NEWS MAGAZINE INTERVIEW - VIVIAN LAKE.

VIVIAN (FILTERED)

I guess I would hope most that the  
public would respect our privacy.  
Now both my parents have died.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

VIVIAN (FILTERED) (CONT'D)  
I'm not blaming anyone, but I'd  
think that would be enough. My  
mother wanted things quiet. She  
never wanted this life for me.

BRIAN LESPANE (FILTERED)  
But your father did? And his  
version prevailed.

VIVIAN (FILTERED)  
It seems that way, doesn't it?

NEXT STATION

INSERT TV SCREEN: Hollywood B-roll. Gowns, red carpets,  
popping flashbulbs. Parties and premieres go on, but the real  
stars are missing. As this shot comes up, a reporter informs  
us...

BRIAN LESPANE (FILTERED)  
It's been months and still they  
hide. Either they've gone the way  
of Jimmy Hoffa, or they should be  
taken at their word. *Retired*. Say  
it isn't so.

Grainy footage. Vivian, John Lake and the Eaglet boarding a  
private plane beneath the cover of night.

As they head up the stairs, into the cabin, the baby by the  
hand, the image freezes.

BRIAN LESPANE (FILTERED) (CONT'D)  
Vivian, your fans demand a sign.

A NEWSPAPER BUNDLE hitting the ground in times square. The  
headline reads:

**"YEAR PASSES SINCE CODY'S DEATH - THE LAKE'S SHOW NO SIGNS OF  
RETURNING - DENIHAN VOWS TO CARRY THE TORCH"**

END MONTAGE - CUT TO BLACK. FADE IN ON:

HALAS, a smart suit and a clean slate, found inside...

INT. LOWER EAST BARBER SHOP - DAY

...where Denihan, paper in hand, is getting a hot shave.  
PRESS and LOCALS around for this campaign stop.

DENIHAN  
Already a year gone, it's still  
hard to imagine.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

But I think they deserve from us  
their privacy, after giving so much  
of themselves to this city.

He sets the paper down. Halas's eyes fall on it. Cody's  
picture brimming on the cover beside "In Manhattan,  
Gentrification spurs fears of Violence."

REPORTER

How do you reconcile it then? Your  
campaign, so tied to his  
achievements, while he helped  
create the very problems these  
people are facing today. Re-zoning  
laws for condos and retail out of  
step with the communities here are  
pricing out the people who work our  
everyday jobs, the teachers and  
fireman, forcing them to live  
in the outer boroughs. Hasn't Cody  
helped create a city so enamored  
with its excess that it can hardly  
be afforded by its own citizens.

DENIHAN

Look, I understand. Things are not  
easy for a lot of people, and  
that's why I believe if we begin  
with quality of life, there can be  
a groundswell. Priority number one  
will be Tompkins Park, and that's  
why I, along with the fine officers  
you see here with me today, are  
asking for a curfew for all  
inhabitants, to be instituted  
tonight at 1 am.

Reporters scribble. Flashbulbs pop in Halas' eye. A *poster boy*.

EXT. LOWER EAST BARBER SHOP - THAT MOMENT

His tie loosened, he lights a cigarette. Pulls the lighter  
away. His gift from Vivian.

On the street, he sparks the flame once. Twice. Quietly  
consumed in it. Halas purposefully puts it away. Smokes.

EXT. HALAS' NEW APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Halas is crossing the street toward a Midtown high-rise  
apartment building. His new digs, when...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)  
Detective?

He stops. From out of an idling car, Ellen Graham approaches;  
a bouquet of flowers in her hand. Her face, beat to a pulp.

ELLEN  
I didn't know where else to go.  
They came back. I know what you  
said. I know I shouldn't be here. I  
just...

HALAS  
(whispers)  
What the fuck did I tell you?

ELLEN  
I know. I just...

Halas, all nerves. Aware of losing it all. He grabs her by  
the elbow, pulling her into an alley. Snaps. Slams her up  
against a wall.

HALAS  
You wanna fuck everything up? You  
know what they'll do if they know  
you were here?

ELLEN  
No. I know. I just...

MALE VOICE  
Put her down.

Halas looks to the car, where a slight, effeminate MAN has  
emerged protectively. We'll come to know him as SEAN HARRIS.

HALAS  
Get back in the car.  
(to Ellen)  
Who is he? How'd you find me?

ELLEN  
Just...girl's talk.  
(then, of the man)  
Sean's just a queer. He not a  
problem. He took me in. He's...

SEAN  
(approaching bravely)  
You let her go now.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HALAS

Or what?

The man is scared, but brave. Halas, gathering his wits. Knowing better. He doesn't want a scene here. He lets Ellen go. Breathes.

ELLEN

I need your help. Something bad's gonna happen.

HALAS

You were never here. I can't help you. You show up here again and I'll cut your throat myself. I swear to god. The queer too.

Halas leave. Ellen, holding the flowers and tearing.

ELLEN

I'd probably deserve it. There's a lot you don't know, Detective.

(crying now)

You don't worry about me. I'm gone. I promise. You'll never see me again.

And Halas disappears into the building, leaving Ellen in Sean's arms on the street.

EXT. RON KURKON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Halas' car parked before an ostentatious West Chester home of the new money variety.

INT. RON KURKON'S HOME - NIGHT

Halas, drinking urgently in the gaudy, glittering kitchen. MRS. KURKON, a Brooklyn beauty from way back, playing polite host.

MRS. KURKON

You look like you're doing real well for yourself. I was just asking Ron why you don't come around much anymore, but I guess that's why.

HALAS

Things have changed.

Kids watching big screen TV in the den. Halas checking his watch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MRS. KURKON

You never struck me as one of these blue collar types. You always had class, Ryan. We all said that about you. Not like this one.

Kurkon enters, grabbing his coat.

KURKON

(to Halas)

You ready?

He finishes his drink.

MRS. KURKON

Bring him home safe. We finally got him away from those people. I want him here in one piece.

As he nods understanding we...

INT. LOWER EAST SIDE SPEAKEASY - NIGHT

KURKON

I was surprised to hear from you.

(Halas "yeah")

It's hard being a kept man, ain't it?

A nervous Halas and Kurkon at the bar of a yuppie filled establishment. The Pregame for the TYSON/SPINKS fight on TV.

HALAS

You know where they are?

KURKON

I still get my check in the mail, but I haven't seen 'em since...

(he drinks)

Let that shit go, Ryan. You don't want it. When I first started working for Cody, I don't know what I thought. That I could be something else. That I could put it away, you know. But me, whatever mistakes I made, I knew what I was, right? But you, you're smart. You clean up good. You're in. All you gotta do is not fuck it up.

The bartender arrives.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

KURKON (CONT'D)  
Do these again. Old Fashioneds.  
(of Halas, knowing his  
silence)  
What is it?

HALAS  
I saw her tonight.

KURKON  
Who?

HALAS  
Ellen Graham? The pictures with  
Lake?

KURKON  
You saw her? What do you mean?

The drinks arrive. Halas puts his down before it hits the bar. Kurkon doesn't take his eyes off his friend.

KURKON (CONT'D)  
You saw her? What do you mean,  
Ryan?  
(then, pointed)  
You let her go.  
(silence)  
Ryan?

HALAS  
I just wanted to start again, man.  
I just wanted my chance.

Kurkon moves in close. Serious.

HALAS (CONT'D)  
I thought she was gone.

KURKON  
(quiet now)  
What did she say to you?

HALAS  
Nothing...that she knew things. I  
don't know. She was scared.

KURKON  
Do you know where she is? Ryan?  
We go back a long way, man. I  
brought you up. We're friends, but  
I won't fucking burn for you.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KURKON (CONT'D)

This kid cannot knock on our door,  
you understand? Do you know where  
she is?

HALAS

I'll make it right.

KURKON

You're goddamn right you will,  
cause it's both our asses here. Do  
you know where she is?

Hold on Halas as he places his offer on the bar.

KURKON (CONT'D)

There's no winning here, kid.  
There's just head above water. And  
I go under. You go under.

ANGLE ON THE BAR: We've seen this before. A cocktail napkin  
beckons *THE MAJESTIC*. And reads in Ellen's fragile hand...

*"THE PEARL STREET THEATER"*

THE SOUND OF WAVES ON THE SHORE.

EXT. LONG ISLAND SOUND - NIGHT

CAMERA LANDS ON: A 240 Volvo station wagon tearing over a  
clearing, down the empty road.

On all sides, Lush farm country. Grand ocean views. Rich real  
estate behind.

The Volvo takes a sudden, sharp turn, away from other traffic  
onto an isolated country road that goes on alone for miles.

In the long distance, heavy woods mark the horizon.

EXT. PINEWOODS - LATER

The Volvo traverses a gravel outlet road which now gives way  
to an unpaved path. Soon nothing but woods. No roads in  
sight.

The Volvo continues in a long ways, pulls in at an angle,  
K-turns till it's facing the direction from which it had  
entered, stops. Kills the engine. The occupants look out.

THE TREE LINE

Through it, several hundred yards away, a stately secluded  
estate can be glimpsed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE VOLVO

In the trunk, a wooden extension ladder is visible. In the backseat, a child's car seat. An astute viewer may now recognize the passengers as the men Halas watched argue with Kurkon in our first scene in Times Square.

The driver and larger of the two is ROBERT PRICE. A stringy, hollow looking figure.

The effete, hard up little man beside him is TRUDY LITTLE.

Robert lights a cigarette. His focus locked on the breaking tree line.

LATER - HOURS PASSED

Pitch black. Robert smokes, staring out the window. Trudy watches as Robert deposits something into his inner jacket pocket. An envelope.

The estate house in the distance. The windows; all dark.

A silent moment, the car doors open. Trudy following Robert's lead.

Robert opens the trunk, removes the ladder. Closes the door.

JUST LATER

They walk away deep into the woods. The car quite a ways behind. Robert hoisting the ladder on his shoulder...

They approach a clearing. The woods break. The men gaze upon:

The ESTATE HOUSE occupying the immense clearing.

A PISTOL in Robert's hand. He secures it in his waistband. The men pull down their ski-masks, move on with absolute surety towards one corner of the house.

An EXTERIOR FUSE BOX: Robert pries it open. Yanks a cable.

The last few lights in the house go dark.

Beneath a SECOND FLOOR WINDOW, Robert sets and extends the ladder to the wall beneath it. Trudy foots it. Robert ascends.

He reaches the window, attempts to open it, but it's locked. He looks down to Trudy.

INT. MANSION ESTATE/BEDROOM - THAT MOMENT

Robert, no choice. He shatters the glass with the butt of his gun. The crashing elicits the sound of a CRYING CHILD. Robert climbs into the room. Gun in hand. Stops.

His eyes goes wide.

INT. MANSION ESTATE/ BEDROOM - NIGHT

A women's eyes snap open.

Vivian sits up in bed. She's alone. She shivers. A bedside lamp. She flips the switch. Nothing goes. She considers.

HALLWAY

A candle lit, Vivian escorts the flame down the hall.

BEDROOM

The door pushes open. Vivian's candle cast a dim glow across the child's room. She freezes. A gush of wind from the broken window extinguishes her flame.

Alone in the dark, Vivian approaches the crib.

It's empty. The crib vacant save an envelope placed squarely on the pillow. The neatly printed words: "Dear Sir!"

The head of Charles' Teddy bear, ripped from its body.

VIVIAN

Before she can scream...

EXT. MANHATTAN/ ESTABLISHING

Rain pounding the East River. Hazy city lights beyond the mist.

Lights go on in a midtown High-rise window.

INT. HALAS' NEW APT - NIGHT

A ringing phone. The lamp flipped on. Remnants of heavy drinking abound in the tony, newly occupied apartment. Bed on the floor, no other furniture.

Halas searches for the receiver. Follows the cord along unpacked moving boxes. Answers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HALAS

Yeah?

MARGRAFF (FILTERED)

I've been calling you for an hour.  
Get up. You need to get down here.

HALAS

What time is it? Call Stabler. I'm  
not on tonight.

MARGRAFF (FILTERED)

You are now - turn on the TV. It's  
gonna be a fucking circus.

Beleaguered, Halas hangs up. Flips on the Television.

NEWSCASTER (FILTERED)

--this just confirmed. Two hours  
ago, June 27th, 2-year-old Charles  
Lake was kidnapped from the Lake  
family estate in Montauk Long  
Island.

ON SCREEN: Frantic news footage. Every channel. Live Chopper  
shots of the sprawling mansion. Police lights play out over  
the exquisite Seaside estate. The newscaster...

NEWSCASTER (FILTERED) (CONT'D)

--on this familiar plot of ground  
where tragedy struck so many years  
before, for a year they'd escaped  
the limelight, while the public's  
demanded their return. Well  
somebody has sought them out.

Halas in the TV's glow. A turn in his eyes. He jumps as the  
phone rings again.

HALAS

(picking it up)  
I'm watching. I'm on my way.

VIVIAN (FILTERED)

Is this Ryan?

Pause.

HALAS

Vivian?

Silence from the other end.

EXT. WESTSIDE HELIPORT - NIGHT

Propellers churn, rippling the surface of the water. Halas enters a Helicopter. It rises over the Hudson, while...

SFX: A VARIETY OF NEWS REPORTS CARRY US OVER THE CITY.

REPORTER 1 (FILTERED)

*"As the facts come in, one wonders. Who knew where they were? Who had the access to this child? Because many had the motive."*

ARIEL VIEW

Out the window. Standstill traffic all the way up the West Side Highway.

REPORTER 2 (FILTERED)

*"And these early hours, so critical. As hour by hour passes, hope for a safe recovery grows more and more dim."*

The entrance to the Lincoln Tunnel. An absolute bottle neck. Same at the GWB. Horns pound. Break lights all across the city.

The helicopter soars off.

EXT. ABANDONED REST STOP - NIGHT

BRIAN LESPANE (FILTERED)

*"And on the line, we've got Laura from Queens. Laura, let's hear it."*

A single street light illuminates a vacant parking area, suddenly shattered. Dark.

Robert Price hurries back to the STATION WAGON, stashed behind the rest-rooms. A half dozen other lights shattered above.

LAURA (FILTERED)

*"In my opinion, that girl was never fit to be a mother. With the drugs and the partying and the men. What example does that set."*

THE STATION WAGON

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Eaglet in the backseat. His head half shaved and Trudy Little attempts to finish the job in the dark. The baby wails.

Robert snatches the buzzer away. Locks eyes with the child. A connection - a determination between the two. Shorn hair clings to Charles' tear wet face. Robert takes the boy's hand. Seems to consider it.

FEMALE CALLER (FILTERED)  
*"It was Willie Horton."*

MALE CALLER (FILTERED)  
*"I'll tell you who did it. The guys who did Sinatra's kid. They got paid, didn't they."*

The razor buzzes as Robert brings it to the child's head. The Eaglet's remaining locks float down around him.

EXT. 495/ QUEENS/ LONG ISLAND - NIGHT

Our chopper flies over midnight traffic jams in every direction. Break-lights light the highway like a Broadway marquee.

FEMALE CALLER (FILTERED)  
*"...just goes to show you. All the money in the world, you still aren't safe."*

Police Sirens flash over road blocks at every exit. But at the Midtown Tunnel, miles from the epicenter...

EXT. MIDTOWN TUNNEL - NIGHT

Our Station Wagon is in line for the toll. Some POLICE mull around outside, though with little defined objective.

BRIAN LESPANE (FILTERED)  
*"With so much speculation and so much interest, we all must ask ourselves, how are we culpable..."*

In the car; Robert behind the wheel, surveying the cops. Their radios chattering. Trudy playing asleep in the passengers seat. Robert's eyes, furtively on the rearview as he advances to the booth.

BRIAN LESPANE (FILTERED) (CONT'D)  
*"...with so much attention lavished on this family, on this child, are we partly to blame."*  
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRIAN LESPANE (FILTERED) (CONT'D)  
*Have we preordained this nightmare  
 to come to pass."*

CUT TO:

SPORT RADIO (FILTERED)  
 "...and 90 seconds in Tyson lands  
 an upper cut that sends him to the  
 floor..."

Heard on the radio in the toll booth as the ATTENDANT makes  
 Robert's change. He returns the cash...

TOLL ATTENDANT  
 That's \$2.50

But he doesn't let go...a view of the backseat. An unoccupied  
 car seat in the rear. And something odd. A few stray locks of  
 golden hair on the vinyl.

ROBERT  
 The dog sheds.

The attendant nods. Something off, but...he dismisses it,  
 going back to his fight on the radio. As the Station Wagon  
 disappears into the tunnel, indecipherable from all the  
 others now, we angle down on the floor of the car where...

CHARLES LAKE lies under a blanket by Trudy's feet. His head  
 shorn. His mouth taped.

The car vanishes into the tunnel. The city skyline high above  
 it. Hold on the Toll Attendant's face. Too late.

EXT. LAKE MANSION - PRE-DAWN

The CHOPPER touches down on the lawn. Halas exits, set back  
 by what lies before him.

The path to the house is already blocked by a media frenzy  
 which will only multiply in the hours, days to come.

As Halas navigates through this leviathan to reach the house,  
 he cuts between:

Fans lighting votive candles. Images of Charles Lake, gripped  
 like prayer cards. REPORTERS clamor for quotes and photos.  
 News Vans file into the area like a Rosebowl Tailgate. A  
 POLICEMAN ushers Halas through a barricade, separating the  
 crowd from the crime scene...

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

MARGRAFF  
(screaming over the roar)  
Halas! OVER HERE!

Captain Margraff greets him, sleepless, disheveled. They shake hands.

MARGRAFF (CONT'D)  
What did I tell you? It's a circus.

The house now before him. It's size and grandeur are jaw dropping.

MARGRAFF (CONT'D)  
There's the kid's bedroom. That's the only site of entry.

He's indicated the second floor window, beneath which DETECTIVES examine the escape Ladder, still resting against the house. Photos are taken, documenting footsteps, shattered glass.

HALAS  
Where are they?

MARGRAFF  
The Senator's been in the guest house for most of the morning. Since we arrived. She's upstairs. Inside.

HALAS  
And she made the 911 call?

MARGRAFF  
Before she'd opened the note.

Halas looks up at the mansion.

HALAS  
What is this place? I've seen it.

MARGRAFF  
It's where her mother died.

Halas looks to the familiar stone wall running along the west end of the property.

Just before they enter.

MARGRAFF (CONT'D)  
And Halas, I should tell you.  
Kurkon's inside.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARGRAFF (CONT'D)

They've had him under a sweat lamp  
for a couple hours.

HALAS

But he hadn't been with them. Not  
for months.

MARGRAFF

So who was on their detail?

HALAS

No one. You didn't hear? They'd  
vanished.

Beat. They pass through dozens of Police to enter...

INT. LAKE MANSION - CONTINUOUS

As Margraff fills him in, Halas is led gazing at the enormity  
of the unfolding spectacle. Constant police activity all  
around.

MARGRAFF

It's bad now, in an hour this  
place'll be worse than the fucking  
Garden. They want to set up an  
entire headquarters here. Top to  
bottom.

HALAS

Who does?

MARGRAFF

Your boss. He's upstairs in the  
kid's room.

Platoons of YOUNG OFFICERS inventory the endless rooms and  
artifacts of countless wealth, open-mouthed as soldiers  
landing on foreign shores.

Each room they pass is more extravagant than the last.  
Solariums. Galleries. Bowling Alleys. No whim gone  
unsatiated.

MARGRAFF (CONT'D)

It'll take'em a fucking century to  
comb through this whole place. But  
I'd bet the kidnappers never left  
the kid's room. And I mean, there's  
easier items here to move. This  
place is fucking Xanadu.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They ascend a great staircase. The crowd collected before a bedroom door betrays the baby's room.

Just outside, Ron Kurkon emerges, absolutely broken down.

KURKON

Jesus, Ryan! I had nothing to do  
with it, man. I swear to god.

HALAS

I know.

The old partners hug. Then whispered in Halas' ear...

KURKON

(quiet)

She called you? I didn't tell her.  
She doesn't know.

(releasing him)

It's damn good you came.

MARGRAFF

C'mon, Halas. You go it alone from  
here.

KURKON

Find me before you go.

HALAS

Head above water.

Leaving Kurkon behind with a handshake, Margraff passes Halas before the crowd at the bedroom door.

Through the bodies, Halas has an obscured view of the scene.

John Lake, fraught. Interviewed.

DETECTIVE

What was your son wearing? Did he  
have any distinguishing marks? A  
Birth spot. Something unusual.

JOHN

His hands. He had...Charles was...

He stops himself. Breaks down.

DETECTIVE

Sir?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DENIHAN

I don't believe identifying Charles  
will be a problem, Detective.

(then)

Is that the note then?

Ray Denihan assumes command, his back to Halas, the ransom  
note delicately held in gloved hands.

THE NOTES READS:

*"Dear Sir! Please have 10,000,000  
dollars ready. We will contact you  
in several days with details about  
the money and where to find the  
child. But we warn you, do not  
contact the police and or press or  
we will too. We know who we have.  
We are serious people and serious  
action will be taken. Do not fuck  
with us or we'll send him back to  
you in pieces."*

Denihan turns over his shoulder; Halas in the doorway.

MARGRAFF

(already down the hall)

Halas - you're this way.

(Halas looks to him)

Be strong in there, son. She'll  
need it.

Halas looks back to Denihan, already moved on. Halas heads  
down the hall.

INT. LAKE MANSION/ROMAN POOL HOUSE - THAT MOMENT

MANCUSO

I'm sorry. It's important we get  
the timeline correct here. Your  
husband was in the guest house  
asleep at 9:30 and in which bedroom  
were you asleep?

Vivian smokes at the foot of a sprawling indoor pool, while  
Mancuso, tactlessly attempts a delicate interview.

VIVIAN

We've already been over this.  
Please, I've told you already.  
Isn't it in your notes?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MANCUSO

I'm just trying to be clear, Ma'am.  
You and your husband were not  
sharing a bedroom?

Silence. Then both become aware of Halas, waiting in the doorway.

VIVIAN

(to Halas)

God, can you get him out of here  
please? How many times do I have go  
over the same thing.

Halas gestures to Mancuso. "Go."

MANCUSO

Good luck. I hope you brought your  
bible.

He exits. Halas and Vivian watch him go.

HALAS

Repetition of events. It's  
important.

(then)

Do you want to tell me what  
happened?

VIVIAN

I can't. Check their notes. I've  
already told them our dirty  
laundry. How many times do I...

HALAS

Tell me.

(calm)

Start from the beginning.

She's exhausted, but his presence seems to settle her.

VIVIAN

John had gone in a couple hours  
before. He's been sleeping in the  
guest quarters.

HALAS

Had anyone been to see him?

She's silent, but intimates yes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

VIVIAN

I don't know who. He wasn't exactly in the habit of informing me when he had "company."

HALAS

All right. Going on.

VIVIAN

I'd put him to bed at about 11 and read in my room till--

HALAS

--put Charles to bed?

VIVIAN

You mean the Eaglet? Yes. My son. Charles.

Halas backs off. Beat.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

We'd been here for months with nothing. We never left. Sinclair did all the shopping.

HALAS

And you never had anyone over? Never had any visitors? Did anyone else know you were here?

VIVIAN

No one. My family.

(then)

Until...two men came by. They said they were looking for work. You know, landscape stuff. I wasn't here. Sinclair sent them away.

HALAS

When was that?

VIVIAN

I don't know. Two, three weeks ago maybe. And we'd called a man here a month ago to check the pool.

(almost laughing)

The police just brought him in. An older guy. He...pissed himself. I mean, they put Ron over a barrel for three hours.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

HALAS

I know. I saw him.

Halas is tentative. He looks out the window.

OUTSIDE:

The spectacle. Worshipers before the throne.

VIVIAN

Have you been involved with  
anything like this? I mean, a  
child.

HALAS

A long time ago. Once. Not like  
this but...there was a boy. Picked  
up off the street in Soho on his  
way to school. I worked it.

VIVIAN

What happened?

His face informs her. She breaks, stifles tears.

HALAS

It was different. It wasn't about  
money.

(then)

Will you pay?

VIVIAN

Will it bring him back?

HALAS

I don't know. It's a lot of money.

VIVIAN

Not to us.

Beat. Vivian coming slowly undone.

HALAS

Why'd you call me, Vivian? You've  
got quite a crew here at your  
disposal.

A moment. Composing. She takes out a cigarette case.

VIVIAN

I know about the girl.

(before he can backtrack)

It's all right.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

I didn't want to handle those things. The family secrets. That was my father's job.

She lights the first of several cigarettes.

HALAS

You'd seen them before. The pictures of John?

VIVIAN

They weren't secrets between us.

HALAS

Who else knew?

VIVIAN

I'm not sure. My father. He had...people he employed to keep him informed, you know. About his business partners, his advisories...you know, their private lives.

HALAS

Blackmail stuff?

VIVIAN

Some of it.

HALAS

Even you? Those pictures were his?

VIVIAN

It's complicated -- but he was very concerned about them getting out to the press. To public. It would have been crippling to us. To everything he'd worked for.

HALAS

Is that why he shot himself?  
(too blunt)  
I'm sorry.

VIVIAN

That was probably somewhere on his list.

HALAS

The guys who worked for your father. Who were they?

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (5)

VIVIAN

I don't know. Some were ex cops, I think. Others were...I don't know. I kept away from all that, you understand. I didn't want to be involved in those things.

HALAS

You didn't want to get your hands dirty.

VIVIAN

I just wanted to raise my family.

HALAS

But you knew her. You had Ron set up the meeting at The Majestic to get those pictures back?

VIVIAN

No. Not before this.

Vivian stands. Stamps out her smoke.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

I don't know who she got them from but those pictures of John would've been extremely valuable. When you got them back...we probably cost her a lot of money.

HALAS

She didn't seem particularly interested in money. Have you brought this up to anyone else?

She looks at him crossly. "Of course not."

VIVIAN

(pointedly)

I'm bringing it up to you. Because you've done well, and we had a deal.

HALAS

Are you threatening me?

VIVIAN

I'm asking. Can you find her?

(taking his hand)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

I'm not saying we handled it in the best way but...My father was -- he was trying to protect us with those pictures. He'd been through more than -- we all have our ghosts, Detective. You understand.

HALAS

Sure -- we all swim in the same water.

VIVIAN

And if there's a price to pay for that. If Charlie is penance for --

Halas considers Vivian, fragile. She toughens up.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

It doesn't matter, Ryan. Find her again. No strings. Whatever she wants. For both of us. I just want things to go back to the way they were. I want my son back.

INT. LAKE MANSION / LIBRARY - DAY

A LOUIS VUITTON TRUNK. Open. Deep. A pair of gloved hands align stacks of 100 dollar bills inside. One after another.

That fortune is prepared on a desk, catalogued by TREASURY ACCOUNTANTS. They record the bills serial numbers onto a list, pass the stacks along.

John, Vivian, Denihan watch the proceedings stoically. Halas with wide eyes, until Margraff appears in the doorway. Gestures, *"we're ready for you."*

Halas follows him out.

Passing through police presence in every corner in the house.

The library converted to a conference center. Phone lines. Switch boards, manned, taking calls.

The living quarters now decked with cots for 40 men. The kitchen bustling to prepare meals for the platoons.

Lt. Mancuso and Hodges oversee the operation in the Garage where a dozen gleaming vehicles have been invaded by Police. Here they take statements from "Witnesses," Faux confessors, Neighbors, all seeking their entry into the Lake's orbit.

Halas led past...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOOKISH OFFICER  
NO NO NO. We need at least a  
semblance of order here. Now,  
where'd you say these are from?

A dozen OFFICERS occupy a desk which, at this moment, is  
inundated with letters. Now multiplied as hundreds more are  
spilled from a mail sack by ANOTHER OFFICER.

A beleaguered BOOKISH OFFICER tries desperately to sort them.

MAIL SACK OFFICER  
Uhhh -- that batch was from,  
Westchester I think -- wait. Maybe  
Far Rockaway.

The Bookish officer begins to sort them. Agitated.

LIBRARIAN  
Do not do that next time! We've got  
to keep these separated. Please.

MAIL SACK OFFICER  
(walking off)  
I'm not a fucking mail man.

He exits the great commotion which is now the Lake's house,  
leaving the Bookish officer the arduous task of sorting the  
piles and piles of letters. The lot of them, in one variation  
or another, they all read - "VIVIAN LAKE."

Margraff finally pulls him away toward an idling vehicle. A  
CHAUFFEUR waits. It's Sinclair, the butler.

MARGRAFF  
I don't want to know why you were  
called up here. I don't know what  
deal you cut with them before, but  
you've been giving a second chance  
here. Remember that, son. Play it  
straight. You'll find people much  
less forgiving this time around.

Halas steps into the car. Off the slam of the door:

DENIHAN (V.O.)  
At this time, I can't go into  
anymore detail, but I can confirm  
for you this.

ANGLE ON

The lenses of a hundred cameras trained on Denihan before...

EXT. LAKE MANSION - DAY

...where he conducts a press conference on the great lawn before the legion of fans, worshipers and media growing ever more fervent in the background.

DENIHAN

(to camera)

At approximately 2:15 this morning, several men unlawfully entered the house behind me and abducted this child, Charles Lake. 2 years old. Last scene wearing a blue one piece pajama suit.

A PICTURE viewed through various lenses.

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

In the coming hours and days, the fullest extent of our authority will be executed to help return this child. A 1-800 hotline has been set-up that we urge people to implement, but use with discretion. The special circumstances of this case, the amount of public interest, sympathy and scrutiny demand a flawless investigation, and we'll do our best to deliver it. The NYPD has offered its full support, but our efficiency will only be maximized with the public's help. I implore those watching at home, for the safety of this child, please act with vigilance and self restraint and report only serious inquiries. And I assure you....

A NEW ANGLE HERE. MOVING.

I/E. CHAUFFEURED CAR - SAME

The press swarm seen from afar.

Halas inside his departing car, exiting the Lake's property. A last look to Denihan, who's words are overheard on the radio.

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

All necessary strength will be utilized to find this boy. Heaven and earth will be moved.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SINCLAIR, driving.

SINCLAIR  
They won't find him, will they?

HALAS  
I don't know.

The car pulls away past a familiar stone wall scene in the opening news footage. Vivian's mother's crash site.

SINCLAIR  
Do you believe in curses?

Halas leans back. Speeds off.

EXT. ST. MARKS ST. - DAY

Halas turning onto St. Marks, off of 2nd where he drove Ellen passed so long ago.

He checks the marquee over head. THE PEARL STREET THEATER, presenting, "*THE ONCE AND FUTURE KING*."

He heads for the door.

INT. PEARL STREET THEATER - DAY

A slight, gentle man is overseeing the dismantling of a set on stage. A crew member gives him a heads up. "Behind you." He turns. We recognize him as SEAN HARRIS, Ellen's guardian.

SEAN  
I wondered when I might see you again, Detective. You haven't come back to apologize, have you?

Halas regards him from a row in the empty house.

SEAN (CONT'D)  
You look like you're doing well for yourself.

HALAS  
I came to see Ellen.

HARRIS  
You can't.

Harris stops his activity.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SEAN

She's gone, Detective. She left. I don't know where she is.

HALAS

(sizing him up)

When?

SEAN

Just in the last few days. I came home one night and she was gone. After two years. Not a word. Vanished...That was your advice, wasn't it?

A moment.

HALAS

There was nothing I could do. But I can help now, Mr. --?

SEAN

Harris. Help her? For some reason I don't believe that's what this is about. Helping her.

(turning away)

Besides, I thought the whole world was looking for that boy. That's where the headlines are.

(Halas, steaming)

I've heard about you. You cut a lotta deals. Well a nice suit doesn't change bad breeding. Go find someone else to intimidate. You've done enough here.

Halas snaps. Grabs him violently by the lapels, lifting him off the ground with frightening strength.

HALAS

You like it or not, I'm the best chance she's got. You keep quiet and there'll be blood on your hands, not mine. I promise you that.

SEAN

Don't get rough, Detective. I'm not worth it.

Harris, gasping for air is set down. Catches his breath. Scared, but still the upper hand.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SEAN (CONT'D)

You're so dumb you don't even know it. You don't have a clue what this is about. Do you?

On Halas' sweat broken face.

IN A BACKSTAGE DRESSING ROOM - JUST LATER

Several bank bound stacks of bills concealed in a desk drawer. A small fortune viewed by Halas in.

SEAN

It's hers. I don't know where it came from. But she never touched it. Never spent a dime of it. You see, she didn't need money for those pictures.

HALAS

If not money, then what?

Halas takes in the room. All around him are the possession of a kid. A teenager girl. Movie mags, makeup all tossed about. Photos of Ellen occupying the vanity. Halas regards them.

HALAS (CONT'D)

How did Ellen know the Lake's?

SEAN

I don't know. She'd been on the streets when I first met her. She was pregnant. The first couple weeks she was here, she cried day and night. She was in some rough shape. But she was a sweet kid. Bought me flowers one morning.

HALAS

Where'd she get those pictures?

SEAN

She used to work for a pimp out of this place in Times Square. The Majestic. She was booked on a juvey charge there. That was before I met her. I think that's where she got them.

HALAS

A prostitution bust?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sean nods. Writes something down. Passes the note to Halas. #174182 scrawled on the back.

HALAS (CONT'D)

This is the incident report number?

SEAN

(nods)

You really wanna help her,  
Detective, you bring her back here.  
You tell her I'll take care of her.  
Tell her I miss her.

Halas, toward the exit. Stops.

HALAS

Would you run away and leave all  
that money behind?

SEAN

After what she'd been through...  
There are some things you just  
can't put a price on.

Halas flips the note in his hands. It's a picture. Ellen gazes up at him.

EXT. HOWARD JOHNSON'S / TIMES SQUARE - NIGHT

Halas lighting a cigarette as Leanne (the young prostitute in Halas' first scene at The Majestic) peruses Ellen's picture.

LEANNE

Last time I seen her was 'bout the  
last time I saw you.

Leanne drinks a milkshake. They occupy a booth in this, the epitome of New York sleaze joint diners. Rockers, pimps, bankers coked from the clubs, all line the tables of this neon establishment.

LEANNE (CONT'D)

There'd been a fight. Ellen had  
stolen something from Adam and he'd  
worked her over pretty bad for it.  
Or at least, had someone do it.

HALAS

You know what it was about?

LEANNE

(coy)

Maybe?

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

She looks to his wallet. Halas reluctantly producing a few dollar bills and handing them her way.

LEANNE (CONT'D)

Rumor was they were some dirty pictures. Babbitt had dirt on everyone, you know. He used to work for Cody, back in the day.

HALAS

Cody?

LEANNE

All those guys. Cody. Denihan. Blackmail stuff. He liked to work it into the girl's acts too, thought it was a kick. You know, an equal opportunity offender. Plus, they couldn't do anything to stop him cause he had dirt on all of them too. I'll tell you, he's got stacks and stacks of the stuff in his office. It's like the New York Times in there, 'cept he guards it closer than his cock. But I think I know where he keeps the keys.

(then)

If you got a skeleton in your closet, I bet he knows about it.

Halas, feeling close.

HALAS

When's he get in?

LEANNE

Never before midnight. Likes the house to fill up.

Halas, mind running, pocketing the picture. A WAITER approaches.

WAITER

Everything good here?

Leanne smiles, her mouthful.

HALAS

She ever talk about Vivian Lake? More than just gossip stuff.

(off her face)

What?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LEANNE

I thought you knew. That's how she first came in there. To "play" Vivian. She was always part of the show. But she was too young, even for Babbitt.

Halas, connecting the dots. He throws some money on the table for the bill. Way too much. Getting up to go.

HALAS

You tell Babbitt I'll be by to see him.

(of the check)

Is that gonna cover it?

LEANNE

(she smiles, then)

You know you're not the only one looking for her. Guy came by yesterday asking questions. Day before that, your partner came through.

Halas perks up.

HALAS

Kurkon? You know who this other guys was?

She nods. Smiling big as she sucks through her straw.

LEANNE

What'd she do anyway?

EXT. HOWARD JOHNSON'S / TIMES SQUARE - NIGHT

Taxis lighting up the avenues. "CATS" on all the billboard signs. From a far we see Halas exit the diner, pitch his cigarette. Run to his car.

Someone is watching him.

EXT. WILLIAMSBURG BRIDGE - NIGHT

POV: THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD OF A SLOW MOVING CAR:

We find Halas, trolling beneath the trembling bridge where the HOMELESS are collected around steel drums, burning fires.

Many are here, MEN, WOMEN, asleep or nodded off in trashbags and cardboard boxes. All ages. All kinds. But not Halas' man.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

From one face to the next. Nothing. He stops. Lights a cigarette. Looks out over the collected disappointments of New York. Defeated, about to exit when...there he is.

A tall, languid figure in a top hat and waistcoat, shooting up in the shadows.

HALAS

Chrissy?

CHRISSY

(totally gone)

Yeah?

CHRISSY (35) looks as if he's been kicked off of some vaudevillian stage a long time past. A pimp's gate. A junky's hollow cheeks.

HALAS

You look pretty good, man.

CHRISSY

You know. Got a keep up appearances. Dress for the job you want and all.

HALAS

I gotta ask you some questions.

CHRISSY

Yeah?

Only now does he look up out of his stupor, double taking at the sight of Halas. Fear runs right through him, and he's instantly on his feet, sprinting along the street.

Halas, in pursuit. Their silhouettes pounding past the fire lights.

It doesn't last long. Chrissy, stumbles on dopey legs, crashing into the street. Crawls on his back as Halas hovers over him. Menacing.

CHRISSY (CONT'D)

(crying now)

Don't hurt me, man. Look at me. I'm sick, man.

(Halas picking him up.

Slammed against a pillar)

We were friends. We were partners, like. Times are hard out here, man.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CHRISSY (CONT'D)

They put a curfew on the park, you know. 1 am. After all the raids, ain't nowhere else to go.

HALAS

You still run your girls?

CHRISSY

Nah...Yeah. A few. As you might imagine, not so many thoroughbreds as the good old days when you and Kurkon were running things but...as you see, it ain't the Ritz 'round here no more.

HALAS

What about this one?

Ellen's picture. Chrissy shakes his head.

CHRISSY

Nah. Not me.

A gutshot. Halas doubles him over with a punch to the ribs. Chrissy heaves hard.

HALAS

Two days ago you were in The Majestic looking for her. Why?

CHRISSY

It wasn't for me.

HALAS

Who?

(he's scared. Silent)

Who?

Halas smacks him in the face. He blubbers.

CHRISSY

This boy Robert. Just a junky from around the way. I was just looking for cash.

HALAS

Where are they?

CHRISSY

Please, man. I can't. They'll hurt me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

HALAS

I'll hurt you, Chrissy.

Face to face. He believes him. No choice.

CHRISSY

All right, man. Fuck. OK. I'll tell you. This shooting gallery up off the park. It's not far. I'll tell you.

HALAS

Come on. You're gonna show me.

As he leads him off by the scruff of his neck...

NEW ANGLE:

Halas and Chrissy, watched through a car windshield as they head on north toward...

EXT. TOMPKINS PARK - NIGHT

Other worldly sounds emanating. The screaming, moaning junkies, the squatters, the homeless burning fires have all been sequestered to one small corner of the park. POLICE occupied, maintaining the boundary.

They call out as Halas moves Chrissy through.

COP

There's a curfew here! Parks closed!

Halas shows his badge. Walks on. Screaming out we hear...

HOMELESS MAN

You don't own this city, man! We know the truth! We know! We know! This ain't just yours!

His last words as the POLICE drag him away. As Halas heads into...

8TH ST ALLEY

Halas arrives in the opening. Quiet. Desolate. Chrissy is all fear and strung out nerves.

CHRISSY

I can't be here man.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HALAS

Shut up.

Halas shines his flashlight up ahead, cutting over vacants, uncollected trash, then...

100 yards ahead, a few FIGURES nodding off. They wake at the light. Take off running. Halas watches them go. His eyes on the flophouse door.

HALAS (CONT'D)

That's it?

But no one is there to answer. He points the beam around. Chrissy's footsteps escaping in the wind.

Hold on Halas. Alone in the dark alley, his light hitting off a trash can still smoking. He approaches.

The can is burnt out but some vestige remains. The flashlight hits it and Halas' face turns grave.

ANGLE ON THE TRASHCAN: Inside, the burnt remains of small blue felt. CHARLES LAKE'S clothing.

Halas is full of fire. Of fear. He spins his beam and 20 yards ahead, it catches chrome. A car bumper concealed beneath a tarp.

With a cautious look behind, he withdraws his gun and approaches. Slowly, Halas pulls back the plastic. The grill of a Volvo flashes in the light.

Hold on Halas.

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. LAKE MANSION - ESTABLISHING

Days into the spectacle, the crowds have not waned. LOCAL RESIDENCE have taken up selling food from carts to the out-of-towners.

While local police are assisted by every able bodied man, boy, boyscout troupe, who scour the woods off the property with dogs and flashlights in hopes of turning up some misplaced clue. Some sign of hope. While inside...

INT. LAKE MANSION - SAME

Land on the mail desk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Our MAIL OFFICER, reading a letter. Places it in pile.  
"Discard." Reaches for the next. Pause.

He pulls his hand away. His finger glistens dark. Wet. He  
looks to the envelope.

The manila envelope drips dark red. Scrolled across "VIVIAN  
LAKE."

OFFICER  
Detectives...Detectives!

At a distant station...

OFFICER (CONT'D)  
DETECTIVES!

Margraff looks up, freezes.

INT. 8TH ST. ALLEY - THAT MOMENT

Halas, plays the flashlight over the discarded vehicle. The  
front seat illuminated, vacant. Passing now toward the  
back...

Halas goes grim. Fumbles for his radio.

HALAS  
(desperately to his radio)  
Badge number 82195. Officer  
requesting assistance in 300 block  
of East 8th St. Possible homicide.  
Repeat, officer needs assistance.

Bravely, he refocus the light.

THE BACK SEAT

A child's safety seat, vacant, though flecked with shorn  
blond hairs caught aglow in the light. The Teddy Bear is on  
it's side, soaking wet. The seat around it glistens in the  
beam, a pool of blood.

INT. LAKE MANSION - SAME

Margraff approaching the MAIL DESK where FEMALE POLICE and  
RURAL VOLUNTEERS weep and console each other with tissues.  
Margraff gets a view. Instantly.

MARGRAFF  
Get 'em the fuck out of here. Clear  
everyone out. Everyone out--now!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Finally, people turn and disperse. Most with pale faces, their hands clasped to their mouths.

Margraff and Mancuso converge around the BOOKISH COP.

MANCUSO

Can we trace it? Can it be traced?

BOOKISH COP

Y-y-yes yes. I think so.

DENIHAN

Is it his?

Ray Denihan, arriving on the scene, assuming command.

MARGRAFF

We don't know. We'll need...

DENIHAN

Not a word of this leaves this room. Do we understand? No press. No news. This stays here.

(then)

Someone go get the family.

EXT. EAST VILLAGE ALLEY - JUST LATER

SPOTLIGHTS illuminate the Volvo. A crime scene established. Neighbors gathered on their stoops. The alley, blocked at either end to hold off the crowds.

Halas stands in the center of it all, among many SWAT MEMBERS and other Detectives viewing the car as forensics work by the beams of flashlights, exposing the cars interior. The sight is ghastly.

The CHILD'S SAFETY SEAT. The Eaglet's hair. The blood pools gleaming all around. A SWITCHBLADE soaked in its stream.

SWAT

All right, lads! We're going in.

The SWAT TEAM has already assembled at the door of the building. They swing the battering ram. The door busts open.

INT. EAST VILLAGE FLOPHOUSE - SAME

The building is completely derelict. Flashlights illuminate vials, syringes littering the floor. Molded cots in unoccupied bedrooms. No doors on the hinges.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

Halas, gun drawn, follows the team, ascending a rickety staircase.

UPSTAIRS

Halas stops. This floor has been occupied, through recently vacated. Clothes, magazines, newspaper scattered about displaying Charles Lake's image along side take-out containers. The place discarded in haste.

IN THE STAIRWELL

VOICES YELL OUT as Police try to hold back the rush of onlookers flooding into the house.

UPSTAIRS

Halas waits as the SWAT TEAMS kicks open a door. It falls off its hinges. They level their guns, though all is silent. Halas steps into the doorways to reveal:

A MAKESHIFT OFFICE - monumental plans. Maps illustrate the Long Island Sound. Montauk. The Lake Estate.

Time lines detail the dates of the Lake's exodus. July 15th. Circled.

Halas pushes in slowly on a Xeroxed photograph, blown up on a wall.

It shows one angle of the grand estate house. In Red Marker, a circle has been drawn around a second floor window. Charles Lake's bedroom.

COP

Jesus. They knew everything.

Off Halas' face...

INT. LAKE MANSION - SAME

We follow John Lake, navigating through the gathered crowd toward.

FORENSICS

If its the boy's, I'd sit on every hospital in the Tristate, cause if they didn't take him in, you can shut this all down. The boy's dead already.

JOHN

What is it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

All action stops. The forensics working among the package, silenced.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Have they contacted.

The crowd at the mail desk falls silent as John appears.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Have they?

DENIHAN  
Yes. I'm sorry.

Among the stacks of fan letters and notes of good prayers, the package is open. Its edges are soaked red. Its contents spilled out.

In a pool of blood, there lays a baby's right hand, severed at the wrist.

John's face drains white.

INT. TOMPKINS PARK - MUCH LATER

On the eastern corner, FORENSICS dusts a mailbox, illuminated by spotlights.

MARGRAFF  
Good police, this guy Louima who'd found the letter. Tracked it back to the postman. The handwriting was so illegible, almost never made it out.

Halas smokes. The two scenes now joined. Margraff beside him.

HALAS  
Finding a usable print on that box'll be like winning the lottery. Half the junkies in the park use it as a fucking toilet.  
(then)  
What'd the note say?

MARGRAFF  
"Now you know we know. We told you no police. We told you no news. Get rid of them, or next time it's his head."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The park nears riot. Glass rains down from the protestors as police quarantine occupants in the park. Loading them into PADDY WAGONS. The people beginning to resist.

MARGRAFF (CONT'D)

You hear two uniforms got hit with bottles outside that punk club on Bowery last night.

HALAS

This city's about to crack.

The two Detectives view the scene around them. Pandemonium.

CUT TO:

BRIAN LESPANE (FILTERED)

Here at Tompkins park tonight; gruesome developments in the disappearance of the young Eaglet.

INSERT NEWS FOOTAGE:

The reporter covering the carnage at the park.

BRIAN LESPANE (FILTERED) (CONT'D)

The events exemplify an already turbulent relationship between the police and the members of this community who've fallen through the cracks. The haves and the have-nots. And the commissioner is expected to announce another neighborhood curfew to go into effect at midnight tonight.

INT. 9TH PRECINCT - DAY

A BRIEFING ROOM of COPS. Amped. Pack to the gills, all waiting for...

Ray Denihan enters the room, folder in hand. A hush over the crowd. Approaches the podium. His lieutenants at his side.

DENIHAN

(reading)

This just back from the DMV. Car was registered to a Linda Mansfield of Long Island City. Reported stolen, 5/12/86. We'll recanvass the owner, but for our intensive purposes, it's a dead end.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DENIHAN (CONT'D)  
(grumbles from the crowd)  
What isn't, is this.

Lights down. POLICE COMPOSITE DRAWINGS project on the wall.  
Spitting images - TRUDY and ROBERT.

DENIHAN (CONT'D)  
At approximately 4:15 Thursday  
night, a Toll Attendant at the  
Midtown Tunnel now believes he saw  
these two men. Both white males.  
Both between 25 and 40. Entering  
the tunnel in a green Volvo Station  
Wagon. New York Plates. A child  
seat in the rear.

VOICE FROM THE CROWD  
He let 'em go?

DENIHAN  
We'll not afford to make the same  
mistake. You all are temporarily  
reassigned from your current cases  
to assist in the investigation of  
the Lake Kidnapping. Of these two  
men. Wake up the neighborhood. And  
gentleman, do not be shy with  
either your tactics or your hours.  
Overtime has already been  
unilaterally approved.  
(a smattering of applause)  
Anything you need on this one. The  
eyes of the nation will be upon us.  
You treat this kid like he's Jesus  
Fucking Christ, which a lot of you  
already believe him to be.

Laughter ripples through the crowd. Lost on Halas.

MANCUSO  
This is your directive. Careers  
will be made from this boy. Go find  
them, Detectives.

Angle on Halas, frozen in the streaming crowd.

INT. NYPD / 9TH PRECINCT - JUST AFTER

Officers hurrying in every direction. Margraff scanning the  
crowd for...

Halas, at his desk. His gun checked into it's holster.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARGRAFF

You got an angle?

HALAS

I got something.

As we cut to...

EXT. TIMES SQUARE - NIGHT

The two Detectives, hustling north on Broadway toward its heart. The streets are packed. Steaming. Lit by neon. Halas, filing him in as they fight through the crowds.

HALAS

Not strong arm stuff, but you know, blackmail. Cody had guys collecting dirt all over the city. Ellen, she got the pictures from this guy Babbitt, where she tried to work.

MARGRAFF

How do you know all this?

HALAS

Some were ex-police.

(of Margraff's look)

Look, when Kurkon started for Cody, it was clear not everything was on the up and up. He'd taken a call one night at Vivian's, just after we'd been detailed off the Bowery. A domestic dispute. We were both in bad with I.A. Even then. Kurkon especially. They were up his ass about an OTB scam he was running in Chinatown. A week later, Kurkon was working for the old man, clean slated, passed on his pension two years away.

MARGRAFF

So that's how you got your stripes? Trading on runaways.

HALAS

We can't all be desk rats.

MARGRAFF

Fucking two coronaries, you little prick. I'm 53. I took my share of doors.

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARGRAFF (CONT'D)

You go after him and Kurkon's behind this, there'll be a lot of people digging around your backyard. You know where all the skeleton's are buried?

On Halas, as they turn the corner to...

EXT. THE MAJESTIC - NIGHT

A familiar back door. Halas blew through it many months ago in search of Ellen. Now, he and Margraff wait for a way in.

MARGRAFF

What is this place?

Off Halas' face as the back door pushes open and a TRANSVESTITE in a full mink steps out for a smoke.

The men exchange a look, then grab the door before it shuts.

INT. THE MAJESTIC - NIGHT

From backstage, Halas and Margraff watching a performance underway for a packed house.

ON STAGE - A BEDROOM SET: "Charles Lake's Bedroom."

A WOMAN - "VIVIAN LAKE" - enters, holding the hand of a MIDGET - "CHARLES LAKE." She puts the *child* into the bed.

"VIVIAN"

"Get some sleep now, baby. You're getting so big, pretty soon I won't be able to carry you."

"CHARLES"

"Do you want to see how big I really am?"

He pulls back the sheets...

THE AUDIENCE *HOWLS*.

"VIVIAN"

"My my. Mommy better take a closer look."

As she heads down...

Halas and Margraff navigating the backstage freakshow. The performers preparing, different characters in the Charles Lake saga. They linger in the wings for their "entrances."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARGRAFF

He know we're coming?

HALAS

I'll go first. It ain't gonna be pretty.

Halas leaves Margraff, and passes through smoke filled rooms of burlesque performers, prop tables of dildos, bottles for insertions, opium smoked behind veiled curtains.

He comes upon an office door.

A MIDGET PERFORMER, watching from the shadows.

HALAS (CONT'D)

He inside?

MIDGET

I think he's with someone.

Halas tries the door. Locked.

INTERCUT WITH:

Margraff, waiting in the wings. Out of his element. An eye on the crowd. Something off. He peers out to the house where...

A commotion ripples through the tables as a MAN barges through, trying to escape to an exit. He knocks over a chair.

BANKER

The fuck are you doing?

The BANKER shoves him, sending him to ground. All heads turn now. People stand to watch as ROBERT PRICE gets to his feet.

Margraff, eyes on him. Blood on Robert's hands.

MARGRAFF

Halas!

Found...

INT. THE MAJESTIC / OFFICE - THAT MOMENT

...kicking open Babbitt's locked door. The frame splinters. Dark. Until a flashlight clicks on illuminating the office. Hold on Halas as he draws his gun.

A cot. Overflowing ashtrays. Fuck pics and set drafts on the walls.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Folders and folders of illicit photographs spilling from everywhere. The place has just been ransacked.

But Halas sees something else. An arm stretched out on the floor. Halas moves slowly, kneeling beneath the cot where...

ADAM BABBITT is found in a pool of blood. Dead on the ground. A knife in his side.

INT. THE MAJESTIC / HOUSE - SAME

Robert, now trying to back out, sees Margraff push through the crowd.

Robert, frozen, surrounded. He puts his hands up.

INT. THE MAJESTIC / OFFICE - SAME

Halas backing out of the room which now begins to collect with onlooking Performers. As they peek in to witness for themselves...

Halas moves toward the stage, an urgent search for Margraff, who he finds approaching Robert Price through the crowd...

A SCREAM cuts through them all. Leanne in the doorway at the sight of Babbitt, pooling blood on the floor.

Everyone freezes, and this is when Robert takes off running. Margraff on his feet.

The Detectives giving chase...

BACKSTAGE

Robert sprinting through dressing rooms. Leathered girls looking up...

Through STAGE HANDS pulling curtains, moving dressing...

Through the back sex rooms, costumers serviced....

The Detectives on his heels to the back entrance...

EXT. THE MAJESTIC - THAT MOMENT

Robert burst out the door through smoking performers, taking off down the street.

Halas and Margraff, a beat later, breaking at a dead sprint up the alleyway.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

Down 8th Avenue, blistering with pedestrian date-night traffic.

Robert, looks back. The Detectives sucking wind. A hard right. Port Authority looming ahead. Robert, weaving through the departing buses, comes crashing through the station doors, taking off inside the building.

Halas, bursts through the doors. Margraff close behind. All into...

INT. PORT AUTHORITY BUS TERMINAL - SAME

The heart of darkness. Skidrow. Homeless central. Halas makes Robert up ahead, pushing over a NEWS VENDOR, to a pedestrian bridge connecting the terminals. Robert leaping the stairs. Two at a time.

Halas, closest at his heels...up the stairs, tearing across the bridge over buses arriving below.

Margraff, slower, panting, struggling up the stairs. As Halas follows Robert down the concourse, Margraff stops along the overpass, sweating and purple faced. A hand to his heart. He's stops and catches wind. He's out.

Halas alone now, chasing Robert down the terminal.

20 feet ahead, Robert heads for the green globe of a subway station, leaps down the stairs. Disappears.

Halas, full tilt, stops at the stairway's edge. Peers down. A moment. He draws his gun, descends...

INT. PORT AUTHORITY BUS TERMINAL / SUBWAY - NIGHT

Silently, Halas descends the steps. No one on the platform.

The booth: Empty of an attendant.

Halas hops the turnstiles, down the station stairs.

PLATFORM

Dead of night quiet. Vacant. Fluorescents flicker overhead. Trash on the tile grime. Halas recoils from a VAGRANT, passed out in his filth on the bench. Wrapped all around him. NY POSTS. Discarded. Fluttering. CHARLES LAKE.

Halas peers into the tunnel for the specter of an oncoming train. Only black. Nothing ahead.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BAM! Halas is decked as Robert comes out of the shadows. Gun held cock-eyed. He whips it at Halas face. Connects. Blood flying.

Halas falls to the edge of the platform.

THE TUNNEL; the first glint of light appears, as Robert comes over him. Takes him by the scruff of the neck.

ROBERT

You've been looking for that whore.

The trembling of an approaching train.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

You're too late.

Halas, strains to look up as...light catches the rail like a flame in distance and runs down the tunnel opening.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

You should of asked your partner.

The trembling louder. The light misting the tunnel opening. Blood hitting the platform as Halas is driven toward the edge. The train roaring forward on the tracks.

Robert pushing him toward the blinding light emerging from the darkness, churning for Halas.

He screams. Held out into the path over the precipice.

HALAS

Wait. WAIT! DON'T DON'T DON'T  
DONT'!

Muffled by the writhing train. The face of the half asleep, now panicked CONDUCTOR blows white to see...

Halas, square in the path of the oncoming train.

Too close to break now. Pounds the HORN.

HALAS

Light barreling toward his blood covered eyes. He SCREAMS.

VOICE

FREEZE! Put him down and turn  
around! Put him down and turn  
around!

Margraff on the landing - gun leveled.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The train squeals into the station...just passing Halas; balancing a hair's breadth from the hurtling metal, as Robert sets him down.

MARGRAFF

Now turn around...

Slowly, he turns...metal in his hand. The gun to the back of Halas' head.

A stand off on the platform. Margraff and Robert with triggers ready. The doors open on an empty train. The faint sound of the recording onboard.

P.A. (FILTERED)

This is an A train to Lefferts  
Boulevard. The next stop is...

Still on the platform. No one chances a move. Shielded by Halas, Robert backs carefully to the waiting train. The gun still to Ryan's head.

As the doors close, at the last second Robert sends Halas to floor with a shove and steps inside. The metal shutting in front of him as Margraff angles for a shot. No use. The train pulling into the tunnel. Into the darkness. Gone.

The two cops collapse. Halas to the platform. Margraff to the bench, regarding the gun in his hands.

EXT. PRECINCT - MORNING

In last night's clothes, Halas, a bandage around his head watches...

Deep in the packed precinct, Denihan and Vivian are in the midst of a heated discussions.

VIVIAN

I don't know. Maybe we let them  
come to us. We back off and pay  
them and they won't...

DENIHAN

Vivian, I know that seems like the  
right decision, but it's just not  
that simple.

In another cluster of cops, SINCLAIR the butler is pumped by a dozen Detectives.

Margraff, arrives, hands Halas a cup of coffee. Takes a seat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HALAS  
(of Sinclair)  
What's he doing here?

MARGRAFF  
He IDed the suspects. Said they  
came by the house couple months  
back, looking for work.  
(of Vivian)  
She wants to shut the whole thing  
down.

Halas, watching the commotion as...

VOICE  
Detective Halas?

A BABY FACED UNIFORMED COP stands before him, looking like he  
just drew the short straw.

BABY FACE  
They were looking for you. Heard  
you came in but, you know, with all  
this...

HALAS  
What?

BABY FACE  
You put out a want sheet on a girl?  
14, 15. Dark hair. Real stunner.

HALAS  
Yeah.

Beat.

BABY FACE  
Something you might wanna see.

Off the Uniform's reluctant face...

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE - MORNING

Halas, at a dead broken sprint, runs up the entrance to the  
bridge. To the center. He stops.

The police scene is all ready assembled. Police cars, sirens  
block the roadway. As Halas hesitantly approaches the edge,  
the policeman chattering.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

POLICEMAN

We're not gonna get much out of these yokes. The yid that saw her go over'll still be drunk tomorrow. Just kept saying she hit the water like a bird. Just quiet.

Halas pushes passed them. To the edge. Below.

THE WATER

A POLICE BOAT trolls. Dragging a net cast out behind it. Spotlights illuminate the black water. Searching.

HALAS

On the bridge's edge. The city aglow before him. He hangs his head in despair as...

BELOW

The search lights hit the boat's wake. A FEMALE BODY is caught in the net, drug pale and ghostly from the depths.

INT. MORGUE - DAY

The body is viewed on the slab. The tray suspended in mid air, half removed from its locker. Ellen is of course its occupant, beached and etherial.

Halas views her along side MULVEHILL, the morgue attendant.

MULVEHILL

May have been the impact. You hit the water from that height, you might as well of jump from the Empire State. But she was naked when they fished her out. Now maybe the clothes come off in the water, but I'd bet someone took 'em off before.

(indicating wounds along her biceps)

See these bruises here, these are preexisting. Victim has multiple lacerations--here--and here--and this bruising across her clavical--superficial wounds on the hands and fingers.

HALAS

Defensive?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MULVEHILL

Might be. I'd put the date, time of these markings the same day--give or take a couple hours.

HALAS

And this?

He indicates a scar cutting north from her pelvis.

MULVEHILL

Cesarian. I'd say, 2 years ago. Hard to say exactly. The cause of the rest of these, difficult as well.

(indicates)

These could be forceful strikes with something like a stick. A thin hard instrument.

(he demonstrates)

Could be a fucking strap on. I don't know. But somebody worked her over 'fore she took her swan song. Still, she's got some face.

(Halas, fuming as...)

Oh, here's our man.

Mulvehill turns to greet a new member to the room. Halas goes white. Sean Harris, still in pajamas, stands before them.

A hand to his mouth as he approaches the body.

MULVEHILL (CONT'D)

She's been IDed. I'm sorry to bring you down here for a formality but...

Sean passes Halas with a cold eye. Stands over the body.

ANGLE on the girl's face. Waterlogged and devastating. The extent of her damage is severe.

Harris hangs his head. *"Yes, it's her."* He cries.

Halas can only look on as...

CLOSE ON THE MORGUE FILE. Mulvehill fills in her name.

ELLEN GRAHAM.

INT. OUTSIDE THE MORGUE - JUST AFTER

Halas blows out the doors, heartsick. Directly into the path of...

VIVIAN

No. You listen! He's my son. He's my son and I won't let you use him as some sort of political capital! You shut it down.

Denihan and Vivian at the end of their argument.

DENIHAN

Vivian -

VIVIAN

Don't. You owe it to me. I know what's at stake. You think about why you're standing where you are today. You think about it when you're back in your office counting poll numbers. You owe us. You owe it to us.

Vivian storms off, meeting Halas eyes. A moment. She's gone.

DENIHAN

So it was your girl?  
(Halas is silent)  
That's a nasty cut, son. Go take care of it.

Halas departing.

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

It's a long road, Ryan and there's no turning.

Halas, ready to burst...

EXT. FDR - NIGHT

Quiet. The black river. Industrial Brooklyn. Headlights blazing up the highway:

I/E. HALAS CAR - NIGHT

Halas' spare revolver in his lap. A box of bullets vibrating on the dashboard.

Halas' car takes an exit, "WESTCHESTER," speeds out of the city.

EXT. WESTCHESTER - NIGHT

Headlights bleeding along the darkened suburban roads.

BRIAN LESPANE (FILTERED)  
 (on the radio)  
 And the fate of the Eaglet, this a  
 horrific reminder of his captors  
 intentions and resolve. As the  
 hours, days tick a way with still  
 no sign, hopes for a safe recovery  
 grow ever more dim.

Halas' TEMPO tears around a turn, heading into the distance.

EXT. RON KURKON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

His car pulls to a stop before the ostentatious home. He  
 shuts off his lights. Unholsters his weapon.

INT. RON KURKON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Halas creeps down the familiar, darkened halls.

Various rooms of recently accumulated wealth. The children's  
 bedrooms. Thick with spoils.

KITCHEN

Gun drawn, Halas stops.

MRS. KURKON  
 He said you'd be coming.

MRS. KURKON's been crying. She sits at the kitchen table,  
 smokes.

MRS. KURKON (CONT'D)  
 I knew when he got involved with  
 that family that they were rotten.  
 The first night he'd come home from  
 them, he had blood on his hands.  
 I'd never seen that before.

HALAS  
 Is he here?

MRS. KURKON  
 He left an hour ago. Someone  
 called. He just packed a bag and  
 left.  
 (beat)  
 I don't think he's coming back.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

Halas waits. Mrs. Kurkon pushes a folder across the table.

MRS. KURKON (CONT'D)  
He left these for you.

As Halas eyes them.

MRS. KURKON (CONT'D)  
That's the guy on the news, right?

Halas flips open the folder. A RAP SHEET. A MUG SHOT. TRUDY LITTLE.

MRS. KURKON (CONT'D)  
You were partners, Ryan. What did  
you men do?

Halas can't answer. He's reading the file. A line circled in red.

KNOWN LOCATIONS: 10th STREET RUSSIAN BATHS.

MRS. KURKON (CONT'D)  
Good riddance, huh?

Off her face...

EXT. EAST VILLAGE - NIGHT

To the east, the Marquee of the PEARL ST. THEATER. To the West, the flophouse days before. The boarded windows. Graffitied doors.

Halas looks back to the park, which seems to steam as a post war battle field. He heads east on 10th St. A sign above a town house door reads: RUSSIAN BATHS.

INT. 10TH ST RUSSIAN BATHS - DAY

Immigrant, bearded faces look up as Halas rolls silently across the lobby, his badge extended.

A swarthy MAN behind the counter gestures to a descending staircase in a far corner. Halas nods, heads toward it.

DOWNSTAIRS:

The schvitz in an old town house populated by OLD JEWS, RUSSIANS, the occasional leering QUEER. Conversations of politics and business MURMUR the groups.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The oppressive heat hits Halas in the face. His clothes cling damp. All eyes falling upon this stranger among the towelled, glistening men.

He scours their faces, bringing conversations to a halt. All coy advances stopped. Their attentions instead to his raised badge. To the heated metal of his gun as he patrols past.

Silently from room to room. From face to face. In each, no sign of Trudy. No sign of suspicion until...

THE RUSSIAN ROOM:

Halas opens the door to scalding heat. All voices fall dim at the sight of him in the stone room, except for...

VOICE

--come on, man. 20 bucks. Just  
twenty bucks. I'm good for it. You  
know I'm good for it--

This too, now silent. The desperate voice from the small, scant man in the corner, now withdrawing his pleading hand from the thigh of a large, sopping Bear.

His hands up at the sight of Halas, dripping in the doorway. The gun leveled upon him. TRUDY LITTLE.

TRUDY

Oh god! Don't shoot.

MAIN ROOM

Halas leads Trudy at an arms distance by the scruff of his neck past gaping eyes. Trudy remains stoic.

But as they ascend the stairs, his future closing in on him, he breaks into sobs. Halas pushes him forward.

MAIN FLOOR

As they reach the landing, the arriving costumers and swarthy COUNTERMEN watch confounded at the captured prisoner.

HALAS

(to the counter)  
Call 911. Tell them it's Detective  
Halas for Captain Margraff in the  
9th. I only want Margraff.

He picks up the phone. Trudy blubbers through tears.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TRUDY

Can't I at least get my clothes on.  
I don't want them to all see me  
like this. Don't make me go out  
there like this.

As Halas considers, the door rings as new costumers enter.  
Freeze at the odd spectacle.

In the brief confusion, Trudy breaks for the stairs...

No chance to shoot, Halas goes after him...

Trudy bolts up steps toward the second floor. Halas at his  
heels...to the landing. Trudy stops, nowhere to run. Hands  
raised passively, backing away as Halas approaches.

TRUDY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I swear. I  
never meant to hurt him.

Halas cracks. Tackles Trudy into the wall. Pounds him with  
rib shots. Punishing, defenseless blows.

FACES peer out from the MASSAGE ROOMS which line the hall,  
witness the beating, then just as quickly retreat to their  
indiscretions behind closed doors.

Halas, unable to stop. Demolishes the dismal figure.

Finally, he pulls away. Blood on his hands. Trudy Little; in  
a rumpled mess, bleeding, sweating onto the floor.

TRUDY (CONT'D)

I wanna--I wanna speak to -- I  
wanna talk to John Lake.

The look across Halas' face. Sober realization. The end of  
the line. Sirens begins to sound.

EXT. POLICE PRECINCT - NIGHT

PRESS, collected on the grand steps of the department. Rising  
in unison as...

From the arriving FORD TEMPO, Halas escorts Trudy Little out  
the door, covered only in a robe. Instantly, flashbulbs  
surround him.

PRESS

*Is he alive? Where's Charles Lake?  
What do you say to Vivian Lake?*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Trudy, terrified. Halas, fighting their way up through the flashing crowd, pushing through the station doors where...

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - THAT MOMENT

Margraff greets their escape.

HALAS

(off the press outside)  
How the fuck do they find out so fast?

MARGRAFF

They have informants at the dispatch offices. Denihan'll be on his way soon.

(regarding Trudy's face)  
Who worked him over?

(no comment)  
What's his story?

HALAS

A CI. Kurkon busted him on a prostitution charge in '85.

Halas, leading Trudy on by the cuffs.

MARGRAFF

Where are you going?

HALAS

I want first crack at him.

INT. OUTSIDE INTERROGATION ROOM - LATER

Margraff watches through the one-sided mirror as Halas wears Trudy down.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - THAT MOMENT

Trudy is at the desk, naked. Shivering. Halas has obviously already had his way with him.

TRUDY

What else do you want to know? I don't know where he is.

Ellen's morgue shots pushed before him. Halas, alone, staring him down. A plastic bag on the table.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TRUDY (CONT'D)

I'm telling you the truth. I didn't...I didn't have anything to do with that.

(he pushes the pictures away)

Kurkon said she was yours, I thought.

HALAS

Watch it. Be cute. I'll climb over this table and knock your fucking teeth down your throat.

(then)

Start from the beginning then. Kurkon.

TRUDY

Yeah.

HALAS

She had pictures. You were supposed to rough her up. What happened?

TRUDY

You know. She was just a kid. I just needed the money. I'd do jobs for Ron from time to time. He called me, told me to find a friend. Some muscle, you know. To take care of this girl. They'd gotten her over to the Majestic. But as soon as we got there and it starts getting rough, she starts wailing and talking a blue streak.

HALAS

You knew who Kurkon was working for?

TRUDY

Sure. I knew he sometimes worked for Cody, blackmail stuff cause he had me keep an eye out for nice dirt. Like an, informant. You know.

HALAS

But Cody was dead?

TRUDY

Yeah, I know. Ron said he had a new guy calling the shots. Look, we were there, she started balling.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TRUDY (CONT'D)

Telling us stuff that couldn't be true. Things you say when you're, you know, to save yourself. Shit about the family. The Lake's. Vivian. Stuff they'd done. And man, that's how this all started. Robert, he got obsessed with this stuff. And Ellen. She was on her knees. Begging. Said, if we let her go...if we let her go she'd tell us something we could make like a million, ten million bucks on. And Robert let her go.

HALAS

What'd she tell you?

TRUDY

Nothing, man. Like I said. It was nothing. Robert was gonna kill her and...

HALAS

What did she tell you? Where's the kid?

(he won't)

All right. All right, Trudy.

He can see it in Halas' eyes. He's summoning up his past. Halas puts his night stick on the table.

HALAS (CONT'D)

You remember how they used to do this in here?

(eyes on the nightstick)

Hands on the table. Ass in the air. You sing or you scream. I don't wanna do you like that Trudy, but you're not leaving me any choice. Either you tell me what you know, or I gotta make you bleed.

Trudy pisses himself.

TRUDY

Come on, man.

HALAS

What did she tell you?

TRUDY

About the kid.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

He cracks. This purges out through tears.

TRUDY (CONT'D)

That...that Vivian would pay us  
just to shut us up.

(can't get it out fast  
enough now)

Robert says it's perfect cause even  
if we get caught...even if the kid  
died, god forbid, we'd be good  
because of what we knew. It'd be  
like...what's it called. A golden  
parachute. We were only going to  
keep him for a couple days. Things  
just got so complicated, you know.  
I mean, when we'd first got the  
kid, and we where out there in the  
woods. In the dead quiet, I  
remember, I just said to myself.  
Here we are. Here you are Trudy,  
with the most famous kid in the  
world and we had him, we had him  
right in our arms. Right out of his  
own bed, and it was just so easy. I  
just kept thinking, ain't this  
something.

(then)

I swear. It wasn't me. Cause Robert  
just went crazy. Said we needed to  
send 'em a message. So they knew we  
knew. And that's when...

Trudy begins to cry the real tears. They come out in waves.

TRUDY (CONT'D)

I left.

HALAS

Is he still alive?

TRUDY

I think. I swear. I swear to god I  
didn't think it'd be like this. I  
don't know where he is. I swear. We  
were moving around so much.

HALAS

All right, Trudy. All right.

He's spent. Halas knows it. He pushes the plastic bag to him  
on the table.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

HALAS (CONT'D)

Get dressed. I don't know if  
they'll fit but...

Clothes. Trudy takes them gratefully, dresses.

TRUDY

I'm gonna fry for this, ain't I?  
Maybe I could talk to the family.  
Tell her I know what I done was  
wrong and...

Trudy, trying to find the words when the door opens.

VOICE

So this is our boy?

Commissioner Denihan comes up behind him. Eyes on the  
nightstick. The piss on the floor.

DENIHAN

(to Halas)

So what is he, Ryan? Hard or soft?

Off Halas' scraped raw hands.

HALAS

Soft. With some hard spots.

Denihan looks to Trudy, nearly dressed now, save for a BELT  
coiled on the table. His fear just ramping back up.

DENIHAN

Good work, Detective. I'm gonna  
want a word with you.

(to Trudy)

You know who I am, son?

(Trudy shakes his head)

Well I'm not the guy that makes  
threats. I'm the other guy. You  
understand?

Trudy nods.

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

Good. Let us see if we can't come  
to some understanding.

(a look to Halas)

Alone.

No fight. Halas leaves.



INT. OUTSIDE TRUDY'S CELL - THAT MOMENT

A swarm of police have gathered. Halas storms out.

The back of the room. Halas stands with Margraff, witnessing the carnage of their spoiled effort. In hushed tones...

MARGRAFF

I couldn't hold 'em off.

(then)

Is he alive?

HALAS

I don't know.

A moment. The door opens. Denihan bee lines for Halas.

VOICES

What'd he say?

DENIHAN

We're gonna have a little talk, you  
and me.

No one sees Trudy in the window behind them, barricade the door with his chair. Climb onto the table. Something in his hand. A moment.

ANGLE ON HALAS - his eyes turn to see...

THE WINDOW - Trudy's feet on the table. A heartbeat. He steps off, but doesn't fall. Suspended.

Halas is already breaking for the door. The knob won't turn. He slams it. No give.

COP

He barricaded the door!

Now the crowd turns, *holy shit!* Trudy's feet suspended, kicking off the ground.

The door. All rush to it with shoulders down as...

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - THAT MOMENT

Trudy's feet. The chair pinned under the door...breaks in pieces as the door bursts open and Cops topple in.

Halas goes right for him. Trudy, hanging from a pipe in the ceiling, the belt around his neck.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They all struggle to lift him up, to unstrap him. But it's a wasted effort. By the time he's laid on the desk, his face is white, breathless.

Halas stands over him, deflated. Denihan stands in the doorway. The men meet eyes.

EXT. DENIHAN CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

Rain casts down on the street. Inside the vast office floor, Campaign workers huddled around television sets in the midtown ground floor retail space, ala Taxi Driver.

INT. DENIHAN CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

In the back office, campaign paraphernalia all about, Halas is being reamed out by Denihan.

DENIHAN

I've gotta distance myself from you now. You put that boy in jeopardy today. Now I've had just about enough of this Sam Spade bullshit. You think I don't know what you've been up to? You're gonna tell me just what he told you in there and I want the god's honest truth. What did he tell you about that boy?

Mancuso and Hodges stand close by.

HALAS

Nothing.

DENIHAN

Nothing?

HALAS

He said he was sorry.

DENIHAN

(to his men)

The fucking balls on this guy.

(to Halas)

You know, you're the worst kind of disappointment, Halas. Because you had all the tools, all the gifts and you still took the easy way out. You could have done something with your life. Done it on your own merit, but you didn't have the backbone to do the work. You didn't have the heart to slog through it.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DENIHAN (CONT'D)  
You thought, what? You're entitled  
to it.

Denihan turns to the window. Rain. The *gaslights* lit.

DENIHAN (CONT'D)  
You know my father was a milkman,  
up and down Park Avenue. My mother  
worked the coat check at  
Bloomingdales. Gives an idea of how  
different things were. This city.  
So much of that charm is gone.

On the street, a CABDRIVER cleans mess from the seats of his  
car; a newspaper over his head to lessen the rain.

DENIHAN (CONT'D)  
I worked my way up through the skin  
of my teeth without short cuts, or  
your privileges, but there is a  
limit to it. Arthur Cody allowed me  
to achieve things I couldn't have.  
He was not a populist but he cared  
about this city. He gave me clout.

Now turning back to Halas, a measured calm in face.

DENIHAN (CONT'D)  
I bet you walked into that house,  
and thought you'd be pissing on ice  
for the rest of your life. Well  
don't think she didn't know it.  
Whatever guilt you carry around,  
this girl's got a reservoir that  
you can't even touch.

Denihan moves to the door. Opens it for Halas.

DENIHAN (CONT'D)  
There're no more angles here.  
There're no more deals. There's no  
card to play. I'm sending you back  
to the D.A. and this time, you're  
gonna face what you've wrought.  
Stay away from her, Detective. You  
understand?

HALAS  
(standing)  
What about the boy?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DENIHAN

He's not your concern anymore. He's not any of ours. As far as we're concerned, this case is closed.

(off Halas' face)

That's the way she wants, so she gets it. Don't fuck with me, Halas. I'll slice you apart.

EXT. DENIHAN CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

Rain in a back alley. Halas, hands on his knees, retching. His wipes his mouth. Collar up against the rain. Heads off.

VIVIAN (V.O.)

It now appears evident that the immense attention devoted to our son, well intentioned and otherwise, has hindered our ability to bring him home safely.

INT. HALAS APARTMENT/STAIRWAY - NIGHT

Halas struggles up the walk up. In the dim light, he looks dripping, broken. He reaches the clearing, leans against his door. Exhausted.

VIVIAN (V.O)

That is why tonight, we have asked to Police to suspend their investigation into the disappearance of our son and the men who have him.

Finally, he enters and shuts the door.

INT. HALAS APARTMENT - NIGHT

Halas, drink in hand, is back where we first met him. Regarding a drawer full of money. A packed bag. A chance to run. His last options as Vivian continues her press conference on TV.

VIVIAN (FILTERED)

It is our belief that our best hope for Charles' safe return, is for all of us now to return to our daily lives and allow those men to contact us without fear of retribution from either the police or the media.

Halas, lost out the window in the city lights.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

I know that in many ways my family has been blessed. Unfairly perhaps. We only ask that whatever grievances; however our extravagances and our mistakes have affected your life, that you understand, they are our own. Not our boys. We can not choose our family or the past. He is still an innocent, even if we are not.

Halas, considering. He sets down his drink, eyes on the cash.

FADE TO:

INT. PRECINCT - DAY

A CITY MAP. Dotted with thumb tacks. SIGHTINGS. LEADS. They cover the entire city. Though now, all unattended.

BRIAN LESPANE (FILTERED)

On the record, there is no longer an active investigation into his disappearance. But off the record, the search goes on in every street corner, bus stop, back alley of the country.

The ransom notes. The phone banks, the file center, abandoned. The precinct now quiet.

BRIAN LESPANE (FILTERED) (CONT'D)

100,000 man hours logged. Untold millions already spent. 4 weeks, 3 days passed and still no new signs of Charles Lake.

A few officers pantomime normal life. Some watching Denihan at a campaign stop on Television...

DENIHAN

My opponent seems to believe that if we help the very wealthy, it will trickle down to the rest of us. Well my friends, I say progress must begin on the streets and not in the boardrooms.

Mock applause from the cops in the precinct, though not from Halas. Absent. We must locate him...

EXT. MIDTOWN TUNNEL - MORNING

In a patrolman's uniform, Halas idles in a Police Cruiser outside the tunnel, watching the trucks come and go.

A traffic cop. Back on a beat.

INT. POLICE LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Halas changes out of his uniform, dressing in street clothes. Many other OFFICERS are here in friendly conversation...

OFFICER

He's ahead in the polls but that  
don't mean shit till November.

... though not with Halas. He's silent. Alone with his thoughts. Focused on a picture, taped in his locker. We've seen it before, in his first apartment. Halas, as a boy. Pure and clean.

A last look. He shuts the door.

EXT. POLICE PRECINCT - DAY

Halas lights a cigarette, pockets Vivian's lighter, heads up the street when...

VOICE

Ryan. Ryan!

He turns. There, dourly disguised on the street, Vivian Lake, pulling down her sunglasses to reveal herself.

VIVIAN

I'm sorry. I didn't know how else  
to find you. Is there somewhere we  
can talk?

Off Vivian's face...

INT. HALAS APARTMENT - DAY

Halas, opening the door, allowing Vivian to enter. He follows.

HALAS

Can I get you a drink?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VIVIAN

What? No. Thank you. I'm fine.  
I'm...John's staying in town at The  
Plaza in case they contact. I can  
only stay for a minute.

HALAS

(his hand on the bottle)  
Mind if I?

Of course not. He pours himself a healthy glass. Sits.

HALAS (CONT'D)

Any word?  
("no")  
I didn't expect to see you again.

VIVIAN

Yes. Well it all happened so  
suddenly, I...How are you? I read  
about the indictments.

HALAS

I'm all right, I guess. Anyway, it  
was a long time coming.

She manages a smile. She's frail, tired. Faded. A long  
silence then...

HALAS (CONT'D)

You wanted to talk?

VIVIAN

You're still looking for her? Who  
killed her?  
(beat)  
But you know, don't you?

HALAS

We worked together, Ron and I. For  
five years in ad-vice. When I was  
first on the force. I was just out  
of school. I thought I had things  
by the balls.

VIVIAN

On the Bowery?

HALAS

It was a free for all. Dope,  
prostitutes. Nobody gave a shit.  
Everybody was on the take.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HALAS (CONT'D)

The Commissioner practically encouraged it. Kept the neighborhood at his feet. Kurkon was like the fucking Pope.

(then)

That's the first time I remember knowing it. Realizing. There was a difference. Money. Class.

VIVIAN

You were young.

(puts out her smoke)

It's not wrong to want those things.

HALAS

I'm 35 years old. At some point, you stop looking to play the angles and look in the mirror. "This is it. You're gonna get up in the morning, and you're gonna work, and you're gonna do it to the day you die." You grow up, right? The bright lights -- You put away whatever that shit is.

(beat)

I should of put it away a long time ago.

She watches him, intent. A long moment.

VIVIAN

Could I have that drink now?

Halas goes into the kitchen. A moment later, he returns with a glass of Vodka.

HALAS

Sorry. There's no ice.

VIVIAN

It's all right.

She drinks.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

If I told you what happened to her, would that be enough? Could you stop?

(waits)

She came to us with those pictures. She wanted money. So we paid her.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (3)

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

I asked Ron to make sure it was over. That's it.

HALAS

Did you know where he is? Ron.

VIVIAN

(shaking her head)

We just wanted to make sure...

HALAS

The ends were tied? Why do you stay with him? Why not just leave?

VIVIAN

I tried once, but not for a long time. I was in love once too, to a much older man. It was a long time ago. My father put an end to it. John was his idea. He was nothing when we were introduced. He was a state senator. My father made him a star. He created it. This family. In some ways, even Charles was his idea. I never wanted to be a mother.

Vivian drinks. The glass is empty. She sets it down.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

Anyway, I wanted you to know. I wasn't all bad.

She fumbles for her cigarettes.

HALAS

You're a rich woman, Vivian. When you get him back, you can do whatever you like.

She scoffs. Lights.

VIVIAN

You didn't know my father, Ryan.

Halas watches her. She's exhausted. Emotionally.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

If my son's still out there, if he's still...I just...it doesn't matter. We're all responsible for our own decisions. No one makes them for us.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

(then)

I doesn't matter if you believe me,  
Ryan. It's the truth. Whatever else  
I did to her, I didn't have her  
killed. I don't think I could do  
that. I wanted you to know that.

She puts her hand on Halas' and smokes. He watches. Silent.

INT. HALAS APARTMENT - LATER

A cigarette in hand, a single light on in the bedroom. Halas  
sits at the foot of the bed, regarding a well worn  
photograph. Ellen.

He flips it over in his hand. On the back, scrawled in Sean  
Harris' hand. An INCIDENT NUMBER. #174182.

Halas considers it. Smokes.

INT. POLICE RECORDS ROOM - NIGHT

Middle of the night. Dead quiet. Halas waits at an unoccupied  
secretary's desk.

The SECRETARY returns, her face buried in a file.

SECRETARY

Ellen Graham?

(looks up to Halas)

There's a file on her, but not  
under that number.

She hands it over to him.

HALAS' EYES ON THE FOLDER: "Ellen Graham"

SECRETARY (CONT'D)

Just some Juvenile Prostitution  
bust. Looks like the court couldn't  
locate her parents, and she chooses  
spending three months in Juvey  
rather than say who they are.

Halas flipping through the wrap sheet.

HALAS

(fingering the file)

She only serves 20 days of her  
sentence. Someone must of signed  
her release.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SECRETARY  
Should be on there.

ANGLE ON THE SIGNATURE LINE: "R. DENIHAN."

Off Halas' face...

SECRETARY (CONT'D)  
Now, what's strange...here's the  
number you gave me.

Placing another file on the desk. #174182

SECRETARY (CONT'D)  
It's not a incident report. It's a  
call number. They correspond with  
911 calls recorded by the routers.  
They're transcripts.

Halas opens the file. Dates. Addresses. Halas flips the page.

HALAS  
There's nothing here.

SECRETARY  
Don't you think that's strange.  
(as Halas figures)  
I'm not a Detective but I read the  
magazines, you know. Isn't that  
where Arthur Cody lived?  
(points to the address)  
The Monroe Stahr.

Halas' eyes.

HALAS  
This is the date?

Writing it down. July 14, 1987.

INSERT: FADING NEWSPAPER HEADLINES. MICROFICHE.

**"Tragic Accident Claims DuPont's Life."** The image of the  
Porsche smashed against the stone wall.

**"Twice a widower. Starlet daughter witness to bloody wreck."**  
A STUDIO PUBLICITY PHOTO of a young, etherial VIVIAN LAKE.

All viewed by Halas in...

INT. NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY - NIGHT

Halas huddles in the mircrofiche booth.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The faximile of newspaper print scrolls across the screen. Pauses. Halas perks up.

*"A CALAMITOUS YOUTH: Vivian Cody; a sad reminder of the pratfalls of life among the elite."*

A variety of images illustrate Vivian's turbulent adolescence. The predominant themes; booze; drugs; sex.

Vivian at 14-15-16, on the arms and laps of famous and illustrious men. The Lolita of powerful men's hearts. The articles slow to reveal this image:

Nymphet Vivian exits a Hollywood party. She's coked to the gills, and clutches to the arm of a theatrical, artistic figure - 15 years her senior in sunglasses and tweed. A Bogdanavichish director perhaps. Or a writer. The caption...

*"Vivian and playwright Adam Babbitt live the nightlife."*

The blurring newsprint. Next:

*"A Stern Warning: Grieving Father Lays Down Law."*

Arthur Cody's return. Cody, with the help of a Security Guard, escorts a shaken Vivian, down the front steps of a house. Adam Babbitt watches from the porch.

Halas, inches from the screen. Pushing in on the face of that Security Guard. *Ray Denihan.*

*"A Marriage for the Ages. Cody weds rising Political Star."*

Vivian escorted down the aisle by John Lake.

*"He's Here!"*

In a hospital bed, Vivian and John present their baby to the world. Now held by his proud Grandfather; Arthur.

ANGLE ON HALAS

The next slide.

*"911 Call evokes troubled pasts."*

"Police respond to an emergency call placed from this address. 723 Riverside Drive. Home of John and Vivian Lake....Lake family deny the call was ever placed."

This time, the picture shows a single police cruiser parked before the Monroe Stahr.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The date. July 14, 1987. Hold.

EXT. NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY - NIGHT

Halas runs down the steps of the judicial building.

EXT. THE MAJESTIC - LATER

Police tape over the doors. Leanne, the prostitute, watches as Halas checks his surroundings, flicks a knife. Cuts the tape. His hand on the knob.

INT. THE MAJESTIC - JUST AFTER

The once packed theater is vacant. The lights out. The stage empty.

Halas and Leanne pass through it toward...

BACKSTAGE

Halas tries the door to Adam Babbitt's office. Locked. A moment. He steps back, unsheathes his gun...BAM!

The door splinters. Halas pushes it open...

INSIDE

Much as it was last scene. Files collecting dust. Leanne considers them reverentially. Halas pushes through them towards...the lockbox beneath the cot. Looks to Leanne.

She opens a door in his desk. A bible. She opens the cover, a rip in the facing. Leanne removes a key. Off Halas face...

LEANNE

You figured God didn't exist in a place like this. Little miracles.

The key in hand, Halas tries the lock. The door pops open.

Cash. Drugs. Pictures. Halas reaches for the hidden stash, but removes only a single item. A cassette tape.

LEANNE (CONT'D)

What is it?

A moment. Halas hands her the stacks of cash.

HALAS

Get lost, all right.

She considers it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEANNE

You're a decent guy, Halas.

HALAS

It ain't out of gallantry.

She flips through the cash.

LEANNE

It's really something, ain't it.

She smiles, and runs out. Halas, alone. Regarding the tape.

JUST LATER

The cassette in a tape deck. Halas presses the button. The wheels begin to turn. A voice sounds...

OPERATOR (FILTERED)

911...what's your emergency?

Sobbing.

OPERATOR (FILTERED) (CONT'D)

Sir...can you hear me?

MALE VOICE (FILTERED)

I think he's dead!

OPERATOR (FILTERED)

You think someone has died?

MALE VOICE

He's not breathing! Jesus Christ  
he's not breathing! Oh my god.  
Please hurry!

OPERATOR (FILTERED)

All right, Sir. I'm sending someone  
right away. Can you tell me who's  
not breathing?

MALE VOICE (FILTERED)

It's our son. Please hurry. He's  
bleeding very badly.

OPERATOR (FILTERED)

I'm going to get you help. Can you  
tell me where you are? Can you tell  
me your name?

MALE VOICE (FILTERED)

My name's John Lake.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

OPERATOR (FILTERED)  
Ok, Mr. Lake. And you at 782  
Riverside Drive? Is that correct?  
Sir...

JOHN (FILTERED)  
He---he fell. My wife...Please, for  
Christ sakes, hurry.

OPERATOR (FILTERED)  
John, I didn't understand you. Is  
that your address? 782 Riverside  
Drive?

Silence.

OPERATOR (CONT'D)  
Sir? Sir, is that your-

The line goes dead. Stop. Dial tone. Hold on Halas.

EXT. PEARL STREET THEATER - NIGHT

Halas hurries inside.

INT. PEARL STREET THEATER - NIGHT

...down the dark, vacant aisle.

HALAS  
(calling out)  
Sean! Sean, it's Ryan Halas--

He stops. Before him on the empty stage, Sean Harris is  
still. His wrists cut. Dead. Pooling blood.

For a long time, Halas is silent. A noise emanates from  
another room. Like the SOUND of a RECORD CLICKING, coming to  
the end of it's reel.

DRESSING ROOM

Halas enters, wafts his nose. The smell of something rancid.

The sound is louder here. A bouquet of roses sit on the  
vanity. Ellen's pictures in memoriam. Halas locates the odors  
source. A wastebasket on the ground. It's contents burnt.  
Ashen.

Halas looks closer. Stacks and stacks of bills, Ellen's  
money, torched.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The CLICKING LOUDER. Halas finds that source. A reel to reel projector at the end of it's spool.

Halas presses rewind. The wheels spin back, the tape collects. Stops. Halas, presses play.

ON SCREEN:

Ellen Graham is on the stage at the Majestic. It's several years ago. She is young. She steadies herself, deep breath, bats her big doe eyes directly into the lens and ...

ELLEN

"And of course she had a pool. Who didn't then? Mabel Normand and John Gilbert must have swam in it ten thousand midnights ago, and Vilma Banky and Rod La Roque. It was empty now...or was it?

(feigns looking into the distance)

It was all very queer, but queerer things were yet to come."

And then a MAN'S VOICE sounds out. Familiar. Sharp.

MAN (O.S.)

OK. You can stop there.

She stops and waits. Her heart pounding. Her eyes drift off screen to where the VOICE called out.

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

Now where'd you say you were from again, honey?

ELLEN

Little bit of all over, I guess.

MAN (O.S.)

And your family?

(silence)

Your folks?

Ellen falls extremely shy. Silent.

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

That's all right. Do us a favor now. Just look right back into the camera and tell us your name again.

Ellen stares dead ahead. Tries a smile...

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (2)

The tape cuts to static. The spools spinning, stop.

A moment. Halas recoils. Hits rewind.

EXT. PEARL STREET THEATER - NIGHT

Halas exits.

Before him, Tompkins Square is teeming. Tensions are mounting. Trouble in the air.

Halas heads for his car, while elsewhere in the park...

PAYPHONE

On the corner of 7th and A. A phone number scrawled on a napkin. A trembling hand punching the digits. The phone to his ear.

VOICE (FILTERED)  
Hello?...Hello?

MAN  
I need to speak to Vivian.

VOICE (SINCLAIR)  
Who's calling please?

ROBERT  
I'm the man who has her son.

As the voice on the other line grows faint, Robert Price steadies himself against the booth and waits.

EXT. THE MONROE STAHR - NIGHT

The Chateau throws tremendous shadows across the estate. Headlamps dark, Halas' car comes up the long drive toward the house.

As Halas exits the car, comes up the courtyard steps...

SINCLAIR  
Mr. Halas. Are they expecting you?

Sinclair has stood up from preparing the Rolls for a drive.

HALAS  
I don't think so.

As he cleans his hands, he gestures Halas toward the house.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SINCLAIR

Please, I'll tell them you've arrived.

HALAS

Tell her I'll see them out here.

Halas and Sinclair share a moment of understanding.

EXT. THE MONROE STAHR - JUST LATER

Halas waits where he first arrived at the house, months before. In the small grave site just off the Mansion. Considering the ancient stones. But this, much more so the single unnamed, undated marker. The small marble crucifix above the grave.

John and Vivian, stopping first to hand a large suitcase to Sinclair at the car, come now beside Halas.

HALAS

You're going somewhere?

VIVIAN

You haven't heard? They called. We're meeting in an hour to make the exchange. Ryan, it's over! We're getting him back.

They look down at the gun, pointed from Halas' hand.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

Ryan?

HALAS

How'd it happen?

JOHN

What's he talking about?

HALAS

I'll make it easy on you. You never wanted all this and Charles was, what? One more thing holding you to it. You wanted to leave. You were angry at John. You were angry at your father for your whole life. And with the baby gone, there'd be nothing holding you to it.

VIVIAN

What?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HALAS

I heard the tape. I've seen the money you paid her.

(silence)

Babbitt brought her to Denihan cause she looked like you, and they cut her a deal to let her go.

VIVIAN

Can't we -- let's talk in the car. We're getting him back. Later. We'll talk. I'll tell you everything. But not now, Ryan. Please. Later.

HALAS

He's not yours. He's not real.

(a look to the grave)

You killed your own child and you hid him away like a...you replaced him like he was...

VIVIAN

I won't listen to this anymore! It's ridiculous. It's just-

BAM! All jump as Halas fires off a warning shot.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

You're crazy. You don't know what you're talking about. We don't have time.

And she starts purposefully toward the car.

JOHN

Vivian. Vivian! Please. It's all right. We'll go.

(then, finally)

I know you don't understand, Detective, but it's true. No one could know.

Beat. Vivian slaps John in the face.

VIVIAN

Shut up!

JOHN

Shh. It's all right, Viv.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HALAS

She had nothing. She was a kid and you took it from her.

JOHN

At first, we let her see him some, but it was just...It was too hard. In the end, he was better off with us.

HALAS

She wanted him back. And you sent those men to shut her up. You sent me to finish it, but I couldn't. And she already told them the truth and they used it against you. You wouldn't do the dirty work so you had Kurkon do it for you.

JOHN

I'm sorry. I know you wanted it to be one way, but it's not that way.

Now taking Vivian in his arms. She crumbles.

VIVIAN

It was just an accident, Ryan. It was just...bad luck.

HALAS

Was it? God, you're so careless.  
(to Vivian)  
You smash things up, and you leave everyone else to fix them. You have everything and you don't understand it. People would give everything for this.

JOHN

Haven't we?

HALAS

I'd of given my right arm for what you have.

JOHN

As it turns out, Detective, the sacrifice is of a much more private part of yourself.

(then)

I'm sorry. You're a decent man, it seems. But now we have to go. Please.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Approaching from the dark, a gun in Halas' back. Ron Kurkon.  
John takes their coats.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry. I know it isn't fair.  
It's just the way it is.

And he escorts a broken Vivian to the car. Sinclair closes the doors as they climb inside and pulls away.

Halas and Kurkon alone. The gun between them. Looking down at the graves before the house.

EXT. SEAPORT - NIGHT

Ron leads Halas at gunpoint through the now familiar docks. Quiet. The water, black beneath the cliff.

HALAS  
You don't have to do this.

KURKON  
We can't run anymore, Ryan. I'm  
sorry. Just a little further now.

He leads him along. A dark corner just ahead.

OVERPASS

Halas stops his march beneath the overpass where he'd stood with Ellen so long ago. The river just before them. Their shadows throw long across the pavement.

KURKON (CONT'D)  
This is it. Quiet now.

HALAS  
Make it fast, all right?

The gun shakes in Kurkon's hands. Halas waits the final verdict. His finger trembles.

He can't do it. Kurkon lowers the gun.

Halas, puts out his hand.

HALAS (CONT'D)  
Give it to me, Ron. It's all right.  
I know.

Kurkon, crying. He places the gun in Halas' hands.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Halas weighs it.

HALAS (CONT'D)

She never told me anything, Ron.

(then)

What'd you do with her? You took her here? Like old times?

KURKON

It was both of us, remember. You led me to her. It was for us.

HALAS

Where are they meeting him? Where's the drop?

KURKON

It's in...it's at Marble Cemetery. On Second Avenue.

HALAS

Downtown?

KURKON

I'm sorry, man. God, I'm just so...She didn't beg, Ryan. I was quick. I was really-

BAM! A flash in the tunnel. Kurkon's face alights. Stumbles back.

Blood spills from his mouth. He looks in Halas' eyes the gun is pulled away from his stomach, smoking.

Kurkon falls to his knees. Blood lets out around him.

For just a moment Halas watches his face go cold.

THE RIVER

Halas, walking quickly along the water. Wiping down the gun in his hand. A look around him. He pitches it into the river.

It hits quiet in the dark. Halas takes off running.

INT. DERELICT APARTMENT - NIGHT

A squalid, empty space. A single crumbling arm chair occupies its center, upon which "Charles Lake" sits. A bandage around his wrist.

Robert walks into the frame, approaches the child. Cloaks the baby's head in a ski mask. Exits.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Pull out from Charles, hooded, alone on his awkward throne.

EXT. WESTSIDE HIGHWAY - NIGHT

City lights passing along the windshield of Halas' Ford. Only the voice on the radio.

BRIAN LESPANE

For months here, tensions between the residence of this neighborhood and a wealthy city spreading into it have mounted, and tonight they have come to a head.

He speeds south towards...

EXT. TOMPKINS SQUARE - NIGHT

Brian Lespane, reporting before an angry crowd.

BRIAN LESPANE

There is already an incredible police presence around the gates of the park as you can hear behind me, protestors are fervent. If you can't make it out, they are saying "CLASS WAR. CLASS WAR." It is quite a scene.

Tompkins Square, needle park. 500 starving artists, junkies, squatters occupy the park. Waving signs, bottles in hand. Camcorders documenting.

A bottle streams through the air, smashes at the feet of POLICE at the gates. They jump. All are hotblooded.

INT. 9TH PRECINCT - NIGHT

CLOSE ON A PA SPEAKER:

PA SPEAKER

All available personnel, assistance in need at 7th Street. Avenue A. Overtime has been approved for all officers volunteering to assist with the protest at Tompkins Square.

The full strength of the unit in RIOT GEAR. A great commotion under way.

EXT. EAST VILLAGE - NIGHT

Halas' Ford cruising down oddly vacant streets. Crossing an avenue. Halas stops.

A foreign sight. Cadence footsteps as the RIOT POLICE ARRIVE up the avenues heading to the park. POLICE LIGHTS in tow. A platoon of MOUNTED POLICE trot down Avenue B. Horse breath under streetlights.

It's an incredible show of force. Of occupation.

Halas, a last look at the parade - he continues on.

Several hundred feet ahead, the car comes to a stop.

Halas parks before an unassuming iron gate in the middle of store fronts on 2nd Avenue. A small crest accounts its history. The New York Marble Cemetery.

INT. HALAS' FORD TEMPO - SAME

Halas opening the glove compartment. Removes his firearm. He loads the chamber. Steadies himself. Snaps it shut.

EXT. MARBLE CEMETERY - NIGHT

Cautiously, he enters. The gate leads Halas through a narrow passage way, cut between two buildings. Finally giving way to...

The graveyard is wrapped by stone walls, secluded from the city in the center of a block. Its tombs, mausoleums, monuments spread across an idyllic, rolling lawn. It is tranquil, and utterly withdrawn from the city around it.

At the far end of the pasture, SEVERAL DARK FIGURES gather by a tomb.

Halas, hands on his gun. He creeps closer to hear...

VOICE

All right. That's good. Set it down right there.

He approaches the gathering. Vivian and John lay the money out before Robert Price.

The ransom conducted among impressive monuments, the text book names.

Halas, concealed behind a mausoleum, watches...

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

Robert, kneeling to examining the money.

ROBERT  
It's all here?

VIVIAN  
Yes. It's there. Where's our son?

ROBERT  
All right. He's close by. A couple  
blocks from here...

But as Robert closes the bag and stands, John levels a gun at him.

ROBERT (CONT'D)  
What are you doing?

VIVIAN  
John!

JOHN  
I'm sorry. We can't let you go.

ROBERT  
This is the deal. I haven't told  
anybody. I haven't...nobody knows.  
I kept my word.

But John steps closer.

ROBERT (CONT'D)  
You're crazy, man. Think about the  
kid. What about...

John cocks the gun as...

HALAS  
Don't move! Stop right there!

Halas steps out, gun trained.

VIVIAN  
Ryan...

BAM! A shot fires.

Vivian SCREAMS. John holds the side of his face, stunned. He pulls his hand away, wet in the moonlight.

Robert's gun smokes. Shaking in his hands. Robert and Halas in a face off.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ROBERT

If I don't get back, that kid's as good as dead.

(picking up the money)

I'm walking out now.

(backing through the stones)

Nobody better follow. I swear to god, anyone comes, I'll cut his face off.

Robert, at the gate with his bag of millions.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

No reason it had to be like this.

A last second, he bolts out the door.

JOHN, bleeding badly from his neck, finally stumbles. Falls to his knees.

Vivian SCREAMS, runs to his side, trying to contain the wound.

VIVIAN

(to Halas)

Please! He needs help. Call 911!

Halas watches in limbo. The sound of Robert's footsteps escaping away.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

Ryan...please. He needs an ambulance. Please. He's all I have left. Ryan, where are you...Ryan! Ryan!

But Halas' turned, sprinting toward the gates after Robert, disappeared into the night.

Vivian SCREAMING after him. John lying in her arms.

EXT. 2ND AVENUE - THAT MOMENT

A strange pulse on the street. Empty, though WILD SOUNDS are heard in the distance. Far ahead, huge crowds are seen tramping north up the city.

Halas searches. Nothing. Then, a shadow dashing beneath a street lamp. Halas pulls his gun. Too late. Robert is gone. Following the crowds.

Deep breath, Halas takes off. Sprinting after him toward...

EXT. TOMPKINS PARK - NIGHT

Illuminated by spotlights, crisscrossing the increasingly drunk and agitated crowd. Ghattobirds hover overhead. The junkies' VOICES rise in the air. The PATROLMEN at stiff attention, hands on night sticks. Tensions at a breaking point.

Protestors YELL obscenities. Finally, a hand comes flying. A BEER BOTTLE streams through the air. Smashes at a COPS feet. A horse nays, up on hind legs as...

The air now rains down with bottles and beer cans; crashing all around the COPS. Shields up. Deflecting the damage. A WHISTLE BLOWS. Time to break heads. Raising their night sticks, the police storm the park.

EXT. 2ND AVENUE - SAME

ANGLE ON ROBERT

Clutching the trunk in his arms, sprinting up 2nd Avenue where PROTESTORS stream in all directions, flooding the streets near the park.

He quickens his pace to join the mob, then enters it. Checks over his shoulder, then slows to the march of the crowd and blends in. Disappears.

ANGLE ON HALAS

Reaching the crowds at a sprint. A running COP'S RADIO SQUAWKS as he blurs past Halas.

DISPATCHER

...repeat. All available officers  
in the vicinity of Alphabet City,  
please respond. Riot in progress.  
Repeat...

In the flowing streets, Halas searches the faces heading toward the park. Young and old, artists and junkies. No sign of Robert till...

A face looks furtively back. There he is, dipping out of the crowd into an alley and vanishes.

Halas pushes through the mob after Robert.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Robert, gripping the money to his chest, walks quickly beneath the dark fire escapes, where a group of KIDS prepare MOLITOV cocktails behind a dumpster.

HALAS, gun drawn, turns into the mouth of the alley. The parade of protestors passing behind.

Ahead, Halas sees the BOYS behind the dumpster, though no sign of Robert.

HALAS  
(to the boys)  
Which way?

They shrug. Though a wad of bills sticking from a LITTLE GUYS pocket betray their sincerity.

Halas moves deliberately ahead toward where the shadow of a doorway where...

ROBERT waits with out breathing. A gun clutched to his chest. Hands trembling as the shadow of Halas slides toward him along the alley way. Finger on the trigger. He waits.

HALAS, eyes caught up ahead at a glimpse of the teeming TOMPKINS PARK, steps now to the opening of the doorway when..

VOICE  
What the - the fuck are you kids  
you doing?

Halas turns to see...

The MOLITOV kids, discovered by a group of PATROLMAN who now push them up against a wall.

COPS  
You little shits.

And commence to WAILING AWAY at them. As Halas watches the kids get pummeled, he's unaware of Robert emerging from the shadows. In trembling hands, training his gun on the back of Halas' head. Finger to the trigger when...

A bottle drops off the dumpster in the scuffle, crashes to the crowd, and EXPLODES. A burst of flame sends up through the alley way, alighting the night, revealing...

COP  
HEY! BEHIND YOU!

Wide-eyed, Halas turns back toward the doorway, only...it's now empty.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Robert's taken off. Running toward the alley opening...

Halas giving chase, as the two men come into full view of...

THE TOMPKINS SQUARE RIOT

The spotlights crisscrossing the park where a full scale riot is now underway. No barrier now. Police entangle with angry protestors. Cuffs are slapped on. Beatings are delivered.

We find Margraff, holding back, witnessing the fray. Bad vibes. Until a bottle cracks across his back. He staggers, stands. Breaks. Attacks the first thing he sees.

ANGLE ON HALAS, stopped mesmerized in the street. And...

Robert, his escape ground to a halt in the middle of the pavement as...a single HORSE, loose from his rider, tramples up the street in a spooked panic, gallops passed him up and turns a corner. Robert watches it go, transfixed then...

HALAS

Hold it, Robert. Don't move.

Halas, gun at his head, approaches. Robert is still. It's done. He drops the money down and raises his hands. Halas carefully approaches, removing his cuffs, as suddenly the CROWDS, storming from the avenues envelope them, filling a gap between the two men.

Robert, a chance at freedom. He looks to the money on the ground. Then to Halas. No choice, he takes off into the park.

Halas gives pursuit, into the storm.

EXT. TOMPKINS PARK - SAME

Halas, avoiding crashing objects, pushing through bodies swarming and bloody. Price's fleeing figure ahead of him. Finally through the gap...

Robert; hopping a fence, out of the park, taking off down 8th street.

Halas; a beat behind. Hops the fence, tearing off after him. Right passed...

Denihan and his lieutenants, converging on the riot. As they watch Halas sprint by...

EXT. 8TH ST - NIGHT

Robert tearing up the street, against of the tide PEOPLE racing to the park. Sirens, screams all around. Halas at his heels.

A squalid brownstone up ahead. Robert leaps the steps, hits the door. Enters.

INT. EAST VILLAGE FLOPHOUSE - SAME

Robert, running up the stairs to an apartment, barreling past an ELDERLY NEIGHBOR on her door step...

EXT. EAST VILLAGE FLOPHOUSE - SAME

Halas, coming through the crowds to the flophouse door where Robert entered. He grips his gun. Pushes open the door. Peers into the lobby. Empty. Eyes on the staircase.

INT. EAST VILLAGE FLOPHOUSE / APARTMENT - SAME

The door pops open. Robert enters, slams it shut. Catching wind. Sweating. Panicked.

A strung out young woman, KATE, enters from a side door, startled to see Robert, but then excitedly...

KATE

Where is it? Where's the money?

ROBERT

Get all your shit. Get the kid.

KATE

Where is it?

SIRENS sounding in the distance.

ROBERT

Get your shit, Kate. We gotta get the fuck out of here.

KATE (FROM HERE ON OUT)

Where's the money? Bob, let me see it. (then) You didn't get it?

ROBERT

If you wanna come, you've got 30 seconds to get your shit together and go. They're on their way now.

(SIRENS.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBERT (CONT'D)  
She just stands there)  
Kate!

KATE  
What about him?

They look to corner. Masked in the chair where we last found him; Charles Lake.

KATE (CONT'D)  
Robby, there's a million cops  
outside. We can't take him.  
(beat)  
What are we going to do?

Robert goes to the window. Far in the distance, the sounds and dim sights of the coming riot in the park. The flash of sirens all around.

Robert considers what lays before him. This girl. This baby. He breathes deep. Withdraws his gun.

INT. FLOPHOUSE / ENTRY WAY - NIGHT

Halas, gun drawn, creeps up the stairs. One floor. Two floors. Passing Robert's trembling neighbor on her stoop.

She points to an upstairs apartment. Halas nods. Coming round the banister.

INT. EAST VILLAGE FLOPHOUSE - SAME

KATE  
What are you doing?

Robert's gun, trained tightly on Charles in the seat.

ROBERT  
We can't do anything with him now.

KATE  
But he's -- isn't there something  
else?

A heartbeat. Robert now turns the gun on her.

ROBERT  
I just wanted something fresh,  
Kate.

She weeps. Robert pivots the gun back to the now crying child. Back to Kate. He slows his breath.

EXT. 8TH ST - THAT MOMENT

Denihan and his men following the scent toward the flophouse when...

BAM! BAM! Two gunshots fire in quick succession from a building above. They all freeze. Eyes to the door.

INT. FLOPHOUSE / ENTRY WAY - NIGHT

As does Halas on the stairs. The OLD WOMAN screams. A moment, then -

BOOM! The final shot rings out through the building. Then silence. Halas bounding up the stairs. To the door.

Slowly, gun in hand, he pushes it open.

HALAS

Don't move! Stay right there.

To the frightened OLD WOMAN beginning to creep up the stairs.

With a deliberate calm, Halas moves into the room.

EXT. FLOPHOUSE - THAT MOMENT

The crowds have turned now with the sounds of gun shots, and are descending upon the flophouse door. Among them...

MANCUSO

Back! Everyone clear the door! No one comes through this door.

As Denihan and his men prepare to enter.

INT. EAST VILLAGE FLOPHOUSE - SAME

In the stairway, Robert Price's ELDERLY NEIGHBOR tentatively scales the stair following Halas. The door ajar before her. With a trembling hand, she pushes it open.

Hold. Her knees go weak as she GASPS.

ANGLE ON HALAS, slowly witnessing the end.

On the empty flophouse floor, Kate lies in pooling blood. Several feet away, so does Robert. The final shot to own his head. And there in the corner, Charles' throne vacant, tossed side ways on the floor. The baby fallen to the ground.

The OLD WOMAN screams again. Halas silences her, and approaches the baby. He kneels before him, and picks him up.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

A beat. The baby cries. Alive.

And Halas removes the mask from his face.

OLD WOMAN

My god!

The Eaglet is unharmed. As the woman puts a hand to her mouth...

DENIHAN

Is he all right?

Denihan and his men occupy the doorway.

OLD WOMAN

It's a miracle.

DENIHAN

I think so.

Halas stands. The child in his arms.

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

There's no fight, son. We'll handle it. This is the way it needs to be done.

HALAS

The way you handled Ellen? You put me off her from the beginning. Why, what was in it for you? Just the future.

DENIHAN

There's no time, son. Everyone will be here in a minute.

(Sirens already begin to sound)

We all got well here, Ryan. People will know who you are. It's time to think about what you want.

(as voices in the halls now grow louder)

This here. It's got nothing to do with her. With any of them. It's just a natural thing. It's just the tide of the city. It's turning now, I think. Here...

(the crowds beginning to form)

You take him, Ryan. You've earned it. You bring him back to her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Voices now climbing up the stairwell.

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

You either run now, or you own it,  
but you can't have both. The choice  
is yours, son, but you need to make  
it now.

Faces already crowding the open doorway. Openmouthed at the  
crime scene. Then at the baby. A flashbulb goes off.

MURMURS

Is that really...?

Many flashbulbs now.

DENIHAN

Well? What's it going to be? There  
won't be some other time.

As the voices grow louder up the stairs, hold on Halas.

INT. EAST VILLAGE FLOPHOUSE - NIGHT

In the stairwell, neighbors crowd the doorway as Police push  
up the stairs. "Keep back! Everyone keep back."

They hardly notice Halas, as he squeezes from the room and  
heads down the crowded steps, alone.

EXT. EAST VILLAGE ALLEY - NIGHT

Pull out to the street, where ambulances and crowds from the  
park have converged, pushing into the building.

Passing through the pandemonium, moving against the tide, is  
Halas.

We pull out from him, a small figure in the massive swell of  
the city.

EXT. TOMPKINS PARK - LATE NIGHT

The park smolders, now vacant of protestors in the predawn  
light. The last few Police cross the debris of the park,  
escorting cuffed participants toward waiting ambulances,  
paddy wagons. Police Sirens pull off into the night.

Here we find Halas, sitting beside Margraff, polishing off a  
bottle of Jameson in the empty park. They laugh at something  
private.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARGRAFF

And they know?

(Halas nods)

Save it for a rainy day.

(they laugh)

You can start over with me, any day  
you choose.

HALAS

How far back can you take me?

They laugh. Margraff makes the sign of the cross.

MARGRAFF

My child, I do believe you are a  
man.

With that, a last drop, and Margraff tosses the bottle  
shattering into the street, among a hundred others. Walks  
away. Halas, alone on the bench.

ARTHUR CODY (V.O.)

If the possibility of America is  
alive today, and I believe it is,  
then it owes its survival to this  
city and these streets.

EXT. WESTSIDE HIGHWAY - NIGHT, LATER

Once again, break lights line the horizon up ahead. 92 Street  
- Riverside Drive. Up on the hill, traffic, floodlights, a  
spectacle illuminates the night.

ARTHUR CODY (V.O.)

For it's in this harbor where we've  
anchored our most valued qualities.

EXT. THE MONROE STAHR - NIGHT

National media assembled outside the gates of "*the most  
lavish home ever built on the Manhattan island.*"

A single POLICE SIREN cuts through the crowd.

ARTHUR CODY (V.O.)

From our shores, Walt Whitman  
wrote, "*Other lands have their  
vitality in a few, a class...*"

The gates to the mansion open. A lightning storm of  
flashbulbs envelope the car, where...

I/E. POLICE CRUISER - SAME

Vivian cradles Charles in her lap. Cameras exploding all around them in the windows.

ARTHUR CODY (V.O.)  
*"...but we have it in the bulk of  
our people."*

The car pulls onto the drive, it passes Denihan, holding his post at the entrance. A hand raised to the waiting press line. Halas, not beside him.

The car pulls up to the house. The gate closes behind.

FADE TO:

ARTHUR CODY, THE SAME FOOTAGE WHERE WE WERE FIRST INTRODUCED.

ARTHUR CODY (FILTERED)  
In the bleakest of times, I find  
solace in that. We are all capable  
of spectacular achievement. It  
takes only but the heart and the  
will. And the mind.

We hear the opening notes of *"FIVE YEARS"* by DAVID BOWIE as we...

FADE TO BLACK.

*The End*