

KILL THE POOR

by

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SCENE 1

An apartment in low-rent five storey building. Open to the kitchen and a small eating area. A door to the bedroom. In the living room, a couch, a TV on a stand and a single weathered arm chair. The apartment is messy. Clothes on the chair and couch.

Some mumbling, a thud against the door, a woman groans in pain from out in the hallway.

LACEY
Careful.

JAKE
Okay...

LACEY
(groans)
I said be careful!

JAKE
Okay!

LACEY
Jesus. Just pay attention.

JAKE
I am!

LACEY
No. You're not. I almost fell.

The door opens and Jake and Lacey enter. They are both in their late 20s.

Jake is helping Lacey into the room. She looks tired and unsteady.

JAKE
Into the bedroom?

LACEY
No I'm okay on the couch for now.

JAKE
Yeah but I made up the bed.

LACEY
I don't wanna get into bed. I've been in a bed for two weeks.

JAKE
Right. So the couch then.

LACEY
Yeah. Like I said.

He leads her to couch. Tries to lower her.

LACEY (CONT'D)
Take it easy...

JAKE
Okay...

LACEY
(looking around)
There was no time to tidy up a
little, eh.

JAKE
Yeah. No. Sorry.

He is picking up clothes from the couch, tossing them and
lowering her at the same time

LACEY
I said easy! God!

She is down.

JAKE
You okay?

LACEY
I wanna stretch out.

JAKE
Yeah, good idea.

He lifts her legs onto the couch. She stretches out.

LACEY
Can you get me a glass of water?

JAKE
Sure...
(heading into the kitchen)
Anything else?

LACEY
No.

JAKE
Your lunch was still on the tray
beside your bed.

LACEY

So what?

JAKE

(returning with water)

So you should eat. Just because you didn't like the food in the hospital, doesn't mean you--

LACEY

I'm okay.

JAKE

I could make you some scrambled eggs.

LACEY

No. Just sit down.

(drinks the entire glass
of water)

We need to talk about Tim's funeral.

JAKE

Really? You wanna talk about that now?

LACEY

I know it's something you don't wanna deal with. But I'm not up to it, and there's no one else.

JAKE

What about your mother?

LACEY

Really? She just lost her son, Jake. She can barely bring herself to talk. You gotta step up here, okay.

JAKE

Yeah. Sure. But I've never arranged a funeral.

LACEY

Call someone. Wayne's wife died last year. You could ask him what you need to do.

JAKE

Wayne from the laundromat? I can't ask him shit like that!

LACEY

Sure you can. Just get him to give you a list.

JAKE

A list of what?

LACEY

Of things we need to do, for chrissake.

(holds up glass)

Here.

JAKE

Another one?

LACEY

Yeah...

Jake takes it, heads into kitchen.

LACEY (CONT'D)

Actually, this time put it in a measuring cup. I'm supposed to be keeping track of my fluid intake.

JACK

Why?

LACEY

So they can tell if the kidneys are getting back to full... kidney stuff.

Jake is returning with an empty measuring cup.

LACEY (CONT'D)

(off empty measuring cup)

There's no water in that.

JAKE

Right. Sorry.

He heads back to kitchen.

LACEY

It's hot in here. What's the thermostat at?

JAKE

Doesn't matter. It's broken.

LACEY

Really broken? Or just kinda wonky like usual.

JAKE

No it's fucked.

Back with the water.

LACEY

Jesus. Did you call Harry?

JAKE

Who?

LACEY

(takes water)

The maintenance guy.

She drinks.

JAKE

His name's Harry? I thought it was Sonny. I've been calling him Sonny for two years. Guy must think I'm an idiot.

He starts out.

LACEY

Whoa. Where are you going?

JAKE

I need to apologize to him.

LACEY

Right now?

JAKE

(stops)

No. Not right now. But soon. Because calling the guy the wrong name for two years is just fucking rude, and I think he deserves an apology!

LACEY

Hey. What the hell's wrong with you? You're way too worked up!

JAKE

I know that! You don't think I know that?

LACEY

So why?

JAKE

Whatya mean why? You could've died!
I mean Jesus Christ, Lace!

LACEY

Yeah. Okay. But--

JAKE

I mean I could be here by myself
right now! And what would I do
then. Do you think I want to live
without you?

LACEY

You'd be okay.

JAKE

No I fucking wouldn't.

LACEY

Well not right away.

JAKE

Not ever. Jesus. You die. I die
too. Right away. I mean as soon as
I figure out how to do it.

LACEY

Okay let's not--

JAKE

I mean it. Do you believe me?

LACEY

I don't know. Maybe. But it doesn't
matter. Because I didn't die! And I
am here. Okay?

JAKE

Yeah.

LACEY

So maybe you should just go with
that for now.

JAKE

Okay, yeah. I'll try to accept
that.

LACEY

Good. So did you call him?

JAKE

Who?

LACEY

Harry. The maintenance guy?
(off his look)
About the thermostat?

JAKE

Right. Yeah. He came and looked at
it.

LACEY

And?

JAKE

He thinks it's fucked, like I told
you.

LACEY

Okay. And is he planning to fix it?

JAKE

He said he'll get someone.
He doesn't know how to do it
himself.

LACEY

He doesn't.

JAKE

No. He hasn't got a clue.

LACEY

Really. So what's the point of
having a maintenance guy if he
can't fix things!?

JAKE

He's pretty good at cleaning. The
floor in the lobby is always really
shiny and--

LACEY

Shiny. Jesus. Look, just tell him
we need that thermostat fixed.
Winter's coming, man. It's a health
issue.

JAKE

Okay. I'll talk to him.
(starts off, stops)
But not right now, right?

LACEY

Right. But when you do, find out if he's ever had to bury someone.

Lacey's cell goes off. She takes it out. Looks.

LACEY (CONT'D)

It's that cop.
(offers phone to Jake)
You talk to her.

JAKE

She's calling you.

LACEY

Just take it.

JAKE

No...

They just watch the phone until it goes silent.

JAKE (CONT'D)

You gonna call her back?

LACEY

No.

JAKE

Well you're gonna have to talk to her sometime.

LACEY

Fuck her. She's just looking for someone to blame.

JAKE

Well someone *is* to blame.

LACEY

Maybe. Or maybe it was just an accid-- Look the point is, do you think she's hassling the other guy like this.

JAKE

You can ask her that when you call her.

LACEY

Didn't you hear me? I'm not doing that. When do you have to be at work?

JAKE

Marco gave me the day off. I told him I had to pick you up and--

LACEY

With pay?
(off his look)
Are you getting paid for this time off, Jake?

JAKE

I'm not sure.

LACEY

Okay. So then you better get going.

JAKE

And leave you alone? No. It's just a day's pay, so what's it matter really?

LACEY

Well if you look through all those bills on the dresser you'll see why it matters. I bet a lot more have come in during the last couple of weeks too.

JAKE

Yeah...

LACEY

So go ahead then. Walk into the bedroom. Open them up and take a good look at them.

JAKE

I can't.

LACEY

Come on. I know it's not much fun but--

JAKE

I threw them out.
(off her look)
Well it was too much. Just watching them pile up. And you were in the hospital, and your brother was in that coma... and it was all just too much.

LACEY

So you just threw them out.

JAKE

Yeah.

LACEY

And did that make you feel better.

JAKE

Kinda. It was like a fuck you to all of them. Like I didn't have enough shit on my mind. Was I just supposed to just forget about the accident, sit down, write them all their cheques, and then send them off with a note apologizing for being late like you do sometimes.

LACEY

That bothers you, does it. You like it better when they're calling us all the time.

JAKE

Look all I'm saying is that throwing them out felt a lot better than paying them would have.

LACEY

Well good for you. But our credit cards are probably being cancelled.

JAKE

Big deal. We'll use cash.

LACEY

As long as we have it. We live off those credit cards between your paycheques. When my EI gets spent there's always a few days when...

JAKE

When what?

LACEY

We need to eat.

JAKE

Yeah okay, the credit cards are important. I'll call them and say we lost the bills.

LACEY

Sure. That'll work. No, just tell them about the accident. That should buy us some time.

(MORE)

LACEY (CONT'D)

Our phones are probably overdue too. And was there anything in that pile from the landlord?

JAKE

Like what?

LACEY

Like an eviction notice.

JAKE

Why would we be getting evicted. We pay the rent. Don't we?

LACEY

Yeah...

JAKE

On time?

LACEY

Usually. But people are saying they might be selling the place.

JAKE

Yeah. But that's just a rumour so--

LACEY

Go to work. Please. Just go to work.

JAKE

Sure. I'll make you something to eat and then--

LACEY

No. I'll be fine. Just go!

JAKE

Okay... yeah...

(kisses her)

You know, maybe I can ask Marco about funerals. He's got a really big family, and some of them have probably died, right.

LACEY

Right. But I don't see Marco being the guy they'd trust to make arrangements.

JAKE

Yeah I know you think he's not that smart but--

LACEY

I think he's a fucking idiot. Is he still watching porn on his phone while he fixes those cars?

JAKE

It's a hard habit to break.

LACEY

What is? Watching porn? Or doing it when you're putting in a new oil filter? Nevermind. Just get going. He's probably already docking your pay.

JAKE

Yeah...

(starts out)

I love you. You know that, right.

LACEY

Yeah I do.

JAKE

And I'm so fucking glad you're... you know...

LACEY

Alive.

JAKE

Right.

He kisses her again, leaves.

Lacey sighs. Lies down. Inhales deeply. A sudden pain.

LACEY

Ah shit.

(yelling)

Jake!? ... Jake!!

She struggles to get up.

LACEY (CONT'D)

(weakly)

Come back...

She collapses on the floor.

Blackout

SCENE 2

A little later. Harry is helping Lacey back onto the couch. His tool chest is on the floor.

HARRY
Were you attacked?

LACEY
(a little out of it)
No... I just...

HARRY
Fainted?

LACEY
What?

HARRY
Fainted!

LACEY
Yeah...

HARRY
I ask because the door was unlocked, and there are some people in this building who might take advantage of that. I'm not saying who. But it's better to be careful. And an unlocked door is--

LACEY
What are you doing here?

HARRY
Oh. Well I was feeling bad about all the things I never had fixed for you. So I thought I'd try to take care of that. I mean I knocked and when there was no answer I reached for my Master Key but I'd forgotten it, then just to be sure I turned the knob, and... here I am. You don't look so good. Do you want me to call an ambulance?

LACEY
No.

HARRY
Then maybe I should call your husband at work.

LACEY

No, that's not a good idea.

HARRY

Are you sure. I mean generally speaking, people like to be notified about things like this.

LACEY

Well he's been "notified" a lot lately.

HARRY

Right. The accident. That musta been a kick in the head. So yeah, we should just leave him alone then.

LACEY

He can't leave work, anyway. His boss will dock his wages.

HARRY

Under these circumstances? No fucking way. Guy must be a real prick, eh.

LACEY

It's a small garage. And I think it's a struggle to keep it going. But yeah, he's definitely a prick.

HARRY

Yeah. And what's the point of keeping a business open if you're not going to behave decently to your employees. Better to just close up shop and shoot yourself in the head. Well maybe that's an overstatement. But if more people believed that treating others decently is the most important thing in life... then it'd be a better world, right.

LACEY

(to herself)

A better world... Who says things like that?

HARRY

I do? You look like you're in pain. Is that from falling down. Or do you look like that all the time?

(MORE)

HARRY (CONT'D)

I mean since your accident. That was one brutal collision, wasn't it.

LACEY

So they tell me. I don't remember.

HARRY

Really? Well that's not good. You had a brain scan?

LACEY

Yeah but--

HARRY

Brain injuries can fuck you up for life. And that accident... it was in the papers, pictures and everything, it looked really bad. I figured nobody could have survived that. Not if they were in that small car, anyway. But that was yours, wasn't it. So--

LACEY

Yeah. Look, can you do me a favour? Fill that measuring cup with water?

HARRY

Sure.

He takes it and goes into kitchen.

HARRY (CONT'D)

(from kitchen)

Someone was killed though, right.

LACEY

My brother. He was in a coma for a few days, but then he--

HARRY

(returning)

Your brother. Ah Jesus, that's rough.

He hands her the cup of water. She downs it.

LACEY

(off his look)

I'm measuring my intake because my kidney was damaged.

HARRY

Your kidney. Maybe your brain.
That's pretty serious shit.
And what about that other guy?
He was hardly hurt at all probably.
He was driving a beast, right.
What was that, an Escalade or
something? And your car was-

LACEY

A fifteen-year-old shit box.

HARRY

Yeah. So no contest. I mean here
comes your little shit box. Here
comes the Escalade. And SMASH!!
What a fucking nightmare that musta
been!

(winces)

Sorry. That was too... I mean it
pisses me off, but I should try to
keep it under control. What's it to
you how *I* feel about it? Are you
going after the guy?

LACEY

Whatya mean?

HARRY

Well he's probably got money,
right. That thing he was driving
costs a fortune.

LACEY

He says we ran the light.

HARRY

That true?

LACEY

Maybe. I don't know.

HARRY

Any witnesses?

LACEY

None so far. It was pretty late.

HARRY

So it's just his word on the
subject.

LACEY

The cops believe him, I think.

HARRY

Yeah? Well here's hoping that's not because he's got some PR company protecting his ass. Just be ready to deal with that bullshit, okay. I mean if it starts to feel like you're getting screwed. Look I better get to work because these things take me awhile to fix for some reason. Might be a hand/eye coordination problem. Toilet first.

Harry heads down the hallway with his tools. Suddenly returns.

HARRY (CONT'D)

One more thing. You need to find a witness. And you need to do it before *he* finds one. If you know what I mean. Do you? Do you know what I mean?

LACEY

No. I don't.

HARRY

Well I haven't got time to explain it now. I've got a toilet to fix.

He leaves again.

Lacey picks up her phone, punches a key.

LACEY

(into phone)

Hi, Jen. How's she doing? ... Has she been out of bed? ... Well try to get her up, or she'll just lie there thinking about it all day. Maybe get one of her other friends to come over. No. I'm out now ... Yeah I'm a lucky girl.

A knock on the door.

LACEY (CONT'D)

No it's okay. I know what you meant.

Another knock.

HARRY

(off)

Someone's knocking.

LACEY
(covers phone)
I know.
(into phone)
Look Jen, I gotta go ... Yeah I
will. Bye.

Another knock.

HARRY
(partially in the room)
Do you want me to get that?

LACEY
Please.

HARRY
Do you know who it is?

LACEY
No...

HARRY
Do you want me to get it anyway? I
mean suppose it's that guy.

LACEY
What guy?

HARRY
From down the hall. You know, the
GUY?

LACEY
You mean the dealer. Why would it
be him?

HARRY
He does stuff like that.

LACEY
Knock on doors?

HARRY
Usually just when he's high. The
thing is, he doesn't just sell.
He's a big user. I guess he never
heard of the Ten Commandments of
Crack.
(off her look)
You know, Biggie Smalls...
Commandment One "Don't get high on
your own supply."

A much louder knock

LACEY

Look, are you gonna get that or what?

HARRY

Sure...

He heads off. Sound of door opening. A few muffled words.

Harry returns. Detective Annie Regan, mid to late 30s, is by the door.

HARRY (CONT'D)

There's a cop in the hall. Says she wants to talk to you. Is it okay if I let her in?

LACEY

She's already in.

HARRY

(turning to Annie)

Hey. Didn't you hear me? I told you to wait.

(to Lacey)

I told her to wait. I was really clear about it. But they don't listen. They never listen. They think that badge means they can do whatever the fuck they want.

ANNIE

What's your name?

HARRY

I don't have to answer that question.

(to Lacey)

Do you mind if I keep working. Because I'm not sure when I can get back to it.

ANNIE

(fully entering)

Busy guy, are you?

HARRY

Yeah I am...

(to Lacey)

You see? Sarcasm. What makes them think they can get away with that stuff?

He looks at her hard then leaves. Annie watches him go, then turns to Lacey.

ANNIE

What's his problem?

LACEY

Beats me. Look, I wasn't up to talking before. I wasn't trying to--

ANNIE

Sure. But I was close by anyway. So...

LACEY

So it's important then. I mean talking to me couldn't wait?

ANNIE

Well waiting is pretty much all I've been doing, Lacey. The accident took place 15 days ago. And you were supposed to get back to me.

LACEY

If I remembered anything...

ANNIE

And that still hasn't happened.

LACEY

Not really. I remember a sound now. The sound of it came back to me.

ANNIE

The sound of the collision.

LACEY

Must have been. Like a big explosion or something. And someone screaming. I think it coulda been me.

ANNIE

So just those sounds. And nothing more.

LACEY

Well I remember being in the ambulance.

ANNIE

Okay. But nothing before that. How about when you were in that field?

LACEY

What field?

ANNIE

Beside the intersection. That's where you and your brother were found. I told you that.

LACEY

You told me I was found in a field? Sorry. I don't--

ANNIE

Yeah that's where you were, all right. So that's a mystery. I mean your car was totalled, and it sure didn't look like anyone who was injured like you and your brother were, could have made it out of that car and into that field. Not without help anyway.

LACEY

What about the other driver? Maybe he--

ANNIE

He was still in his vehicle... unconscious when EMS got there. He remembers the accident happening. But then he passed out.

LACEY

How's he doing?

ANNIE

He's got a slight concussion. Some bruising.

LACEY

Really. So it wasn't such a big deal for him.

ANNIE

I didn't say that.

LACEY

You kinda did. And he's still saying the accident wasn't his fault?

ANNIE

He's saying your car ran the light, yeah. He doesn't know if it was you or your brother driving. But he's sure his light was green.

LACEY

Well maybe I should start saying our light was green.

ANNIE

Except you've already told us you don't remember.

LACEY

So maybe I do now.

ANNIE

Do you?

LACEY

(looks at her first)

No. I fucking don't. But maybe he doesn't either. Or maybe he's lying for chrissake. Have you thought of that?

ANNIE

Yeah it's crossed my mind. Look the investigation at the scene was inconclusive so--

LACEY

So why not leave it at that. Call it an accident. Why are you looking for someone to blame?

ANNIE

Because when your brother Tim died it meant that this became a possible case of vehicular manslaughter. Unless he was the one driving...

LACEY

And then it's, what? Vehicular *suicide*? Jesus Christ!

ANNIE

Hey calm down. All I'm saying is that we can't charge dead people with a crime, can we?

LACEY

Right. So that just leaves me. Okay
if that's what you wanna do, just
do it for chrissake!

ANNIE

You know what? I think you need to
rest for a few more days.

LACEY

Do you!?

ANNIE

Yeah. So why don't you do that?
Rest. Get better. Calm the fuck
down. And we'll talk later. Okay?

LACEY

Whatever.

Annie leaves.

Harry comes back in carrying a plumber's wrench.

HARRY

I heard all that. Yeah you're
definitely going to need a witness.

Blackout

Scene 3

Jake is setting the table for dinner. We can hear Lacey from the bathroom.

JAKE
In the field.

LACEY
That's what she said.

JAKE
With Tim...

LACEY
Yeah. Both of us. Like I told you.

JAKE
I just can't get my head around it.

LACEY
(appearing)
So until you can, are you gonna
keep asking me questions about it?

JAKE
(going into kitchen)
Am I bugging you?

LACEY
A little.

JAKE
(returning with a large
pot)
Maybe you're just hungry.

LACEY
(sitting)
What's that?

JAKE
Pasta. It's a recipe Marco told me
how to make.

LACEY
What's in it?

JAKE
(serving)
Tomato sauce. Olives. Onions...
Sausage. Plus there's something I
forgot... Maybe sugar. Anyway it
looks good, right?

LACEY
No, it looks gross.

JAKE
Try it. If you don't like it, just say so.

LACEY
(tries it)
I don't like it.

JAKE
Really? He said everyone likes it. Do you want me to add sugar just in case.

LACEY
No that's okay. All those ingredients. How much did they cost?

JAKE
Well the sausage was kind of-- Why?

LACEY
You could have just made potato soup or something to save money.

JAKE
Can we just for one night not talk about money.

LACEY
Okay. For one night. But not this night. How are we gonna pay for Tim's funeral. Five grand. I mean that's a lot.

JAKE
Marco says it's probably the cheapest we can get away with. It'll just be a plain coffin. And there won't be any extras.

LACEY
What are the "extras?"

JAKE
I don't know. But we can't have them whatever they are.

LACEY
Well as long as they don't include things like people to dig the hole.

JAKE

That's pretty dark, Lacey. You're worried it'll be just us digging a hole for him to go into.

LACEY

It's probably my pain killers. I'm gonna go off them.

JAKE

Good plan... Listen, are you totally sure Tim didn't have life insurance.

LACEY

He hadn't even had a job for five years.

JAKE

Okay but he sold dope. Maybe he had some cash put away.

LACEY

He sold a little weed. He wasn't like the guy down the hall.

JAKE

You mean Daryl. Yeah he's impressive.

LACEY

Impressive.

JAKE

I mean successful.

LACEY

Maybe he's just lucky. I mean he's not following the commandments, right.

JAKE

The commandments? Like from the Bible?

LACEY

No. From Biggie Smalls.

JAKE

Oh. Right. Yeah, because he does it from his apartment. "Never sell crack at a place you'll be at." That's number four, I think.

(MORE)

JAKE (CONT'D)

Or are you talking about number one? "Never get high-

LACEY

"On your own supply" Yeah. So he does both...

JAKE

Definitely. He's a risk taker. So you know about them? The Commandments.

LACEY

Just that *one*. It sounds like you know them all.

JAKE

Well they're legendary.

LACEY

You mean for people who sell crack.

JAKE

Yeah. Or *did*. Even if it was only part time.

LACEY

Part time as in not 24/7.

JAKE

Yeah. I was never 24/7.
(off her bowl)
Maybe eat just a little. To get your strength back.

LACEY

Sure...
(she takes a mouthful)
No. Sorry. Maybe some apple sauce. Or canned peaches.

JAKE

Okay.

He heads into the kitchen.

JAKE (CONT'D)

I need to ask you about that field again?

LACEY

Jesus...

JAKE

Is it possible in any way that you can think of, or even just imagine, that Tim got you out of that car and then--

LACEY

He had a broken back, Jake. They told me he was probably killed on impact.

JAKE

Okay. But... maybe he didn't know that.

LACEY

What?

JAKE

Well sometimes people are dead and it hasn't hit them yet. They just act on nerves or something.

LACEY

You mean like a chicken after its head's cut off. He wasn't a fucking chicken, Jake.

JAKE

I know that. But maybe he was *acting* like a chicken.

LACEY

Jesus Christ. What is wrong with you.

JAKE

I'm scared.

LACEY

Of what?

JAKE

That cop for one thing! It sounds like she's really into finding out how you wound up in that field. And I'm just trying to come up with something that will get her off your back.

LACEY

Try harder.

Jake gets a text.

JAKE
It's from Harry. He's coming up.

LACEY
Yeah he's got a plan.

JAKE
For what?

LACEY
I better let him tell you. I'm not
sure I totally understand it.

A knock on the door.

LACEY (CONT'D)
Is that him already?

JAKE
No. He said he'd be awhile.

Jake heads to the door.

Lacey forces down another mouthful of the pasta dish.

Jake returns with Mr. David, a late 40ish man in a dark suit
and turtle neck.

JAKE (CONT'D)
This man wants to talk to us. He
says it's--

LACEY
(to Mr. David)
You're the guy...

JAKE
What guy?

LACEY
In the accident. In the SUV.

MR. DAVID
So you saw me then?

LACEY
No. I mean... I guess so. What do
you want?

MR. DAVID
Well a few things actually. First,
I'd like to know how you're doing.

LACEY

Okay. How are you doing?

MR. DAVID

A little dizzy still. But mostly pretty good. Lucky I guess.

JAKE

It was more than luck, man. When that thing you were driving plowed into them it musta felt like they were getting hit by a tank.

MR. DAVID

(to Lacey)

Did it?

LACEY

I don't remember.

MR. DAVID

Yes I was told you were having a problem with that. And the memory hasn't improved?

JAKE

Why? You worried she might be able to contradict your story?

MR. DAVID

No. I'm hoping she can support it. It's not good having my version of what happened be the only one.

LACEY

Sorry. Can't help you.

JAKE

She can't even remember how they got in that field.

MR. DAVID

Excuse me?

JAKE

They were found in a field beside the intersection.

LACEY

Do you know anything about that?

MR. DAVID

I was unconscious. Maybe someone who was passing...

LACEY

Maybe...

MR. DAVID

Anyway. I feel bad about your car.
Bad that I was driving something
that could cause that much damage.

JAKE

And kill her brother.

MR. DAVID

Yes. Well I can't do anything about
that. I truly wish that I could.
But about the car...

He takes out a cheque. Puts it on the table.

MR. DAVID (CONT'D)

That should put you in something...
decent.

(off their looks)

No strings. Just wanted to help you
in some way... That's it then. Ill
let myself out.

He takes in the apartment, smiles a little, then leaves.

JAKE

Did you see that? The way he smiled
when he was taking in our
apartment.

But Lacey is looking at the cheque.

LACEY

Jesus...

She hands it to Jake.

LACEY (CONT'D)

We could buy two of our cars brand
new for this.

JAKE

Maybe three.

A knock on the door.

Harry enters carrying a binder.

HARRY

Your door was unlocked again.
That's no good.

(MORE)

HARRY (CONT'D)

If you do that often, try to stop. There are people in this building who never learned the basic rules of how a society should function.

JAKE

(to Lacey)

He means they steal.

LACEY

(to Harry)

We've got nothing worth their time.

JAKE

She means we decided not to let it freak us out.

LACEY

People can get desperate. That's just the way things are.

HARRY

That's very compassionate. But also a little soft-headed. Did you think like that before your brain injury?

JAKE

(to Lacey)

What's he talking about?

LACEY

Nothing.

(off Harry's binder)

What's that?

HARRY

Our petition. We'll get to that later. But first we have to talk about the witness situation.

JAKE

You mean the fact that there isn't one.

HARRY

Not yet.

LACEY

That's his plan. To get a witness.

JAKE

You mean to find one.

LACEY

No to get one. To make one up.

HARRY

Well not from scratch. It'll have to be a real person capable of answering all the questions that'll be asked.

LACEY

Like?

HARRY

Well why didn't he or she come forward earlier. It's gonna be tricky.

LACEY

And illegal.

HARRY

But also very satisfying. Because the other guy has to compensate you for all the damage and pain he caused.

JAKE

He says it wasn't his fault.

HARRY

The witness will say otherwise. I'm telling you he has to pay.

LACEY

He already has.

She shows him the cheque.

HARRY

He sent this?

JAKE

No. He was just here.

HARRY

He was? How'd he find out where you live.

LACEY

Good question.

HARRY

(off cheque)
So this is guilt money.

JAKE

Yeah but not for the accident. For the size of his vehicle...

HARRY

He said that?

JAKE

Kinda...

HARRY

Okay it's a start. But there's no way you can accept...

(off cheque)

... fifty grand as compensation for the death of your beloved brother.

LACEY

But suppose it really wasn't his fault.

HARRY

That will become less and less important as we proceed. Also from now on, don't talk to him without having your lawyer present.

JAKE

We don't have a lawyer.

HARRY

Yes you do. You're looking at him.

JAKE

You're joking.

HARRY

No I'm exaggerating. I have no technical right to call myself that since my disbarment.

(nothing but stares back)

Okay here it is in a nutshell. I was at a low point in my life, and my only client was a wealthy elderly woman. I was both her lawyer and her chauffeur, and when she died I handled her estate. She had intended to leave all her money to animal shelters in memory of the twenty-six Pomeranians that had so enriched her life, which I think was a fine idea, but not when your young lawyer is struggling to pay his rent or even eat properly.

LACEY

So you took some of it.

HARRY

Yes. And when it was discovered, they took away my right to practice my chosen profession. But not, and this is important, my ability to get things done. So back to the witness issue... and where to find this person. It can't be anyone close to home.

JAKE

So none of the criminals in this building.

HARRY

We don't want a criminal, period. We want someone who understands that people like you need to occasionally receive a little justice. Let me mull it over. It's important to get this right. Because there will be a lot of money involved.

LACEY

If the guy was heavily insured.

HARRY

Oh no. We're not going that route. He won't publicly admit to being responsible for killing your brother.

LACEY

Especially if he didn't do it.

HARRY

Again, let's not dwell on that. Besides, that won't be the issue if he thinks we have someone who says he *did* do it. Which he might have anyway. Correct?.

JAKE

Yeah. Because we only have his word that he didn't.

HARRY

But wealthy people with influence walk away from this kind of thing all the time.

(MORE)

HARRY (CONT'D)

Because the authorities, and fuck them all the way to hell for it, go out of their way to exonerate them.

(he gags)

Excuse me. This kind of injustice fills my mouth with vomit...

Speaking of injustice, I want you to sign the petition.

He opens he binder.

JAKE

What's it for?

HARRY

We're not getting evicted. No matter what the owners want to do with this place. We're all staying put. Oh there's going to be a struggle. But let's see them try to throw out three hundred people who are vigorously resisting that action. This isn't just a petition. It's a declaration of war. Now are you both going to sign or what?

LACEY

I am. We're in no position to find another place to live. First and last month's rent. The cost of moving...

JAKE

What are you talking about? We've got that guy's cheque.

HARRY

No. Sorry. You have to return it. It could look like you've accepted a settlement. No wait, you should hold on to it in case our plans turn to shit. But don't cash it. Under no circumstances, until we've exhausted all other options, do you cash it. Okay?

They look at each other, turn back to him and nod.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Fantastic. Now back to the witness thing. First off though, any chance I can get a cup of tea?

JAKE

Coffee okay?

HARRY

If that's what you've got then
that's what I'm having. Asking for
things that people don't have is
something that should definitely be
discouraged. It only causes
embarrassment

(standing)

Mind if I use the bathroom?

LACEY

Go ahead.

Harry leaves.

JAKE

He could be getting us involved in
things we can't handle.

LACEY

Suppose we can though. Suppose we
can handle those things and even
more. And suppose we wind up with a
lot of money.

JAKE

That's a lot of supposing.

LACEY

Yeah. But maybe we should've
started doing it a long time ago.
Supposing things. Instead of just
dreaming things.

Harry returns.

HARRY

Got it! We need a communist. A good
old fashioned "let's redistribute
the wealth" totally out of her
fucking mind, pinko!

He gives them an enthusiastic thumbs-up. They return it,
quite a bit less sure.

Blackout

SCENE 4

Annie is in the armchair looking at her notebook.

Lacey is making her way from the bathroom to the couch.

ANNIE
How's the urine?

LACEY
Sorry?

ANNIE
Any blood?

LACEY
No...

ANNIE
Good. And the output?

LACEY
It seems to be okay.

ANNIE
So it looks like you're going to be fine then. Now if we can just get that memory back, eh.

LACEY
Yeah well that'll either happen or it won't.

ANNIE
Makes you kind of vulnerable though. I mean something could come to light that points us in a certain direction that... leads us to a certain conclusion. And if you're not able to remember-

LACEY
Are you fucking with me, Detective?

ANNIE
Yeah. I am.

LACEY
Why?

ANNIE
I was hoping to shake you up, spark something in your memory bank. Look I'll be honest with you.

(MORE)

ANNIE (CONT'D)

If there's any doubt in this case, the other driver, Mr. David is almost certain to receive the benefit of that doubt.

LACEY

So I've been told. Why though?

ANNIE

Well in this case it might be because both you and your brother have criminal records.

LACEY

For things that have nothing to do with driving a car.

ANNIE

(reading from notebook)
No but public intoxication, possession of a controlled substance, assault, two failures to appear for him and one for you... they don't look good when we're trying figure out who messed up at that intersection.

LACEY

Was I drug tested in the hospital?

ANNIE

You, the driver of the other vehicle, your brother...

LACEY

You tested my brother while he was in a coma.

ANNIE

Procedure. Everyone was clean. So good on you. For getting yourself sober. But then there's your husband...

LACEY

What about him?

ANNIE

He dealt drugs.

LACEY

Who told you that?

ANNIE
Other drug dealers.

LACEY
He has no record.

ANNIE
You mean he was never caught.

LACEY
Jesus...

ANNIE
The point is your family isn't exactly full of model citizens. And again, if people are looking to find fault...

LACEY
What people?

ANNIE
People on a jury. Now it won't mean much if it's determined that your brother was driving.

LACEY
Because you can't put a dead man on trial. I got that the first time you mentioned it.

ANNIE
Did you? Good. But on the other hand, if it's proven that you were driving...

LACEY
Right. Vehicular manslaughter. Got that too.

ANNIE
So what are the chances?

LACEY
That I was driving?

ANNIE
Well the car was in your name.

LACEY
Yeah. But he's the one who used it most of the time. What's going on here? These visits, these questions that are all kinda the same.

(MORE)

LACEY (CONT'D)

It's like you're trying to wear me down or something. I mean I don't fucking remember anything, so why keep asking?!

ANNIE

Maybe I'm just exploring options for you.

LACEY

What?

ANNIE

Well maybe it's possible that, with a little help, it could be determined that Tim was driving. If that turned out to be the case then no one would go to jail and no one would be held financially responsible. I'm assuming Tim had no assets.

LACEY

He had a new pair of Adidas.

(off her look)

No I get it. You mean *I* wouldn't go to jail and there'd be no reason to come after me or my mother for money. Okay... so here's hoping it goes my way. I mean so what that my brother is fucking dead. And so what if that prick in the SUV *might* be lying about who had the green light. Because that doesn't matter, does it?

ANNIE

It does to me. But it might not to anyone else. And that includes a judge or a jury.

LACEY

Really. So what should I do then.

ANNIE

You should remember. You should remember that Tim was driving.

LACEY

(looks at her)

You want me to lie.

ANNIE

I want you to remember.

LACEY

Remember that Tim was driving. Just that.

ANNIE

Nothing else matters, Lacey.

LACEY

What are you doing?

ANNIE

This! I'm doing this!

LACEY

Well what whatever "this" is, I'm not going to blame my brother, my dead brother for something I don't know he did. So fuck you!

ANNIE

Come on, don't be stupid! You want to take a chance on making your life even worse than it is? Look hard at your situation for once. Look at this place. You've got nothing! You hear me? Nothing!

LACEY

Okay. Shut the fuck up.

ANNIE

I mean what the hell is wrong with you people?!

LACEY

"You people"?

ANNIE

Yeah you fucking ridiculous people. I don't know how or why it turned out for you like this. No money, no options, no future to speak of--

LACEY

Holy fuck. Listen to yourself!

ANNIE

It's just a goddamn mess, isn't it. Maybe you were born into it. Maybe shit just happened. But it's time to get real, okay. It's time to make this one sensible goddamn choice!

LACEY

You gotta go.

ANNIE

Really. You think that's your best move here? Kicking me out when maybe you should just allow me to wait for your husband to get home.

LACEY

And why should I do that?

ANNIE

Because he might be able to understand what I'm offering here. Nothing I've observed about him leads me to believe that, but I live in hope.

LACEY

We don't do that.

ANNIE

Do what? Live in hope?

LACEY

We don't disagree about things like this.

ANNIE

Really? Where is he anyway? He can't still be at work at 10 PM.

LACEY

What are you getting at?

ANNIE

Just ask him who he's been hanging with when he gets home.

LACEY

Sure...

ANNIE

No I mean it. Because just maybe he's been out doing something you might *not* agree with.

Annie is on her way out.

LACEY

Like what?

ANNIE
Just ask him!

LACEY
Like what!?

Annie is gone.

LACEY (CONT'D)
(sitting)
Fuck!

Blackout

SCENE 5

Lacey is in the chair. She is holding three Ziplock baggies. One containing a white powder, one some pink pills and the third some small chunks of crack

Sound of the door opening. She puts the baggies under her.

Jake comes in.

She look at him.

JAKE

Hey...

LACEY

Yeah. Hey.

JAKE

How you doing?

LACEY

Not so good.

JAKE

How come? The pain bad today?

LACEY

No that's under control.

JAKE

So what's the--

LACEY

The cops know.

(no response)

Did you hear me? The cops know what you're doing.

JAKE

I'm not doing anything.

LACEY

You're dealing again.

JAKE

No way!

LACEY
That detective was here.

JAKE
And she told you that?

LACEY
Pretty much, yeah.

JAKE
Well she's wrong. I mean they might
have suspicions but--.

LACEY
Why? Why would they have
suspicions?

JAKE
Well the cops coulda seen me with
Daryl, I guess.

LACEY
Daryl.

JAKE
(gesturing)
Yeah. You know... from down the
hall.

LACEY
Oh you're working for that genius.

JAKE
No.

LACEY
No? Then what's this?

She produces the baggies.

No response.

LACEY (CONT'D)
Don't. Don't... Don't fry your
brain trying to come up with an
excuse. We're way past that. That's
us ten years ago. All I want to
hear from you now is the fucking
truth.

JAKE
Okay. Okay... but I'm just doing it
until...

LACEY

I told you I don't want to hear any excuses.

JAKE

Well what about a reason? A reason isn't an excuse it's a... fucking reason. And mine is that we need to get money for Tim's funeral.

LACEY

Not by doing this. What is all this shit anyway? That's crack but--

JAKE

And that's Meth. And the other one is Apache powder--

LACEY

What?

JAKE

Fentanyl.

LACEY

Jesus. No fucking way. Fentanyl? That kills people.

JAKE

I don't fucking care.

LACEY

What?!

JAKE

I don't mean I don't *fucking* care. I just... Okay I'll give that one back to him.

LACEY

You'll give them all back to him.

JAKE

No. We need to get your brother out of the morgue and into the ground. That funeral home wants a deposit of fifteen hundred to even get started. And you made me not cash that cheque!

LACEY

Our lawyer said we shouldn't.

JAKE

You mean Harry? He was... dis...
dis--

LACEY

Barred! Disbarred!

JAKE

Right. So he's not really a lawyer
then, is he.

LACEY

Sure he is. Just like you're really
a drug dealer. I mean neither of
you have forgotten how to do it, so-

JAKE

Please don't get yourself upset.

LACEY

Right. You wouldn't want that. You
love me too much to see me upset,
don't you.

JAKE

I love you more than anything.
You're my whole life.

LACEY

Right. Okay. So why would you
(off the baggie)
... leave this here so I could find
it.

JAKE

Why would I want you to find it?

LACEY

Because you need to get me
involved.

JAKE

Involved in what way.

LACEY

Could be a lot of different ways.
Maybe you want me to talk you out
of it.

JAKE

I don't.

LACEY

Well maybe it's something else then. You do this shit all the time. You try to drag me into things for all kinds of reasons. You wanted me to take that mechanics course with you.

JAKE

I thought you'd like it.

LACEY

You thought I'd be good to have around in case there was any math involved.

JAKE

Come on.

LACEY

It took me five minutes.
(off his look)
To find this stuff?

JAKE

Really?

LACEY

Five minutes tops.

JAKE

(looks at her)

Well I guess I forgot how good you are at it. You know, from all those years you spent trying to find where your mother hid her booze.

LACEY

And you're bringing my mother into this because?

JAKE

Because I think she's why you're not always very trusting. I mean you were *searching* for the drugs, right.

LACEY

Because that lady cop gave me a tip.

JAKE

Which you could have ignored. And I'm saying your mother's drinking is why you got sucked right into that problem we have with trust.

LACEY

You know, I thought we made a deal not to bring our parents into whatever goes wrong for us.

JAKE

Yeah that's right. But you can't always ignore--

LACEY

My mum, your dad. We don't blame them, okay. We don't look back and find excuses. And we don't repeat. We don't do the stupid things they used to do just because they look easy.

JAKE

Unless we don't have a fucking choice.

LACEY

Oh. So we can make exceptions. You can sell meth and fentanyl, and I can get smashed and turn a few tricks.

She throws him the bag.

LACEY (CONT'D)

Take it all back.

JAKE

That's not a good idea.

LACEY

I mean it. Take it the fuck back or I will.

JAKE

It won't matter who takes it back. The deal was made. "When you take it, you got it." That's a thing Daryl takes very seriously.

LACEY

The hell with what he takes seriously. That's some bullshit dealer code or something?

JAKE

No it's all about business. He took what he gave me off the market, without cash up front, just on my say so. And also he knows where I live so that was added security for him, right.

LACEY

Which means he can get to you.

JAKE

If he has to.

LACEY

And slit your throat.

JAKE

It won't be like that. I'm just responsible for his losses if I don't move it in a reasonable amount of time. He'll just add interest to what I owe him until I get it done. No big deal. Daryl says it's based on the rules of commerce. Sort of like a bank.

LACEY

What a load of crap. Interest. Security. You gotta give it back. Blame me. Tell him it freaks me out.

JAKE

He won't care.

LACEY

Sure it will. He likes me.

JAKE

How do you know that?

LACEY

From the way he looks at me, Jake. He looks at me like he *really* likes me, okay.

JAKE

Yeah but that's... that. This is business. Anyway, if he "likes" you so much, he wouldn't want to slit your throat, would he.

LACEY

Not right away. He'd probably do shit to me first.

JAKE

That's not funny.

LACEY

Oh I know that. So you want me to take it back to him or--

JAKE

No. I'll do it. But tomorrow, okay.

LACEY

Right now.

JAKE

I can't right now. He's having a party.

LACEY

A party. Are you saying you don't wanna spoil his fun or something?

JAKE

No it's not that. He's just more reasonable when his crew's not around. He thinks they're always looking for signs of weakness in him. You know, in case he needs to be moved out.

LACEY

Moved out? What's that mean?

JAKE

Killed. It means killed.

LACEY

Really? Well fuck him. *And* his crew. And whatever the fuck they do in their stupid druggy world. Get it out of here. I mean it.

JAKE

Yeah. I know. I'm sorry.

He starts off, stops.

JAKE (CONT'D)
You all right?

LACEY
I need to lie down.

He approaches her.

JAKE
Okay but wait up for me, okay.

LACEY
I'll try, yeah.

JAKE
No don't go to sleep.
(getting closer)
I mean it's been awhile.

LACEY
I know...

JAKE
(cupping her breast)
I miss you. Stay awake, okay.
(kisses her)
It'll be good.

He kisses her again. Grabs her ass.

LACEY
Take the drugs back.

JAKE
Okay. But a little later.

They kiss again. It gets intense. He is guiding her gently down onto the couch. He has his hand inside her shirt

JAKE (CONT'D)
I think we should do this first.

LACEY
Yeah... okay...

She is undoing his jeans.

JAKE
Yeah. Should I be gentle?

LACEY
Fuck no...

She pulls him in hard. They keep going...

BLACKOUT

SCENE 6

Morning. Lacey emerges from the bedroom. A little groggy.

LACEY

Jake?

Into kitchen...

LACEY (CONT'D)

Jake?... What the...

A knock on the door, and Harry comes in

HARRY

Okay, seriously. You have to keep that damn door locked. Do you want me to give you a list of why you have to keep it locked. Do you want me to tell you what happened to people who live here when they didn't keep it locked.

LACEY

Some other time okay. I'm a little upset right now.

HARRY

Why? What happened? It better not be something that could have been avoided by locking that fucking door.

LACEY

Jake's not here.

HARRY

Where is he?

LACEY

I don't know.

HARRY

Is that bad?

LACEY

Maybe.

HARRY

Maybe *how* bad?

LACEY

Well I'm not worried he got lost if that's what you mean.

HARRY

Jesus. This not a good time to just disappear.

LACEY

Is there ever?

HARRY

Well yeah. If things get truly hopeless. But not before you've at least put up a fight.

Jake comes in carrying a shopping bag.

JAKE

Hi..

LACEY

Where the hell have you been?

JAKE

Went out for milk. And tea, just in case our lawyer wanted to pay us a visit. And here he is.

LACEY

You didn't come home last night.

JAKE

Sure I did. You were asleep.

LACEY

No way I'd go to sleep without hearing you come back.

JAKE

I looked in on you.

(to Harry)

She was out like a light. And I'd only been gone ten minutes.

LACEY

Ten minutes.

JAKE

Maybe less. He wasn't there. I waited a little but--

HARRY

Who wasn't there?

JAKE

No one.

LACEY

No one he wants to talk about.

(look at Harry)

What are you doing here anyway?

HARRY

We've got a witness.

JAKE

Really?

HARRY

Oh yeah. And she's going to get on to Mr. SUV right away and ask for two hundred grand. I suggested one hundred, but she's a keener.

LACEY

Is she a communist?

HARRY

No she's a sociopath. I knew her in law school. A very smart woman. But her only source of pleasure is in fucking with people to the point of total ruin. She's a truly sick but highly functioning individual. She'll say things to him that will scare the shit out of him, and make him question not only *her* sanity but his own as well. For starters, she'll say she saw him run the light and cause the accident. Which I'm willing to bet is true. That man giving you that cheque means he wants this thing to go away. And whether he did or didn't cause the accident, she's gonna freak him out so much he'll be convinced he's going to wind up in jail for killing your brother anyway.

LACEY

Is she gonna tell him she's a lawyer?

HARRY

There's no upside to that. She'll suggest a public place for him to hand over the money. They'll meet. She'll disappear into the crowd.

(MORE)

HARRY (CONT'D)

That's it. Only downside is that she wants twenty percent of whatever she squeezes out of him.

JAKE

How much are you taking?

HARRY

Nothing. That's not who I am now. I no longer profit from the misfortune of others.

LACEY

You're helping us profit from *his*. I mean how come no one wants to think about him maybe being innocent?

HARRY

Again, no upside. He pays. Or he doesn't. If he's guilty and has the money he pays. If he's innocent and has the money he might still pay just because it's easier. Like I said, I'm betting he is, and he does. And I'm betting that way so you people get something substantial out of this.

(starting out)

I'll be in touch.

He is gone.

LACEY

That's kind of what the detective said to me.

JAKE

What is?

LACEY

That we should try to get something out of this no matter what really happened. Maybe she was trying to set a trap. You know, get me to lie and then--

JAKE

Or maybe she just wants to help us.

LACEY

Yeah but... well, what the fuck's going on with these people? Why do they care about us all of a sudden?

(MORE)

LACEY (CONT'D)

Did anyone care when we were homeless?

JAKE

We were never homeless.

LACEY

We were sleeping on my cousin Karen's floor.

JAKE

Yeah but we were indoors. Being homeless means you're--

LACEY

Whatever. The point is--

JAKE

No one cared.

LACEY

Until now, yeah. Must be because of the accident.

JAKE

You mean because it got us a lot of attention.

LACEY

And a lot of pity too, I guess.

JAKE

We hate pity.

LACEY

Yes we fucking do. But if that's all we can get from some people, we should just take it?

JAKE

Definitely.

LACEY

Definitely?

JAKE

Sort of.

LACEY

(looks at him)

So you actually expect me to believe you were only gone ten minutes last night.

JAKE
It's the truth.

LACEY
Because Darryl wasn't there.

JAKE
He was there, but so was his crew
and he wasn't gonna take all that
merchandise back from me in front
of them.

LACEY
Well what about now?

JAKE
I texted him. He hasn't gotten back
to me yet.

LACEY
Okay. So where are they then?

JAKE
The drugs?

LACEY
Yes, Jake. The drugs.

JAKE
I put them somewhere safe.

LACEY
Where?

JAKE
Doesn't matter. You didn't want
them in the apartment, and they're
not.

Jake gets a text.

LACEY
That Daryl?

JAKE
No it's Clyde.

LACEY
Who the fuck is Clyde?

JAKE
He works for Daryl. He wants a
meet up. I gotta go.

He rushes out.

LACEY
Wait a minute...

JAKE
Can't.

He is gone.

Lacey picks up her cell.

Hits a key.

LACEY
(into phone)
Hi, Mum. How you doing today? ...
Worried about what? ... No it's
okay. We'll get the money for it
somehow ... Mum. He's not gonna rot
in the morgue, okay ... No he's not
gonna get dumped somewhere either
... Yeah I promise. Please try not
to worry about it. I'll call you
later. Bye.

She disconnects.

Puts her head in her hands.

Blackout

SCENE 7

Mr. David and Jake are both on the couch. Fairly close together. Mr. D is manspreading with both legs and arms.

JAKE

Do you want me to sit in the chair?

MR. DAVID

No this is good.

JAKE

It's just that you seem to need a lot of room.

MR. DAVID

Where's Lacey?

JAKE

She's out for a walk.

MR. DAVID

At night? In this neighbourhood?

JAKE

She was born in this neighbourhood.

MR. DAVID

Yeah but it's changed a lot, right.

JAKE

Not enough to stop her from going for a walk.

MR. DAVID

Good for her. We have to fight back, right.

JAKE

Against who?

MR. DAVID

Against who. That's funny... So she's feeling better then. And what about you? All these things about the accident haven't caused you to become a little fuzzy-headed?

JAKE

I don't think so.

MR. DAVID

What I'm saying is, I thought we had an agreement. All those zeros on that cheque I gave you...

JAKE

Yeah. That was--

MR. DAVID

Generous. It was very generous.

JAKE

Oh yeah. For sure.

MR. DAVID

Yes. So this afternoon when I got a call from a woman -- whom I assume was representing your interests -- asking me for a quarter of a million dollars, I was a little confused.

JAKE

A quarter million. Wow.

MR. DAVID

Yes. A big fucking wow.

JAKE

Only... what makes you think she was representing us.

MR. DAVID

You mean why do I have trouble believing that a witness to the accident suddenly appeared and decided on her own to shake me down. Because I'm not a fucking idiot. Do you think I'm a fucking idiot?

JAKE

No.

MR. DAVID

Does your wife?

JAKE

Probably. But that's only because she thinks most men are.

MR. DAVID

What do you *know* about me?

JAKE
Nothing really.

MR. DAVID
You mean nothing except I drive a very expensive vehicle and can easily spare the sixty thousand dollars I offered you out of the goodness of my heart.

JAKE
It wasn't sixty. It was fifty.

MR. DAVID
Sixty. Fifty. So fucking what? You should have just cashed the cheque! Listen, do you want me to give you a little advice.

JAKE
No. Not really.

MR. DAVID
Well here it is anyway. Next time you're thinking about shaking someone down, find out much more about that person first. You understand what I'm saying?

JAKE
I think so.

MR. DAVID
You just "think" so.

He casually pulls out a knife.

JAKE
Hey, man. That's not--

Mr. David stabs himself in his palm. Lick off the blood.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Why'd you do that? What's that mean? Never mind. I don't need to know. Just put it away, okay. I get it. We made a mistake. We'll back off. Please. Weapons aren't the answer, man. If there's a problem that's outta control, lets just work it out. Okay?

MR. DAVID

Sure. I'm good with that. I just wanted you to know where I'm coming from. Do you know where that is now? The place I come from.

JAKE

Its the dark place. You're coming from the dark place I've been trying to stay out of my whole life.

MR. DAVID

No. You know what? I'm pretty sure I'm from a much darker place than that. I'm from a place that's full of death and destruction. A place where there is absolutely no forgiveness, that punishes failure in ways you couldn't even imagine. And if I fail to get you to back off and I'm thrown into the light of day, my punishment will be severe. But before that, before I receive my punishment, I will make sure that both you and your wife are punished in an even worse way. In a way that I'm having trouble picturing without getting sick to my stomach. Is any of this penetrating your very feeble brain.

JAKE

Yeah.

MR. DAVID

Are you sure?

JAKE

Yeah...

MR. DAVID

So... are we all right now? We're cool, yes?

JAKE

Definitely.

MR. DAVID

(puts the knife away)

So... how long have you and your wife been together anyway?

JAKE

Since we were fifteen.

MR. DAVID

Really. So where are all the children you should have by now?

JAKE

We don't have them.

MR. DAVID

(smiles)

That's my point. Why not?

JAKE

We're waiting until we're in a better situation.

MR. DAVID

You mean when you're off welfare.

JAKE

We're not on welfare. Getting on welfare would be going backwards.

MR. DAVID

But blackmail is going forward? Do you see the problem with that thinking? How one can make you a loser and the other one a *dead* loser?

JAKE

Yeah. I do.

MR. DAVID

Good. So this was just a learning situation for you then.

JAKE

Yeah. A learning situation.

MR. DAVID

I understand that. Now cash the cheque, and buy yourself a nice car. It might fool people into thinking you're not just a pathetic nothing. And trust me. That's all you're getting from me. Also, if I get another call like the one I had today... well I'm going to have to put an end to all this, aren't I.

(stands)

(MORE)

MR. DAVID (CONT'D)

Now do you think you can relay all that was said here to your wife accurately?

Jake nods.

MR. DAVID (CONT'D)

And buy some new furniture, for godsake. You can't live a good life with junk like this around you. All this evidence of your failures... It's too much to overcome.

JAKE

(looks at him)

Did you... cause the accident?

MR. DAVID

Jake?

(shakes his head)

After all I have just told you, you still want to ask me that question?

JAKE

No don't worry. I won't tell anyone. No one would believe me anyway. You know, because I'm such a loser.

MR. DAVID

Right.

JAKE

So... did you?

Mr. David just smiles, and leaves.

Blackout

SCENE 8

Lacey and Harry. Lacey is dressed in an old track suit of Jake's. Jake is in the kitchen.

LACEY

She's asking for way too much. You gotta tell her to back off.

HARRY

That's not going to work. She thinks he's a challenge.

Jake is coming from the kitchen with three mugs.

JAKE

He's a criminal. A serious criminal

HARRY

Thanks...

(taking a mug)

Yeah. She found that out. And it got her excited. His name's actually Davisomitski, or something like that. He's second generation Albanian mob. A nasty group of law breakers and she's thrilled about taking them on. Usually she only gets to stick it to sleazy business types and the odd politician. This takes her to a whole new level.

LACEY

Well it's great that she's having fun, but this guy threatened us.

JAKE

Me. He threatened *me*.

LACEY

You, us... What's it matter?

JAKE

Come on. I'd never let him get away with threatening *you*.

LACEY

(to Harry)

He had a gun, so that's probably not true.

JAKE

Actually it was a knife.

LACEY

You told me it was a gun.

JAKE

In my mind it was a gun.

LACEY

Whatever. I'm not saying you
wouldn't have *wanted* to defend
me...

(to Harry)

He's got a thing about guns.

JAKE

And knives.

HARRY

Irene says that gun and knife stuff
is just part of his schtick.

LACEY

Well tell "Irene" we think killing
people might also be part of his
schtick. We're happy with the fifty
thousand.

HARRY

Doesn't matter. I'm sure he's
already put a stop payment on that
cheque.

JAKE

Why would he do that?

HARRY

To save money. It was enough to
just scare you.

JAKE

Who's scared? I'm not scared.

HARRY

You should be.

LACEY

He is.

(to Jake)

Look just take the cheque to the
bank, okay. Try to cash it. Then
we'll know for sure if we want to
do anything else.

HARRY

Yeah you can't come away with this with nothing.

JAKE

You mean except our lives.

LACEY

Just go to the bank.

JAKE

Sure. But I have a few errands to run so--

LACEY

Do this first. It's in the kitchen drawer with the knives and forks.

Jake retrieves the cheque.

LACEY (CONT'D)

It's made out to me. I'll have to sign the back.

JAKE

(handing her the cheque)
Right.

HARRY

(handing Lacey a pen)
This is probably a fool's errand.

LACEY

That's okay. He's a fool.

JAKE

Hey.

LACEY

I'm talking about those other "errands" you have to run.

JAKE

Yeah? Well that's okay then, I guess.

He takes the cheque and leaves.

HARRY

What's he up to?

LACEY

Shouldn't you be calling Irene?

HARRY
(takes out his cell,
punches a key)
I'll try but...
(into phone)
Hi. It's me. Look you need to step
away from this ... Because this man
is making my friends very nervous..
(to Lacey)
She doesn't care.

Lacey grabs his phone.

LACEY
(into phone)
Hey. Irene. Back the fuck off.
You're messing with our lives here!
... No it's not worth the risk! ...
No it fucking isn't!

Hands back Harry's phone.

LACEY (CONT'D)
What is it with her?

HARRY
(shrugs)
Like I told you. She's a sociopath.
(into phone)
Irene, look... how about I point
you to another target. We're in a
fight with our landlords and we
need someone to go at them in a
really big way. This would be a no
holds barred situation. Yeah. Total
war...
(to Lacey)
She's considering it.

LACEY
That's big of her.

Blackout

SCENE 9

Lacey has let Annie in. They are both heading to the living room.

ANNIE
You been jogging?

LACEY
Sleeping.

ANNIE
Oh. Well at least you're getting dressed now.

LACEY
Right. Listen, I've still got nothing to tell you. No new memories. No new need to let myself off the hook. So whatever you're here for...

ANNIE
There was an incident involving your husband.

LACEY
Whatya mean an incident?

ANNIE
It was a gang thing in the park near here. And shots were fired--

LACEY
Jesus. Is he dead?

ANNIE
He took a bullet in the shoulder, but he's going to be okay. He's in the hospital.

LACEY
The hospital... Can you take me there?

ANNIE
Sure but...

LACEY
(heading to bedroom)
I'll just get changed...

ANNIE

The thing is, he was with a known dealer who was in possession of a large quantity of crack cocaine. And there were other individuals...

LACEY

(from off)
What about, Jake?

ANNIE

He was shot in the arm.

Lacey comes out of the bedroom unchanged.

LACEY

I meant was he carrying?

ANNIE

No but-- I thought you were going to change.

LACEY

I decided not to bother.

She starts out. Annie follows.

ANNIE

Look, this was a turf war kind of thing, so if Jake is involved with these people...

LACEY

Right. That'd be bad. Got it.

She leaves.

ANNIE

(following)
Aren't you going to lock the door?

LACEY

(off)
Jesus Christ. No...

ANNIE

Not smart.
(to herself)
These are not smart people.

Annie leaves and closes the door behind her.

Blackout

SCENE 10

Mr. D is on the couch. Spread out. Waiting.

Harry comes in.

HARRY

Okay how many times do I have to
ask you to keep that door
(sees Mr. D)
...locked.

MR. DAVID

Hi, there.

HARRY

Who are you?

MR. DAVID

Why do you ask?

HARRY

Well you're in an apartment that
isn't yours.

MR. DAVID

So are you.

HARRY

I'm the... concierge.

MR. DAVID

The concierge. Is that a joke?

HARRY

Yes.

MR. DAVID

Okay. Good. I liked it.

HARRY

Thanks. Now who are you?

MR. DAVID

Who do you think I am?

HARRY

I think you're someone who
shouldn't be here.

MR. DAVID

Relax. I'm just waiting for that
young couple to come home.

HARRY

You can wait in the lobby.

MR. DAVID

Lobby. That must be another joke. There's no couch. Not even a couple of chairs.

HARRY

It's a lobby without furniture.

MR. DAVID

Sure. Because it would all get stolen, wouldn't it. I get that. Come on. Take a load off. Let's chat. I was going to say this to the young people who live here but since you're the... concierge. Harry, right?

HARRY

Yeah.

MR. DAVID

Right. So actually you should be the one to receive this information anyway. Irene said it was your idea to approach me.

HARRY

Who's Irene?

MR. DAVID

Please. Don't do that. It will just waste time for both of us.

HARRY

You found her?

MR. DAVID

I never lost her. I had her followed from our meeting.

HARRY

Have you hurt her?

MR. DAVID

Yes.

HARRY

How badly?

MR. DAVID

It's hard to tell. She doesn't seem all that bothered by pain.

HARRY

She isn't. So you might as well let her go.

MR. DAVID

That's one option. What are you anyway? Besides a janitor... You seem to think of yourself as some kind of hero to the people here. You were a crooked lawyer, right. Is this your attempt at redemption?

HARRY

Could be. Or maybe it's just something that needs to be done.

MR. DAVID

Well whatever it is, it has to stop. I can't be involved, beyond what I already am, in any of the consequences from that tragic accident. It's already brought me too much attention. I have people to answer to, and they don't like their associates to attract attention. I've already explained this to Jake but apparently you people aren't communicating with each other clearly. So here it is one last and final fucking time. If I ever hear from any of you again, this "thing" will get truly, truly, truly ugly for all of you. Do you understand what I'm saying.

HARRY

I truly do.

MR. DAVID

Excellent.

(stands)

And tell the young couple that the next bullet Jake takes won't be intended to wound.

HARRY

The next bullet? What are you--

MR. DAVID

You know, if you seriously want to make the people in this place feel better about themselves, put a nice sofa, a few cozy chairs, maybe even a brightly coloured rug in that lobby. Show them you trust that they won't get stolen. Plant new grass around the building. Maybe a few flowering bushes. Small things like that. That's all you should be doing. Anything more... adventurous is just going to end in heartbreak.

He leaves.

Blackout

SCENE 11

Lacey, Jake and Harry. Jake's arm is in a sling. Harry is on his feet and agitated.

HARRY

He's killed her. I'm sure of it.

JAKE

Should we call the cops?

HARRY

And ask them to look for her body at the bottom of the lake? This man is a seriously deranged criminal. I don't know how high up he's connected but-

LACEY

What's this thing he said about Jake maybe getting shot again.

JAKE

How'd he know about that?

HARRY

My guess is that he supplies Daryl's gang. And he used them send you a message.

JAKE

Yeah I was wondering why they all of a sudden turned on me. I don't get it. I'd already told that asshole we wouldn't push it anymore.

LACEY

Then Irene got to work.

HARRY

That was a strategic error.

LACEY

Ours, her's or his?

HARRY

Mine. I should never have unleashed her. Bless her, she couldn't control her basic instincts. Well, live and learn.

JAKE

If we can.

LACEY

Yeah we'll have to make sure he knows we're really, really backing off this time.

(to Harry)

I mean there's no other choice, is there?

HARRY

Well there's always another choice. Problem is, we won't know if it was the right one until we make it. Just letting him threaten us into doing nothing doesn't feel right to me though. He put a stop payment on that cheque, didn't he?

JAKE

Yeah.

HARRY

Well there you go. You're getting nothing from that evil asshole if we leave it as is. That settles it.

He starts off.

LACEY

Harry.

HARRY

Don't worry. I'll leave you out of it. And if whatever I do doesn't work out... I've liked getting to know you both very much. You've helped me get focused.

Starts and stops again.

HARRY (CONT'D)

One more thing. It's about the petition. Get it signed by as many people as possible. If you have to, just forge their names. No one will notice. Then start the campaign to resist eviction. And please don't give up. Not about that or anything else. How you start off doesn't have to be how you end up.

He leaves.

JAKE

I should go with him.

LACEY

Why?

JAKE

It feels shitty not to. That prick
he's going after had me shot.

LACEY

(sitting on couch)

So you want a little payback?

JAKE

Maybe.

LACEY

Look just sit down. You're not that
guy.

JAKE

What guy?

LACEY

The one who needs to go get payback
and leaves me here worrying about
him. Sit down. Please.

(off his look)

Come on. Be that guy, okay. Be *my*
guy.

Jake looks at her. She pats the couch next to her. He sits.
She snuggles up to him.

Blackout

SCENE 12

Lacey and Annie. Lacey is on her feet.

ANNIE

Mr. "David" denies ever seeing your friend.

LACEY

He's lying. Harry went to see him.

ANNIE

How would Harry even know where to find him?

LACEY

Maybe from Daryl down the hall.

ANNIE

The dealer your husband's involved with.

LACEY

He's not in-- Mr. David is Daryl's supplier and he-- Look I'm not going to talk to you if you're just trying to connect Jake to Daryl or any other drug dealer.

ANNIE

You didn't like my heads-up about the company Jake's keeping?
(off her look)
Look maybe Harry just took a little vacation.

LACEY

A vacation? No way. He'd never leave this place for long.

ANNIE

Why not?

LACEY

Because he's got a job to do here.

ANNIE

Fixing toilets you mean.

LACEY

That's not his real job. He's on a mission to get some justice.

ANNIE

For you?

LACEY

For everyone.

ANNIE

Okay. So he's a little unbalanced then.

LACEY

Maybe he is a little. So what? Does that mean we should just forget about him. It's been almost two days. Something's happened to him.

ANNIE

That could be true. Guys like Mr. David are good at what they do. And one of the things they do is make people disappear.

Jake comes out of the bedroom in his underwear. Putting his sling back on.

JAKE

What's she doing here?

LACEY

I called her. I'm worried about Harry.

JAKE

He's dead. Let me know when she's gone.

He goes back into the bedroom.

ANNIE

What's with him?

LACEY

He's pissed that you told me what went down in the park.

ANNIE

What, he thinks I was gossiping? Jesus... Anyway, let's assume Harry's dead. What's the lesson here, Lacey?

LACEY

The lesson? What the--

ANNIE

The lesson is this. There are individuals out there who shouldn't be messed with. Especially by people with limited resources like you. And--

LACEY

He ran the light.

(off her look)

Mr David or whatever his fucking name is. It came to me last night in bed. I remembered the whole thing. I was driving. I entered the intersection on a green light. I saw him coming out of the corner of my eye, but I thought he'd stop. He didn't. He didn't even slow down. Then it happened. It was freaky and loud. I passed out for awhile and then woke up, got out, went to the passenger side, pulled Tim out and dragged him into the field. And then...

ANNIE

You passed out again.

LACEY

Yeah... But that prick ran the light. So I want him in jail for killing my brother. But first I wanna take him for a fucking bundle. So we'll both do our thing, okay. You make a case against him. And I'll try to empty his bank account. Tell him. Go tell him you're coming after him.

ANNIE

That's not usually how we go about it.

LACEY

I want him to know as soon as possible that he's not getting away with this.

ANNIE

You mean the accident.

LACEY

Or for doing what he's done to my friend Harry.

(MORE)

LACEY (CONT'D)

He was trying to help us! Someone trying to help us. Do you have any fucking idea what that means to me!? Get to work, and put that criminal asshole away.

ANNIE

I'll do my best. And the money you want from him, you'll get that how?

LACEY

I'll think of something.

ANNIE

Good for you. Yeah. That's more like it

Annie smiles as she leaves.

Blackout

SCENE 13

Lacey is asleep on the couch. Mr. D is in the armchair. Watching her.

She stirs. Looks at him. Focuses. Sits up.

LACEY

I knew you'd come.

MR. DAVID

Really. Is that why the door's unlocked?

LACEY

It's always unlocked. Pretty stupid, eh.

MR. DAVID

Where's your husband?

LACEY

At work. I thought we should talk without him. This whole thing is making him very upset.

MR. DAVID

And you think we can make it better with a little talking.

LACEY

You don't wanna talk? You just want to torture me then kill me?

MR. DAVID

Speaking like that makes you seem a little crazy. Didn't your friend give you my message.

LACEY

No, he did. And I understood. I was ready to do all you wanted. But then he disappeared. And that kinda freaked me out. Freaked me out and shocked me so much that I remembered something.

MR. DAVID

And what was that.

LACEY

(near tears)

It wasn't your fault.
(MORE)

LACEY (CONT'D)

My brother was driving, and he'd had way too much to drink. He went through that red light and you had no choice but to slam into us. I'm really sorry for all we've put you through.

MR. DAVID

What the fuck is wrong with you?
What are you talking about?

LACEY

(smiles)

That's what I'll be telling the cops. And I'll do it...

(sadly and with tears)

Like like I just showed you....

(smiles)

Everything except my brother being the driver. I can't lay any more grief on my mother. And all you have to do is tell me what you did to my friend Harry. You do that and you'll be in the clear.

MR. DAVID

Sounds like I'm already in the clear.

LACEY

Well with *that* version of what happened you are. There's another one. The real one that says you ran the light. It makes you responsible for my brother's death. It probably puts you in prison.

MR. DAVID

And that's *actually* what you remembered?

LACEY

It's what I'll say I remembered if I have to. So where's Harry?

MR. DAVID

I don't know. The last time I saw him was right here. I gave him a message for you. Did you get it?

LACEY

Yeah...

MR. DAVID
And you didn't understand the part
about leaving me alone?

LACEY
Where's Harry?

MR. DAVID
I don't fucking know!

LACEY
I don't believe you!

MR. DAVID
I don't give a shit! Anything
else?

LACEY
What?

MR. DAVID
What else... do you... want... from
me?!

LACEY
Money.

MR. DAVID
You mean *more* money.

LACEY
Yeah. A lot more. I mean it will
still be reasonable, but I have to
think for awhile before I come up
with a figure.

MR. DAVID
You mean you don't want to be
greedy.

LACEY
That's right. I just want what's
fair. I'll be in touch.

MR. DAVID
(getting very close)
You know, Lacey... I've been
restraining myself because I feel
sorry for you.

LACEY
Sure you do.

MR. DAVID

(even closer)

There you go again. Don't fucking think you know me, okay. It's fucking annoying. I'm a very complex individual. And I have tried my best not to hurt you people. But this thing you're doing... it's very dangerous.

She lies back down.

LACEY

Is it?

He stands.

LACEY (CONT'D)

For you or for me?

MR. DAVID

For both of us. Okay. More money. But that's it. It stops with that.

LACEY

(crosses herself)

Promise.

MR. DAVID

Fuck you.

He gives her a final look. Just wondering. But she has her eyes closed.

Then he leaves.

Blackout.

SCENE 14

Lacey and Jake are snuggling on the couch.

JAKE

It was good to see you eat your supper. I've been pretty worried about you.

LACEY

It's okay. I'm back on track.
(she looks at him)
And I'm gonna get stronger. A lot stronger. That detective's right. People without resources are no match for the all assholes out there. So we're gonna take another approach from now on. Not to everything. Just to how we take care of yourselves.

JAKE

It was good of Daryl to take the drugs back.

LACEY

Yeah he's a saint.

JAKE

I owe him though.

LACEY

No you don't.

JAKE

Yeah, Lace. I do. That's just the way things are.

LACEY

Is the door locked?

JAKE

No.

LACEY

Good. Are you nervous?

JAKE

Are you?

LACEY

I'm too mad to be nervous.
 (hears something in the
 hall)
 Shh...

They listen. Prepare. Then...

The door swings open. A man storms in. Carrying a gun. All in black, including a balaclava. He approaches them. Stops. Relaxes his neck muscles.

Lacey moves her hand from behind Jake. She is holding a gun.

MASKED MAN

No!! No! Don't!!

He whips off the balaclava. It is Harry.

LACEY

Jesus!

JAKE

What the...!

HARRY

Whatya doing with a gun!?

JAKE

What are you doing--

LACEY

In a mask!?

HARRY

I was just trying to show what could happen if you keep leaving that fucking door unlocked!

LACEY

Where the hell you been, Harry?

HARRY

I needed to keep s low profile while I made some arrangements.
 (off gun)
 Where did you get that thing?

JAKE

Marco keeps it in the garage. I didn't like the idea but--

LACEY

I thought we should be prepared.

JAKE

It's our new approach to certain things.

HARRY

So you were expecting him to show up.

LACEY

We still are.

HARRY

That's not going to happen.

LACEY

We think it could.

JAKE

She scared him.

HARRY

I killed him.

(off their looks)

Well did you think I was all talk?

That was the old me. This me is

much more inclined to add some

action to my words.

JAKE

(to Lacey)

He killed him?

LACEY

That's what he just--

HARRY

How did you scare him?

LACEY

I told him I remembered that he

caused the accident.

HARRY

Did he? I mean did you actually

remember that.

LACEY

No.

JAKE

(to Harry)

How?

HARRY

How what?

LACEY

How did you kill him?

HARRY

I didn't actually do it myself. I just arranged it. It'll look like a gang killing.

LACEY

You're sure of that?

HARRY

Yes.

JAKE

Why?

HARRY

Because it was. He was squeezing our friend Daryl down the hall for a bigger share. Daryl didn't like that one little bit.

JAKE

And so he did this thing because of that?

HARRY

Plus my promise to keep him in good standing on the premises. He likes it here. And I can help keep the law off his back.

(sitting)

Now let's talk about the future. How do we get all the people in this building to sign our petition? How to we get them to understand the power they have. How do we get them to understand how important it is to stand up for themselves and push back when their basic life circumstances are threatened. Okay I can see how you might need some time to consider all that.

He leaves.

Lacey hands Jake the gun.

JAKE

Can I take that thing back to the garage?

LACE

You don't think we'll need it again?

JAKE

You heard him. The guy's dead.

LACE

Yeah but there are lots of other guys like that out there. I think we should hold on to it for awhile.

JAKE

Okay. I guess we should start locking the door too.

LACEY

No way.

JAKE

So the door will be unlocked. But we'll have a gun. What's that mean?

LACEY

It means... we're hoping for the best. But we're prepared to blow someone away if we have to.

(kisses him)

That makes sense, doesn't it. I mean considering how things are...

JAKE

Out there, you mean.

LACEY

Yeah out there. And down the hall.

JAKE

Yeah...

(kisses her neck)

Do you think you're ever gonna remember what happened with the accident?

LACEY

I'm thinking I don't want to. But maybe I should say I do. You know to do what Harry and the cop said. Blame the asshole.

JAKE

He's dead.

LACEY

Well he had insurance. And he had money to leave to someone. Why not us?

JAKE

Yeah. Because who knows how long it'll be before you can get back to work.

LACEY

And Marco's never gonna give you a raise.

JAKE

Right. What a prick, eh.

LACEY

And I don't see how my mum ever recovers from Tim dying.

JAKE

Which means we gotta take care of her, put her somewhere nice. And we'll need money for that.

LACEY

A lot. So... I think I'm starting to remember what happened.

JAKE

That's good.

LACEY

But I've heard insurance companies fight like hell not to pay anyone anything. And if he had a family they're probably evil assholes like he was. So just me saying it was his fault won't be enough. We need to find a witness.

JAKE

You mean a real witness?

LACEY

Or just, you know... a witness.

They think.

Look at each other.

Smile.

Blackout

THE END