

NEXT

Screenplay by
Gary Goldman

Based on
"The Golden Man"
By
Philip K. Dick

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Bare WHITE ROOM

Thirty feet square. CRIS JOHNSON, wearing a jail uniform, sits in a HEAVY CHAIR that is bolted to the floor. Mid-twenties, jaded, rebellious, handsome as a statue, Cris radiates a serene, if somewhat scruffy, charisma.

He faces a PLASMA SCREEN MONITOR on a bare wall. To the left of the screen, an unframed MIRROR; to the right, a DIGITAL CLOCK-CALENDAR.

A WOMAN'S FACE appears on the plasma screen. CALLIE FERRIS. Thirty. Tailored. Angular. Kate Hepburn-ish.

Ferris on monitor
Mr. Johnson, you've been sent to us
by the state authorities for
testing. We want to determine if
there's any substance to your
claims.

CrIS
Fire away.

FERRIS ON MONITOR
If we can verify your ability, we
may be able to help you avoid a
criminal trial.

CRIS
And "we" is...?

Ferris ON MONITOR
Homeland Security.

Ferris' face is replaced on the plasma screen by a series of random video clips. Hang-gliding. Traffic jam. Volcano erupting.

Ferris ON MONITOR
Now if you would, please look at
the monitor and tell us what you
see, say, five minutes from now.

Cris looks at the clock. 16:32 / March 9, 2006. He squints and the clock speeds up a little.

Ferris (o.c.)
Are you there yet?

In a few seconds, the clock reads 16:37.

On the monitor. Ferris' image has been replaced by footage of surfers riding big waves in Hawaii.

CrIS
Surfers.

Ferris (o.c.)
Good. Now can you move ahead ten minutes.

Varied images fast forward on the plasma screen. He arrives at 16:47 and reports on what he sees.

cris
Ants crawling up a tree.

Ferris (o.c.)
Excellent. Can you get to 1900 hours?

Cris looks ahead and squints.

CLOCK

Minutes whiz by.

PLASMA SCREEN

Clips play and change almost too fast to be recognized.

Clock

Cris gets to 19:00 -- and keeps going.

Mirror

Cris has a five o'clock shadow.

Clock

Hours tick off like an accelerating metronome.

Mirror

Cris sports a three-day stubble. He struggles to get out of the chair, but he is now strapped into it, bound at the wrist and ankle. His face fills with rage.

Plasma screen

The evening news zips by. Talking heads. Reportage.

Mirror

Like a window into a time machine. Cris' beard lengthens. He grows pale. His clothes change every few seconds. Rage gives way to the panic of a man trapped on a runaway train.

Plasma screen

The news dissolves into a blur.

Mirror

Cris ages before his own eyes. Wrinkles etch into skin. Hair greys, recedes. Outrage ebbs into hollow resignation as Cris watches himself waste away.

 Woman's voice
 Sir...Sir?

Cris' tired old eyes look up, confused.

Int. VEGAS HOTEL Coffee shop - day

A perky young WAITRESS stands over him, holding a pot of coffee.

 WAITRESS
 Warm-up?

On cris

Young again.

 CRIS
 Just the check.

She sets it on the table with a flirtatious smile. He takes it to the register and pays cash.

 Cris (V.O.)
 "The future ain't what it used to
 be." Ever hear that expression?

A moment later, A SECOND CRIS follows the first Cris to the register, repeating his every movement.

 CRIS (V.O.)
 It's a joke, but it's true. The
 future changes every time you look
 at it. Because you looked at it.

As Cris 2 pays cash, Cris 1 proceeds into the casino.

CRIS (V.O.)
Cause once you see it, you're
different.

Cris 2 follows, literally walking in Cris 1's footsteps.

CRIS (V.O.)
Maybe just a little.

A DRUNK bumps into Cris 1 and spills his Daiquiri on him.

CRIS (V.O.)
And that changes everything else.

Cris 2 -- the real Cris -- follows a moment later and
sidesteps the Drunk, who spills his Daiquiri on someone else.

CRIS (V.O.)
It's got something to do with
quantum physics.

Cris 2 reaches the gaming tables and merges with Cris 1.

Cris (V.O.)
That's why I stay away from
roulette and craps. It only takes a
millionth of an ounce to change a
roll. Just placing a different bet
can throw things off.

A roulette ball skitters indecisively between two grooves
before settling into one of them.

CRIS (v.O.)
I've got other rules, too. I don't
play against people, like at poker.
Only against the house.

Slot machines. Horse racing. Sports games.

CRIS (v.o.)
And my goal isn't to win big. At
least not any more. The idea is to
go unnoticed so I can keep coming
back to the trough.

He passes the MILLION DOLLAR SLOT. Stops, like it's calling
out to him.

CRIS (v.o.)
 So no jackpots. No longshots. No
 big bets except when I want 'em to
 see me lose.

Cris notices a DESPERATE GAMBLER on the verge of tears.
 Clearly, he's dropped a bundle. Cris approaches him and
 points to the MILLION DOLLAR SLOT.

CRIS
 Try that one, man. I've got a
 feeling.

Gambler
 (suspicious)
 Then you play it.

CRIS
 Against my religion.

Cris offers the guy a handful of silver dollars.

CRIS
 Do it, quick, before somebody else
 gets there.

While the Gambler dawdles, a MIDWESTERN DOWAGER plants
 herself at the MEGA-SLOT and starts feeding it dollars.

Cris sighs and walks off.

The Gambler watches him go, then reacts to BELLS, FLASHING
 LIGHTS, and SHRIEKS OF CELEBRATION. The Dowager has hit the
 MEGA-JACKPOT.

Blackjack section

Cris takes a stool at a crowded table.

CRIS (V.O.)
 Mainly I stick to blackjack. Boring
 but controllable.

Cris antes up. Cards are dealt. He's got a four showing.
 Taking a hit, he goes bust with a jack. So in real time, he
 sticks.

CRIS (V.O.)
 And safe unless they think you're
 counting.

The dealer turns over his cards. He's got a king and a deuce. So he has to draw. Pulls the jack. Busted.

The dealer pays Cris, then presses a button under the table.

INT. surveillance room

Banks of video monitors display images from the multitude of cameras looking down from above the gaming tables. The SURVEILLANCE SUPERVISOR, HAWKEYE, repositions in response to a red light so he can look over a Surveillance Operator's shoulder and study Cris.

INT. office of casino boss - DIFFERENT CASINO - day

The Stalin-faced CASINO BOSS sits behind his desk.

casino boss

If you don't mind my asking, why does Homeland Security give a damn about who's lucky in Vegas?

He's talking to Callie Ferris. We recognize her sardonic beauty from the plasma screen in Cris's pre-vision. In person, she's edgy, confident, and impatient with those who aren't as quick as she is.

Ferris

Maybe they're more than lucky.

casino boss

Then we handle it.

Ferris

I'm not talking about cheating. That's your problem. But if somebody wins consistently and you can't figure out how...Excuse me.

She answers her cell phone.

Ferris

Ferris...I'll be there in fifteen.

She stands, disconnects, and hands the Casino Boss her business card.

FERRIS

Call me, like they did. And try to hold him till I get here.

Casino boss
Yes, ma'am.

She's already out the door.

Video monitor: close on cris

Relaxed. Playing blackjack. The FEMALE DEALER tries not to gawk at him as she deals from a shoe.

Ferris (o.c.)
Nice looking guy.

davis (o.c.)
I guess.

Pull back: surveillance room

Ferris and DAVIS, the casino's dapper CHIEF OF SECURITY, stand behind Hawkeye, the Surveillance Supervisor, and study Cris on various monitors.

Ferris
Maybe she's in cahoots.

davis
He's beaten six dealers in a row.

ferris
You're sure he's not counting?

hawkeye
We've got five decks in the shoe.
And he wins more off the top than
the bottom.

davis
Moves a lot from table to table.

On a monitor, Cris pockets some of his chips.

hawkeye
Keeps his stacks short.

On another monitor, A COCKTAIL WAITRESS takes orders from the players.

WAITRESS
What's your pleasure?

CRIS
Grand Dad, rocks.

Ferris
What's his name?

davis
(shrugs)
Not staying here. Pays in cash.

Hawkeye
We're running him through face
check.

As Ferris watches Cris on the monitor, he becomes still and attentive, as if sensing danger. He squints a little, the way we do when we try to remember something.

Ferris
Invite him for a drink.
(remembers her manners)
If you don't mind.

Int. CASINO/BLACKJACK TABLE - day

As Cris signals for another card, TWO BLACK SUITS appear behind him.

black suit (o.S.)
Sir, would you come with us,
please.

Cris takes in their grim faces. Turns to see two more pairs of goons stationed nearby.

SNAPBACK to:

Thirty seconds ago

The COCKTAIL WAITRESS approaches to take Cris' order.

WAITRESS
What's your pleasure?

This time, Cris hurriedly scoops all his chips into his coat pocket, jostling the Waitress as he stands.

CRIS
Scuse me, sorry.

Hustling away, he glances back just as the first TWO BLACK SUITS reach his stool, but this time it's empty. They look around. One of them whispers into his mike. The three pairs of goons get instructions and split up.

Tracking shot / eye level

Cris strides crisply through the casino. Sees another PAIR OF BLACK SUITS, scanning for him. He ducks into the maze of slots. Zigs and zags from aisle to aisle, seemingly at random. A moment after each turn, a Black Suit appears ahead, behind, or to the side - where they would have spotted Cris.

Tracking shot / high angle

A clearer perspective as TWO BLACK SUITS approach Cris' aisle from different directions. Cris has no way to see them or know they're coming, but at the last moment, he MOVES in between two aisles where neither guard will see him as they pass.

surveillance room

Davis and Hawkeye wince as the Black Suits keep missing their quarry.

davis
What's wrong with you guys?

hawkeye
He's right next to you! Aisle 63!

Ferris watches the chase, fascinated.

Phalanxes of slot machines

Black Suits converge from various directions, in that fake-calm fast-walk.

Cris studies the gamblers playing the machines nearby, then heads to a particular spot - where he is sure to be spotted - except that a TEXAS-SIZED MAN repositions himself, blocking the Black Suit's view.

The Black Suit moves on. Cris shifts to another spot just as a different Black Suit arrives at the other end of the aisle. This time, THREE FRAT BOYS change machines and obscure Cris from his gaze.

surveillance room

Davis is throwing a fit.

Davis
There! There! He's right there in front of you! Walk toward each other!

Cris slips away in the shadow of the Frat Boys.

hawkeye
Maybe he's on our frequency.

DAVIS
I don't see an earphone on him.

hawkeye
He's heading to the Convention Annex.

FERRIS
(stands)
Give me a headset. I'm going down there.

Convention annex

Arriving at the foyer, Cris sees Five Meeting Rooms. He squints then decisively enters one of them.

FOUR BLACK SUITS arrive an instant later. Without wasting a beat, each of them goes through a different door. All except the one Cris went through.

Cris re-emerges a moment later and heads back toward the casino.

Casino

Ferris, arriving, adjusts her headset.

Cris sees her. Recognizes her from his prevision as the woman on the plasma screen. Turns and walks away.

She sees Cris. Takes off after him.

Ferris
(to head mic)
He's heading toward...
(reads sign)
the Ipanema Grill.

Security Staff converge on the area. Cris is in plain sight. Suddenly a busload of tourists surge in through a door and clog the way.

Cris continues into the...

Kitchen area

Passing a room service cart, he rolls it in front of him. A few steps on, he takes the bottle of OLIVE OIL on the cart and pours some in front of one random closed door. Cris then shoves the room service cart down the hall toward an empty intersecting corridor. A Black Suit barrels into the empty intersection just as the cart arrives - and tumbles over it. Behind Cris, a door swings open; a Black Suit charges out; steps precisely into the puddle of poured olive oil - and falls on his ass.

Cris slips by him, but gets cut off by an arriving group of FOUR MORE BLACK SUITS. Big guys. They try to grab him. He evades their grasp almost magically and, like a Shaolin Monk, somehow leverages them into each other until they are in a pile on the floor. Cris darts around them into the...

Lobby

He co-opts a luggage cart that is loaded up for delivery. Rolling it to the left, a Black Suit on that side doesn't see him - and moves on. Cris switches to the right side of the cart - just as a second Black Suit would have seen him.

Abandoning the cart, Cris sets off across the lobby in a herky-jerky rhythm.

He walks four quick steps without being seen. Then stops behind a column just as Black Suit 1 turns his way. When Black Suit 1 looks on, Cris resumes his journey, cutting across the lobby at an acute angle. In this way, he avoids being seen by Black Suit 2. Cris now backs up three steps and avoids being seen by Black Suit 3.

By precisely choosing his movements and knowing where his hunters will be looking, Cris achieves something like invisibility.

The last obstacle to daylight is Ferris. She sees him. He makes a run for the door. She dashes after him.

FERRIS

You! I just need to talk to you!

Cris grabs a guest's suitcase and keeps moving.

FERRIS

Homeland Security!

The guest chases after Cris - and collides with Ferris, knocking her to the ground. Which allows Cris to slip through a door to the...

Ext. Hotel loading dock - day

Where TWO LAUNDRY DELIVERY MEN are flinging sacks of clothes into the back of a truck. Cris steps toward the open tailgate with a steady pace. As if on cue, both Laundry Guys turn and bend to pick up another sack of clothes. Cris walks right by them without being noticed -- and climbs into the truck. A moment later, the Laundry Guys pivot back around, toss sacks of clothes in after Cris, and slam the rear doors. They get in the truck and drive off just as Ferris, Davis, and several Black Suits arrive to find a cold trail.

davis

You were right. This guy is a lot more than lucky.

Oddly, Ferris seems almost encouraged.

ferrIS

At least now I know he exists.

Int. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY - las vegas regional OFFICE - NIGHT

Ferris strides purposefully through hallways crowded with people hustling just as urgently as she is. She enters the large ante-room of a bigshot's office and addresses JEANNIE, a civil service secretary.

Ferris

Jeannie, I have to see him right away.

Jeannie

He's on with Washington. We just went on Code Orange.

Ferris

What's the threat?

JEANNIE

We found a dirty bomb in East Vegas. A barrel of C-4 and a kilo of nuclear waste. But we're getting chatter about a dozen more out there somewhere, ready to blow.

Ferris absorbs the catastrophic news without emotion.

Ferris
Tell him I have a new source that
could help with the case.

JEANNIE
(snide)
Another remote viewer?

Ferris stares her down.

Ferris
Have him meet me in imaging.

Leaves without waiting for a response.

ext. picnic in park - Day

Cris and a glowing YOUNG MOTHER hold a BABY BOY. Gazing into the baby's eyes, Cris beams with perfect happiness. He plays with the baby's fingers. The two middle ones are subtly WEBBED BY A PIECE OF SKIN that comes about halfway up the bottom knuckle. The image whites out as...

INT. LAUNDRY TRUCK - DAY

Sunlight pours into the back of the truck, revealing Cris lounging on a mound of laundry sacks. He composes himself and steps out, nonchalant as James Bond.

CrIS
Thanks, guys. Not too heavy on the
starch.

Computer simulation

The pursuit of Cris through the casino has been mapped into a 3-D visualization. Multiple camera angles have been merged so that a single POV seamlessly follows Cris without cutting.

It's clear that Cris avoids trouble before he sees it.

male voice (O.s.)
You pulled me out of a conference
call with the Secretary to show me
a video game?

Int. IMAGING lab - day

ERIC WISDOM, 38, stands next to Ferris as they watch the simulation on a flat-screen monitor. Highly competent, solidly masculine, Spencer Tracy to her Hepburn, you can rely on him in your average emergency. Which this is not.

FERRIS
I need six men to bring him in.

WISDOM
We're on Code Orange.

Ferris
He could help us find the other
bombs.

WISDOM
That's an ultra low probability.
None of your "specials" have ever
panned out, and this isn't the time
to experiment.

Ferris steps close to Wisdom.

FERRIS
Come on, Eric, you saw it. We're
flying blind and he's got radar.

Wisdom steps away from her.

WISDOM
Callie, people are talking. They
say I'm only funding your research
because we're involved.

FERRIS
That's because they're....

WISDOM
Right.

Ouch.

WISDOM
I'm sorry, but they're right.

FERRIS
You bastard.

WISDOM
I care about you, and I wanted to
support you. But there's a limit to
what I can...

FERRIS
(professional)
Look, we analyzed what this ability
would look like if it existed.
(MORE)

FERRIS (cont'd)

I went screening for it in a highly scientific way. And now I've identified someone who matches all the indicators. So the next obvious step is to...

wisdom

Let me do my job! - Christ! Don't you ever quit?

FERRIS

No.

(beat)

I've got a country to protect.

He finds her both infuriating and irresistible.

WISDOM

Use your charm on somebody else.

He stalks out of the room, leaving her more thwarted than sad.

DRIVER'S POV: TRAFFIC IN VEGAS

An elevated freeway. Driving behind a pick-up truck carrying a mattress and box spring.

Cris (v.o.)

I'm not God. I don't see everything. Just my own future.

Ext./INT. Cris' car - day

Cris drives an old Camaro, muscle-y but inconspicuous.

Cris (v.o.)

To me, it seems normal. The way lightning comes before thunder.

Cris changes lanes to get from behind the truck.

CRIS (V.O.)

Most of the time, I'm not paying attention. Just making sure I don't step in a mess.

In his rearview mirror, Cris sees the mattress fall off the truck, causing an accident.

CRIS (V.O.)
Sometimes I get a blast from far
away.

He sees a plume of smoke in the distance.

CRIS (V.O.)
Or I can start with a glimpse of
something close and keep pushing
on.

He takes the next exit.

CRIS (V.O.)
Usually it's none of my business.

He turns into the parking lot of a bookie shop, THE FINISH
LINE.

Int. The finish line - day

Cris walks to the counter. Addresses the manager.

CRIS
Guy around?

MANAGER
You are?

CRIS
Tell him it's King Midas.

Int. homeland security regional hq - internal security office
- day

TERRY BAINES, plainclothed HEAD OF PROTECTIVE SERVICES for
the Facility, walks down the corridor with three of the
better-trained MILITARY POLICE who have been brought in to
augment the regular staff of civilian FEDERAL PROTECTIVE
SERVICE POLICE. Baines is a handsome former Special Forces
Lieutenant, early-forties, who takes his work very seriously.
Ferris runs to catch up with him. He doesn't slow down for
her.

FERRIS
Terry? Terry! - I know you've got
your hands full but I was wondering
if you might be able to spare a few
warm bodies for an outside
operation.

She gives him a look. There's some mutual attraction, but not a lot of affection.

BAINES
We're strictly internal.

FERRIS
That's why I need your people.
Everybody else is assigned.

BAINES
Does Wisdom know about this?

FERRIS
He suggested it.

While Baines arches a dubious eyebrow, an intellectual junior analyst, AMANDA, catches up with Ferris.

AMANDA
Callie.
(corrects herself)
Agent Ferris. I've got a face match
on your subject. His name is Cris
Johnson.

Ferris takes Amanda's PRINTOUT and glances at it on the run:
it's a PHOTO of Cris on a WANTED BULLETIN.

fERRIS
(slows to a stop)
Never mind, Terry. Pretty Boy here
is wanted for murder in Nevada.

She hustles off with Amanda.

INT. BACK ROOM AT THE FINISH LINE - DAY

A smoky office with a big screen tv and a poker table, but no card players. Cris is greeted by GUY, relaxed, professional, smartly dressed, mid-forties. He's classier than the joint he runs.

Guy
Well, if it isn't the Golden Man.

A look, a hug. A lot of history.

Guy
What brings you crawling back to
me?

CRIS
I need to cash some chips. - Got
tagged.

He starts setting them in stacks on the poker table.

GUY
You burned through your stash
already?

CRIS
I've been trying to lay low.

Int. State police STATION - dAY

Computer monitor on a desk plays Cris' escape from the
casino.

CavANAUGH (o.s.)
That's him. I call him the Road
Runner. You know? Beep beep.

LT. CAVANAUGH, middle-aged hunter type, beer belly but still
a menace.

Ferris
What's he running from?

Cavanaugh takes a videocassette from a pile on his messy
desk.

CAVANAUGH
You showed me yours. I'll show you
mine.

He pops the tape into a VCR. Presses play.

On the monitor

Low-quality security camera recording of a liquor store at
night. Business is good. FIVE PEOPLE wait in line at the
register. Time code reads November 11, 2004. Cris walks in,
unsteady on his feet. Heads for the beer locker. Pauses.
Suddenly runs toward the register at full speed and TACKLES A
CUSTOMER, shoving him hard to the floor. Cris prepares to
hold him down, but the tackled man just lies there, a pool of
blood forming under his head. Cris looks up. The customers
are gaping at him, terrified.

CRIS
 (slurred)
 He was gonna kill you! You all
 would'a died!

Cris sees that they're afraid of him, not the dead man. He runs out. PAUSE TAPE.

Back to scene

Cavanaugh studies Ferris' reaction.

INT. BACK ROOM AT THE FINISH LINE - DAY

Guy finishes counting Cris' chips.

Guy
 But you of all people. How could
 you have let it happen?

CRIS
 That was the night Donna broke off
 our engagement.

GUY
 Ahh.

CRIS
 I was so drunk I could barely see
 now.

Guy opens a drawer, takes out a pack of a hundred \$100's, and counts out an additional sum from his pocket.

GUY
 Well, I hope you don't mind. I
 called Neal to let him know you're
 here.

CRIS
 Christ, Guy, did you have to?

GUY
 You say everything's inevitable, so
 I guess I did.

Guy returns to his antique copper espresso machine and starts to make two cups.

CRIS
 Well, you can save your breath.
 Cause I know what you're gonna say.

GUY

Then you're aware that Neal is in a serious cash crunch and could lose it all.

CRIS

I'm sorry to hear that. But I'm done playing the market.

While Guy is distracted making espresso, Cris jams the desk drawer shut with a penny.

GUY

Neal's got it all worked out. He'll fly you out of the country on his jet. Put you up in style. He pays taxes, totally legal. You get cash, squeaky clean. Half the net. When your share hits fifty mil, you can say "finito"...and it's over.

CRIS

Except last time, Neal didn't take "finito" for an answer.

Guy slams his fist.

GUY

You need us, asshole! The Law is breathin' down your neck!

CRIS

I can stay ahead of 'em forever.

GUY

But why live that way?

CRIS

Because I don't want to be used any more.

GUY

What do you give a shit as long as you get what you want?

CRIS

Cause what I want is freedom. And you don't get it by giving it up.

Guy calms himself and sets an espresso in front of Cris.

CRIS
Enjoy it while it lasts.

Cris picks up the cup and knocks it back.

Ext. finish line - Parking lot - day

Cris starts up the car. Notices he's woozy. He prepares to back out. Instead he blacks out -- as Guy and THREE MEN drag him out of the car.

SNAPBACK TO:

Guy's office

Guy sets the cup of espresso in front of Cris, who picks it up. But Instead of knocking it back, he sets it down and grins cryptically at Guy, who senses something and reaches to open his top desk drawer - the one Cris pennied shut. Guy can't get it open. Guy reaches under his Racing Form. Feels around. Cris holds up a knife.

CRIS
Looking for this?

Guy pulls his arm from under the Racing Form -- spilling the cup of espresso that Cris just set down. Guy knows that's not a coincidence.

CRIS
Don't mess with somebody who knows
your moves before you even think
'em.

Cris takes his cash.

GUY
The jet'll be sold in a week. Then
there goes your ticket out.

CRIS
Don't wait for me.

Cris heads out.

Guy
You know what I think? I think I
know the future better than you do.

Cris scoffs as he leaves.

Int. State police STATION - dAY

Cavanaugh pours coffee for himself and Ferris.

CAVANAUGH

He's just some gambler. Lives completely off the grid. No bank account. No credit cards. No previous record.

Ferris

So why'd he do it?

CAVANAUGH

Must be a wacko. He'd never met the victim. No connection whatsoever.

Ferris tries to make sense of it all.

feRRIS

And in fifteen months, why haven't you caught him?

Cavanaugh sighs woefully.

CAVANAUGH

You saw. He's got eyes in the back of his head. He can see around corners. I even had him in custody once, and he disappeared.

Ferris

Must be very embarrassing.

A painful subject for Cavanaugh.

CAVANAUGH

And what is it you want him for?

Ferris

Questioning.

CAVANAUGH

About?

Ferris

Stuff that hasn't happened yet.

Cavanaugh nods knowingly.

CAVANAUGH

Well, I guess Homeland Security
trumps liquor store murder. How can
I help?

Ext. Suburban home - las vegas - niGHT

A tract house, cheap, from the 60's, could be anywhere.
Something sad about the place. Cris stands at the door,
holding a bag of groceries. IRV, a sick old man, opens the
door, wearing a knit cap and pajamas. He's hooked up to a
little oxygen tank on wheels. When he sees Cris, his smile
crimps the tube in his nose.

IRV

What are you doing back here?

CRIS

I came to fix you dinner.

IRV

Idiot.

Irv pulls Cris inside. Closes the door.

Int. irv's house - night

They embrace like father and son. The oxygen tube gets in the
way.

IRV

This is what you get from two packs
a day.

CrIS

But you quit ten years ago.

IRV

It was already too late. I just
didn't know it.

CRIS

Sometimes not knowing is better.

Irv shakes his head.

IRV

Look where you're headed, pal. The
big decisions are over before you
even realize you made 'em.

Int. The finish line - back room - night

Cavanaugh and Ferris chat with Guy. This time the poker game is in progress.

CaVANAUGH

Any idea where he might be going?

Guy turns to Ferris.

GUY

I've got a little problem with the IRS. Think I could get some relief?

FERRIS

Depends how helpful you are.

GuY

Oh, I know everything about him.

He looks at Ferris, knowing. She turns to Cavanaugh.

FERRIS

I need to speak to him alone.

INT. FINISH LINE - MAIN PARLOR - NIGHT

Guy and Ferris sip cappuccino.

GUY

And another thing, no woman ever turns him down, I'm serious. Mainly because he only propositions the ones he knows'll say yes, which is most of 'em anyway. But does that make him happy? No. Says he's bored. Never surprised. Has to watch himself die over and over again.

FERRIS

Why'd he come back to Vegas?

GUY

Didn't say, but I'm guessin' it's this friend who's dying. An old fart who took him in when he was strung out on drugs. - He's an orphan, ya know. Been on the road since he was ten.

Int. Irv's house / living room - night

The place is a mess. Piles of newspapers. Old clothes. Cris cleans up as they talk. Irv sits at a table and plays solitaire.

IRV

You want my advice? Get yourself a good lawyer and turn yourself in.

CRIS

If I tell 'em the truth, you know what happens? I end up with the Feds. - And you know what they do to me?

IRV

Make you a secret agent.

Cris

Don't laugh. They strap me in a chair and make me watch the news.

IRV

Dan Rather or Peter Jennings?

CRIS

It's not funny, Irv. That's all I do, day after day, for the rest of my life. Watch the news until I lose my hair and croak.

Irv is moved by Cris' dilemma.

Irv

There's no way around it?

CRIS

The best I can do is stay away from all of 'em.

Irv shakes his head with sympathy for Cris' plight.

IRV

In that case, you've gotta leave the country.

CRIS

I know, I know, but there's something I gotta do first.

IRV

What?

Cris doesn't answer. His gaze is distant.

IRV

Cris?

Cris focuses.

CRIS

She's coming here. The Fed.

IRV

You gotta go?

Cris thinks. Shakes his head.

CRIS

Let's play it out.

Int. Irv's kitchen - day

Cris makes a lamb roast, studding it with cloves of garlic.

CRIS

I've got the place all picked out.
It's called Palau. Three hundred
teeny islands in the South Pacific.
(places roast in pan)
Nothing ever happens there, so
there's nothing to foresee.

IRV

Then what the hell are you waiting
for?

Cris puts the roasting pan in the oven.

CRIS

Her.

IRV

Who?

CRIS

I haven't met her yet.

IRV

Then find somebody else!

CRIS
It has to be her.

IRV
What's so special about this one?

CRIS
She's the mother of my child.

Irv stops shuffling the cards.

IRV
I thought you were shooting blanks.

CRIS
I guess the doctors were wrong.

IRV
I don't mean to be indelicate, my friend, but how do you know the little bastard is yours?

CRIS
He's got my thing.

IRV
Your thing?

Cris holds up his hand, revealing that the skin between his two middle fingers is webbed a little higher than normal.

CRIS
My thing.

IRV
I still don't understand why you never got that fixed.

Cris laughs...then suddenly stops.

cris
She's here.

He walks to the door and opens it to discover Ferris standing there, with her finger about to press the doorbell.

CRIS
Agent Ferris, come in.

She regards Cris with appreciation.

FERRIS
One step ahead of the game.

CRIS
Always.

She enters. Tries not to be intimidated by his ability or appearance. Sees Irv, watching them.

Ferris
Is there some place we can speak privately?

CRIS
Let's go in the kitchen. I've got a roast in the oven.

Irv
No, you two stay here. I'll watch the food.

Once out of Ferris' eyeline, Irv queries Cris with his hand in the shape of a gun. Cris shakes his head, then turns to Ferris - and waits for her to begin.

FERRIS
You're wasting your life, Cris. You have the most amazing talent, and you're running from it.

CRIS
Yeah, people say I could have been a chef.

Ferris
Don't be cute. There's too much at stake here.

Her gravity anchors him.

FERRIS
Now if you say that man in the liquor store was going to shoot five people, I believe you. Why else would you kill a stranger?

Cris guards his reaction.

FERRIS
But no good deed goes unpunished, eh?

(MORE)

FERRIS (cont'd)

And that's how it's going to be in this world. People will either hate you or want to exploit you.

CRIS

Everyone but you, of course.

FERRIS

I can fix your legal problems. More importantly, I can give you a chance to use your gift.

CRIS

Trust me, it's better if I don't. It's better if I just mind my own business.

Ferris looks at him, disapproving.

FERRIS

I'll be honest with you, Cris. That's not an option. Your country needs you. And if we don't grab you, somebody else will.

CRIS

Nobody's grabbed me yet.

Ferris

You're up against more powerful forces now.

She lets that sink in.

FERRIS

I'd like you to come with me for some testing. Would you be willing to do that?

Cris's expression grows dark. He looks at Ferris accusingly, then BOLTS away, toward the KITCHEN.

FERRIS

Where are you going?

Cris covers his eyes and dives to the floor as STUN GRENADES shatter windows and explode with a FLASH.

FERRIS

(temporarily blinded)
Shit! Cavanaugh!

Gas grenades follow.

Cris scrambles to his feet as a NEVADA POLICE SWAT TEAM bursts through windows and doors, wearing gas masks and goggles, scanning with laser-guided rifles. They find Cris, dashing for the back door. Open fire.

Cris tumbles, dodges a few bullets, then takes a hit in the shoulder, the back, the leg. Staggeres forward. Absorbs dozens of bullets.

Falls.

Lies there.

Dying.

Cavanaugh steps up to deliver the final shot.

SNAPBACK TO:

Int. Irv's house / living room - an hour AGO

IRV

In that case, you've gotta leave the country.

CRIS

I know, I know, I've got the place picked out. But there's something I've gotta do first.

IRV

What?

Cris doesn't answer. His gaze is distant.

IRV

Cris?

Cris focuses.

CRIS

I have to go.

IRV

You just got here.

CRIS

I know, but they're coming for me.

Cris takes the pack of cash he got from Guy, pulls out more than half the bills, and sets them on a table.

CRIS
This is for nurses and stuff, to
make things a little easier.

IRV
You're gonna need it.

Cris shakes his head and embraces Irv.

CrIS
You're the only one I could trust.
Ever.

They're both choked up.

IRV
I don't suppose you've discovered
any last minute escape for me?

CRIS
I looked, Irv, I really did. I went
down every path, every treatment.
Sometimes there's just no...

IRV
It's okay. It's okay...Now I can
relax.

A last look.

Ext. irv's street - dAY

Cris' approaches his parked Camaro with his key out.
CAVANAUGH and SIX TROOPERS spring from hiding, guns trained
on him.

Camera pans to cris

In Irv's back yard, watching this scene.

Ext. ALLEY BEHIND IRV'S HOUSE - day

A State Trooper keeps watch, smoking. When he steps on the
butt, Cris enters the frame in the background. When the
Trooper turns to a wall to piss, Cris crosses the alley,
unseen. When Cris passes out of frame, the Trooper finishes,
unaware of what he has missed.

Ext. outskirts of vegas - night

A Route 66-vintage highway with stop lights and tawdry commercial development. Cris stands on the shoulder, thumbing a ride. Cars and trucks pass without stopping.

FAST FOWARD through endless traffic until an OLD CHEVROLET pulls over. Cris checks his watch. It's 8:23.

Snapback TO:

SIDE OF THE ROAD

Chris checks his watch. It's 7:57.

Cris
(to himself)
Twenty-four minutes.

He looks around. Sees a donut shop. Heads toward it.

Int. Irv's house - night

Cavanaugh's State Troopers, guns drawn, are searching the place on a hair-trigger, ready to blow away anything that moves.

FERRIS
I need him alive, Cavanaugh. Even
if he resists.

CAVANAUGH
Yes, ma'am.

She points to Cavanaugh's troopers.

FERRIS
Tell them.

As Cavanaugh grudgingly walks off to deliver the message, Irv approaches Ferris.

Irv
You'll never catch him. He knows
what you're gonna do to him.

FERRIS
That's very helpful information.

She walks off, leaving Irv to regret he opened his mouth.

Int. donut shop - night

Cris steps in. Goes to the counter.

CRIS
Medium coffee, black, and a glazed.

As he waits, he sees a vague REFLECTION in the GLASS DISPLAY CASE: a SQUARE CROSS, coming into focus.

Puzzled, Cris looks up and around to see the object that's being reflected. He can't find it. Cris turns back to the display case, but the reflection is gone. The DONUT GIRL gives him his order.

Cris takes it, turns, and notices LIZ COOPER sitting by herself at a booth, circling items in the classified section. He recognizes her as the future mother of his future child.

Cris gazes at her face, which is both childish and mature, shy yet indomitable.

She turns, scowling, from the staring stranger.

Cris approaches Liz and gives her that smile that always works.

CRIS
Mind if I join you?

LIZ
(prickly)
Yeah, actually I do.

Cris seems disconcerted.

SNAPBACK TO:

The Donut Girl gives Cris his order. He approaches Liz again and tries a different opening line.

CRIS
Is that cruller any good?

Liz looks at him like he's hopeless. He notices that she's reading the used car ads.

SNAPBACK TO:

The Donut Girl gives Cris his order. He approaches Liz.

CRIS
Shopping for a car?

LIZ
What business is it of yours?

SNAPBACK TO:

The Donut Girl gives Cris his order. He approaches Liz.

CRIS
Rough day?

LIZ
I don't want to talk about it.

SnAPBACK TO:

The Donut Girl gives Cris his order. Discouraged after all that rejection, he approaches Liz -- and bobbles his coffee, spilling it on the floor. He's mortified, but she smiles at him.

SNAPBACK TO:

The Donut Girl gives Cris his order. Now confident he's found the right approach, Cris approaches Liz and deliberately bobbles his coffee. But not in the exact way he did before. When it falls, it splashes on her shoes.

LIZ
Aw Christ! Look what you've done!

CRIS
I'm so sorry. I'm a spaz.

LIZ
Yeah, you are.

She wipes her shoe with a napkin.

LIZ
It looked like you spilled it on purpose.

CRIS
Why would I do that?

LIZ
I don't know. To impress me?

CRIS
Look, I'm sorry. If I could, I'd do
it over.

Disgusted, she hands him a stack of paper napkins.

CRIS
Here.

She watches as he sops up the coffee and carries dripping,
soggy tissues to the trash. The miserable expression on his
face finally wins the smile he's been working for.

Int. Donut shop - night - a few minutes later

They're sitting across from each other, laughing.

Liz
Divorce, bankruptcy, repossession.
Yeah, I'd call that a bad year.

CRIS
Well, Liz, your luck's about to
change.

LIZ
How's that?

CRIS
You met me.

LIZ
And what are you, a leprechaun?

CRIS
An angel, actually. And we always
reward the people who help us.

LIZ
Great, what do I have to do?

CRIS
You don't have to do anything.

Cris glances outside and sees the old Chevrolet drive by
without stopping. He checks his watch. It's 8:23.

CRIS
But I could use a ride.

She knows she shouldn't.

Int. JEEP CHEROKEE / on highway - NIGHT

Going fast. Johnny Cash on the CD.

LIZ
When does the luck kick in?

CRIS
It already has.

LIZ
I don't feel anything.

CRIS
Not even a tingle?

LIZ
Son, I haven't had a tingle in
eight months.

He waits for the other shoe to drop.

Liz
(can't hold it in)
Since my worthless no-good dickhead
of a husband ran out on me.

CRIS
Then you're way overdue. For a
reversal of fortune.

Brake lights flare on the cars ahead. They pass an exit.

CRIS
Any kids?

LIZ
Thirty.
(off his look)
I teach fifth grade.

CRIS
I mean of your own.

She shakes her head.

CRIS
I guess that's good. Considering.

LIZ
No, that was the problem. - I
couldn't get pregnant.

Traffic is backed up.

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

LIZ
You didn't. I'm just running off at the mouth. - That's why I was in Vegas. To see another doctor.

Flashing yellow lights - a barricade. Cris is getting nervous.

CRIS
He didn't want to adopt?

LIZ
No, he had to have a Randy Junior.

Flashing blue lights - parked cop cars.

LIZ
What, is there an accident?

The place is crawling with state troopers. Cris is looking around for a way out.

SnAPBACK TO:

one MINUTE EARLIER - one mile back

LIZ
When does the luck kick in?

CRIS
It already has.

LIZ
I don't feel anything.

Brake lights flare on the cars ahead.

CRIS
(urgent)
Take this exit. Quick!

LIZ
Why?

CRIS
Just take it!

The dotted lines on the road are now solid.

LIZ
It's too late!

CRIS
No it's not!

Cris grabs the steering wheel and jerks it to the right, sending them over some speed bumps onto the off ramp.

LIZ
Let go! Are you out of your mind?!

She slams on the brakes and they screech to a stop on the right shoulder of the exit ramp.

LIZ
Get out!

Cris scrambles for an explanation. Looks, sees a queieu of brake lights from the roadblock now backed up past the exit.

CRIS
Traffic was piling up. You didn't see it?

LIZ
GET OUT!!

CRIS
We could'a been stuck there for hours.

LIZ
I don't give a flyin' goddamn! You don't grab the steering wheel!

Cris pauses for a beat. Takes a different tack.

CRIS
You're right. I'm sorry. I panicked. I get phobic sitting in traffic. It won't happen again, I promise.

LIZ
Damn straight, cause you won't be in the car!

She waits for him to exit.

CRIS

How 'bout at the next gas station?
Please. I'll fill up your tank.

Liz sighs, exasperated, and continues down the exit ramp, passing a sign that says, WELCOME TO CALIFORNIA.

ext. road block - NIGHT

Cavanaugh and Ferris drink coffee as troopers examine every passing vehicle.

Ferris

You're wasting time here.

CaVANAUGH

How long have you been in law enforcement? About six months?

FERRIS

Long enough to know we're not gonna catch him by surprise.

CAVANAUGH

What, you think he's got some kind of radar?

FERRIS

Interesting idea. It'd explain a whole lot.

CAVANAUGH

And Area 51 would explain my missing tennis shoes. But that doesn't mean they're on a flying saucer.

Ferris comes to a decision.

FERRIS

In this case, it does.

Cavanaugh knows he's about to hear something wild.

Ext. Gas station/mini-mart - night

Gasoline flowing. Liz, still in a snit, sits impatiently behind the wheel, watching in the mirror as Cris crosses behind the car and knocks on her window. Grudgingly, she lowers it. He holds out a lottery card.

CRIS

I am really really really really
sorry.

Indulging him, she takes it. When he walks away, she deigns to look at it. She tries to resist but can't. Gets out a nickel and scratches the card. Wins \$250. What the...?

CHUNK. The pump shuts off.

BEHIND THE CAR

Cris takes out the nozzle and twists on the cap. Behind him, Liz strides by in a huff.

Liz

Get in the car. I'll be back in a
minute.

Cris smiles to himself as she proceeds toward the mini-mart.

ext. roadblock - NIGHT

Cavanaugh considers what Ferris has just told him.

CAVANAUGH

I'd call your proof a little iffy.

FERRIS

Look, from your own experience,
this guy can't be punched, shot,
surprised, captured, or confined.
So either he's got something
special, or you're an idiot.

Cavanaugh doesn't like her logic.

CAVANAUGH

Let's say I'm not an idiot...

FERRIS

And I'm not saying you are.

CAVANAUGH

Then what?

FERRIS

We've got to think like he does.
We've got to think ahead.

Int. liz's CAR ON a mountain ROAD - night

Willie Nelson on the CD player. Liz holds an Icee in one hand while Cris feeds her Kettle Chips.

CRIS

But lately I've been traveling all around Oregon. It's really peaceful up there.

LIZ

All right, I'm starting getting the picture. - Basically, you're a no-good, worthless ramblin' man who's never held a job in life.

CRIS

(smiles)
Exactly.

She's charmed, in spite of herself.

liz

At least you're honest about it.

Ext. Liz's car - Outskirts of tahoe - NIGHT

Cris and Liz sing along with Patsy Cline on the radio. The song ends as they hit the city limits.

LIZ

This is where I turn into town.

She pulls over.

CRIS

Well, thanks for the ride.

LIZ

Thanks for the card.

CRIS

You're welcome.

They're both reluctant to part.

CRIS

I don't suppose you'd have time for a drink.

LIZ

No, no, I've gotta teach tomorrow.

CRIS
I understand...Well, see ya.

LIZ
So long.

He steps out and starts to close the door.

LIZ
Well, maybe just a quick one.

Int. The silver spur - night

Cowboy dive. Crowded for a week night. Liz leads Cris to the bar where the BARTENDER is washing some glasses.

LIZ
Hey, George.

Bartender
Hey, Liz.

LIZ
I'll take the usual and he'll have
a...

CRIS
Sierra Pale.

The Bartender and Liz exchange a look.

Bartender
Two Sierras.

As he draws two pints, the Bartender leans toward Liz.

BartENDER
Randy's been hanging around.

LIZ
He's not here now, is he?

Bartender nods toward the pool tables, where RANDY, her ex, plays 8-ball with a pal.

LIZ
Thanks.

She turns to Cris.

LIZ
We gotta split. My ex is here.

Cris lays some money on the bar, and they head for the door. But before they get there, Randy sees Liz and bounds after her, holding a pool cue. He's much bigger and taller than Cris.

Randy
I gotta talk to you, baby.

LIZ
Sure, Randy. I'll call you tomorrow.

She tries to slide by him. Randy blocks the way.

Randy
Bullshit. I've left a dozen messages on your phone.

Cris steps between them.

Cris
Excuse me. We were just leaving.

Randy
And who the hell are you?

Cris stands his ground. Locks eyes.

Liz
Don't mess with him, Cris. He used to play hockey.

CRIS
Just a friend.

Randy
Then don't get between me and my woman.

LIZ
I'm not yours anymore, asshole!

Randy
Baby, I've made a terrible mistake, and I just want to undo all the...

Randy holds Liz by the shoulders.

liz
Let go!

RANDY

You still care for me, I know it.

Liz resists. Cris grips Randy's arm.

CRIS

Easy, man.

Randy hauls off to slug Cris. Cris easily ducks the blow and answers with a solid punch to the belly.

Randy recovers and realizes he's up against a skilled opponent. He takes a stance, ready to get serious. He sticks a few jabs at Cris, who easily slips from each one, like he saw them coming a mile away. Randy goes for a hook. Cris feints and lands an uppercut to Randy's chin. Most men would go down, but Randy is so big, he stays up to take more punishment.

Cris delivers an elegant beating that humiliates the big guy and makes him look like an oaf. Cris puts an end to it by breaking Randy's nose. The big guy falls to his knees, bleeding.

Liz rushes to Randy's side, holding her ex and glowering up at Cris like he's a sadistic brute.

LIZ

Get out of here! Get out!

Cris realizes he's blown it.

SNAPBACK TO:

MOMENTS BEFORE

RANDY

You still care for me, I know it.

Liz resists. Cris grips Randy's arm.

CRIS

Easy, man.

Randy hauls off to slug Cris, who this time makes no effort to duck. WHAM! Cris takes a sledgehammer in the mouth. Randy follows up mercilessly, punching Cris in the gut, then holding him up while he punches him again.

Liz grabs Randy's arm.

LIZ
Stop it, Randy! Stop it!

Randy flings her aside and finishes up with a solid right to Cris' jaw, that puts him on the floor. Randy pulls back his leg for a pointy-booted cowboy kick to the ribs, when Liz rushes to Cris' side and glowers up at Randy like he's a sadistic brute.

LIZ
Get out of here! Get out!

Randy realizes he's blown it -- and lets himself be pulled out of the bar by a couple of buddies.

Liz examines Cris with concern.

LIZ
Oh God, I'll take you to the emergency room.

CRIS
No ho'pital. I don' nee' ho'pital.

LIZ
God, I hate that bastard...Will somebody get some ice!

She strokes Cris' hair.

Ext. Liz's cottage - night

In the foothills. Liz's car pulls up. Cris gets out, holding a dish towel full of ice to his jaw.

CRIS
I'm sorry I'm causing you all this trouble.

LIZ
Are you kidding? You stood up for me.

CRIS
Actually, I wasn't standing for that long.

Liz unlocks the front door. Turns on the lights.

LIZ
Sorry it's so cold in here. The heater's broken.

Int. Liz's cottage - night

Cris looks around, sore but pleased that he has managed to stay in Liz's company. The place is cozy, ranch-like.

LIZ

I really should've left him a long time ago. God knows he deserved it.

CRIS

Why didn't you?

LIZ

Cause I don't leave. I never have. My boyfriends always left me.

She wets a washcloth with hot water.

LIZ

I get attached to people, and then I'll put up with anything.

CRIS

What a terrible quality. You're too loyal.

She returns with a wet washcloth.

LIZ

Sit in the light.

He lowers himself onto the sofa next to the table lamp. She comes close and gingerly wipes the blood from his nose and lips.

LIZ

I never minded that I was the more devoted one. Somebody's gotta be more this or more that.

He looks in her eyes.

LIZ

But they never appreciate it, that you're there for them.

She tries to stay on task but gets drawn in by his gaze.

LIZ

They just try and get away with more and more, and figure you'll just...

He leans forward. Their lips touch.

LIZ

Salty.

It gets more intense.

Then abruptly, she shies away, freaked.

LIZ

Christ, I don't even know you. I
have no idea who you are.

SNAPBACK TO:

ON THE SOFA

She wipes the blood from his nose and lips. He looks in her eyes. She tries to stay on task, but she gets drawn in by his gaze. He leans forward. Their lips almost touch. But this time, Cris pulls back.

Liz is embarrassed.

LIZ

Sorry to get you caught up in my
soap opera.

CRIS

Once you start watching, it's hard
not to get involved.

She goes back to tending his wounds.

LIZ

You ever been married?

CRIS

Almost.

LIZ

What happened?

CRIS

She wanted kids.

LIZ

And you didn't?

CRIS

No, I did, too.

She looks at him, curious.

CRIS
It's just that...I can't.

Something about his revelation unsettles her.

LIZ
Why are you telling me this? These personal details.

CRIS
I don't know. You asked and...I guess I felt like you'd understand.

Tears well up in her eyes.

LIZ
I do.

Cris looks at her with sympathy.

LIZ
I can't either. Have kids.

Cris comforts her. She looks up into his eyes expectantly.

Fighting the pull, he looks away for a moment to see where this is going - then glances back at her, almost dizzy.

CRIS
That was incredible.

LIZ
What was?

CRIS
This.

He kisses her with a quiet intensity that quickly ignites.

Their lovemaking unfolds as it would be experienced by Cris. Effect before cause. The pleasure, then the gesture that elicits it.

Cris explores her body until she sighs, then snaps back and goes directly to the sweet spot. He strings together a perfect melody of shudders and moans, without striking any false notes along the way.

Moments are superimposed, diaphonous, played against each other in counterpoint.

Visual harmonics, elastically out-of-sync. Rising to a crescendo. Until all the futures resolve into a single now.

DISSOLVE TO:

AFTERWARDS - NIGHT

Floating in bed. Her head on his chest. His eyes open, sadly content, like he wishes he could stop time here forever. Like he's afraid it will all disappear if he takes his eyes off her.

LIZ

That was...I've never...

Cris forces himself to look away into the distance.

int. WISDOM'S OFFICE / federal facility - night

Wisdom, exhausted, quietly confers with a cadre of ANALYSTS AND OPERATIVES. Their voices are confident, but their body language betrays their pessimism.

expert 1

We sent the payload to Livermore, and by measuring the cesium degradation, they've identified the reactor in Smerlensk that it came from.

expert 2

Washington has our birds tracking for that radiation signature in key cities.

Ferris slips in and takes an empty chair.

wisdom

What do we know about the explosive?

Expert 3

Our lab downstairs is still studying the C-4 sample. It's Czech, but we haven't nailed down the batch.

Wisdom rubs his forehead, distraught.

WISDOM

So basically we've got nothing.

No one disagrees.

WISDOM

You're failing your country,
people. You're not trying hard
enough.

(looks around the table)

Do you understand what I'm saying?
Do you understand what I expect
from you?

The staff exchange uncertain glances.

WisDOM

TWIST ARMS! CRACK HEADS! BREAK THE
FUCKIN' LAW! BUT DON'T LET THIS
HAPPEN!

He has blown them wide-eyed.

WISDOM

(suddenly calm)
Are there any questions?

INT. WISDOM'S apartment - NIGHT

Ferris and Wisdom are in night gear, getting ready for bed.
She sees that he's disheartened.

FERRIS

You know you're very sexy when
you're ruthless.

WISDOM

We're groping in the dark.

FERRIS

My guy's got a flashlight. We just
need to bring him in.

Wisdom doesn't have the energy to fight her any more.

WISDOM

I'll see if Baines can spare some
manpower.

She's gracious in victory.

FERRIS

You're all the manpower I need.

Int. Liz's house - bedroom - morning

Head on pillow, Liz buds from sleep. Reaches out. Cris is gone. Her eyes open, fearful.

INT. LIZ'S KITCHEN - MORNING

She rushes in, looking for Cris. - He's not there.

She hears CLANKING from the laundry room.

On the floor, Cris sits next to the heater, which lies in pieces. He tries to adjust the remaining apparatus.

LIZ
What the hell are you doing?

CRIS
You said it was broken.

LIZ
Well, you're not leaving till it's fixed, I'll tell you that.

He smiles archly.

CRIS
I'm afraid that could take a while.

Now she understands his strategy.

LIZ
As long as it's done right.

Int. HOMELAND SECURITY - workshop - day

Ferris enters the area where weapons are stored and where mechanics build whatever the department needs. She interrupts Baines as he gives instructions to some MP's. These are his guys who get priority over the civilian Protective Service Police.

FERRIS
Did Wisdom talk to you?

BAINES
(grudging)
What do you need?

FERRIS
This one first.

She hands him a sketch. He studies it, perplexed.

BAINES
What is it?

FERRIS
A trap for somebody who can see the future.

BAINES
If you say so.

FERRIS
And then these.

She hands him more sketches.

Int. Liz's fifth grade class - day

Liz stands before a map of the Native American tribes of the Lake Tahoe region.

LIZ
And what was the main staple of their diet?

SMARTIE PANTS busts a button to get called on. Instead, Liz points to a SHY GIRL.

shy girl
Trout.

LIZ
From the lake?

SHY GIRL
No. From the rivers.

LIZ
Right. And the Washo were so jealous of their fishing grounds that when other Native Americans came to trade for dried fish, they were only permitted to remain one night.

Liz notices that her students are distracted and giggling. She turns to see Cris standing in the doorway, holding a box. Embarrassed, she blushes.

LIZ
I'll be right back.

Liz pulls Cris into the hall, out of sight of the kids.

LIZ
What are you doing here?

CRIS
(beaming)
I brought ice cream sandwiches for everybody.

LIZ
Ice cream sandwiches? Do you have any idea how much fat they have in them? Don't you see how overweight half of them are?

CRIS
(crestfallen)
I - I didn't think of it. - I thought you'd be happy to see me.

LIZ
Well next time exercise a little forethought, okay?

He's speechless.

CRIS
Do you want me to leave these somewhere?

LIZ
No.

CRIS
All right then. I'll just go.

Seeing his doleful expression, Liz can't help smiling. She glances up and down the hall, then kisses him lasciviously on the lips.

LIZ
Put a few in the freezer. I love ice cream sandwiches.

With a mischievous grin, she ducks back into class, leaving Cris reeling, but exhilarated.

int. CHINESE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Liz and Cris stuff their mouths with lo mein. She sets down her chopsticks, picks up a red pencil and industriously resumes marking up a stack of papers.

LIZ

You have been such a bad influence.
I'm gonna be up all night grading
papers.

Cris watches, bored.

CRIS

I've got a better idea. Run away
with me to the South Pacific.

LIZ

Funny. We've only known each other
a week.

CRIS

But we're going to be happy
together for the rest of our lives.
Really, I peeked.

She picks up the chopsticks and takes another bite.

LIZ

I think you're serious.

CRIS

Deadly.

She muses, tempted.

CRIS

Let's go pack your bags. We'll
leave tonight.

LIZ

And what'll we do for money?

CRIS

Don't worry. That's always been
easy for me.

She gets lost in the fantasy. He can almost taste the fulfillment of his dreams.

LIZ

This is ridiculous.

CRIS

Why?

LIZ

Well, first of all, it's the middle of the school year.

CRIS

They'll replace you.

LIZ

And I'm in charge of science fair.

CRIS

They can pick up the slack.

His unbridled enthusiasm brings out her inner adult.

LIZ

It disturbs me, Cris, that you think it's okay just to duck your responsibilities.

He's taken aback by her sudden shift.

CRIS

I - I don't think it's okay. I'm not that kind of person. But I have this feeling, this very strong feeling, that it has to be now. We have to leave soon, or it's not gonna work out.

LIZ

I don't believe that. If it's meant to be between two people, somehow it'll happen.

CRIS

Yes, but sometimes you have to make it happen. You have to seize the opportunity before it's too late.

He tries to keep his desperation from showing, but she sees right through him.

LIZ

What are you afraid of, Cris? Why are you running away from yourself?

(MORE)

LIZ (cont'd)
 Whatever it is you're looking for,
 I don't think you're going to find
 it on some island, cut off from the
 rest of the world.

He adores her more than ever, and fears losing her even more.

CRIS
 Your students are very lucky.

She puts her hand on his.

LIZ
 Now I've got to grade papers.

Ext. Church - day

Liz and Cris file by the PASTOR after the service and mill about on the lawn with the other congregants. Kids release pent up energy in the adjacent park.

Randy approaches Cris.

Randy
 A religious fella, are you? Ready
 to turn the other jaw?

Cris offers his profile for hitting.

CRIS
 But then you have to sign the
 divorce papers.

LIZ
 Randy, don't you dare.

She drags Cris towards a YOUNG COUPLE WITH KIDS.

Liz
 Paul, Janice. Have you met Cris?

RANDY

approaches RICK, a young LOCAL POLICEMAN who's not the sharpest knife in the drawer.

Randy
 There's something weird about that
 jerk. Have you checked him out?

Policeman RICK
 I'm not dragging the Law into your
 romantic squabbles, Randy.

Randy
C'mon, Rick, help me out here.

Ext. church - day

Paul and Janice are chatting with Cris and Liz.

Paul
Cris, are you free on Tuesday?
Cause I'd like you to be my guest
at the Rotary luncheon.

Janice
I'm the first female member.

Cris grows distracted. Out the corner of his eye, he sees a SPORTS CAR gunning it down the street, passing a SUNDAY DRIVER to beat a red light. At that moment, a kid misses a catch and a BASEBALL rolls into a street, where a twenty-ish WOMAN JOGGER runs over to get it, just as the sports car passes the Sunday driver, sees the jogger, and skids, forcing A BUS to swerve and plow into a GROUP OF PEOPLE standing at the corner.

SNAPBACK TO:

A FEW SECONDS EARLIER

Paul
Cris, are you free on Tuesday?
Cause I'd like you to be my guest
at the Rotary luncheon.

Janice
I'm the first female member.

Cris is spaced out.

LIZ
Cris.

Ignoring them, Cris turns toward the street where he saw the accident take place. He sees kids, but they're jumping rope. Wrong group. He scans around and finds the kids who are playing softball. Someone misses a catch. The ball rolls toward the street. The sports car is now coming fast. The woman jogger sees the errant ball and runs to fetch it.

CrIS
Miss! Lady! Don't!

She's wearing earbuds and can't hear him. He's too far away to grab her. He's closer to the approaching sports car. Cris picks up a rock, prepares to throw, hesitates a beat, squints....

He throws. Misses. Snapback. Throws. Misses. Snapback. Again. Again. Scores a hit. Snapback. Opens his eyes and hurls the stone.

Liz and the bystanders watch, appalled, as the rock SHATTERS the driver side window of the sportscar, which instead of skidding, screeches to a halt. The bus drives by without incident, injuring no one.

The Driver of the sportscar bursts from his car and furiously charges Cris.

CrIS

I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'll pay for the damages.

The Driver curses Cris and tries to grab and hit him. But Cris deftly deflects the blows so that they seem harmless.

CRIS

I said I'll pay.

Realizing he can't land a punch, the Driver changes tack.

DRIVER

You're damn right you'll pay! I wanna talk to the cops.

CRIS

No need for that. I'll give you cash. Okay? Will you take cash?

He pulls out his wallet.

CrIS

Two thousand? That should cover it.

DRIVER

Make it three.

CRIS

Okay, three.

He digs in his pocket and pulls out the stack of hundreds.

ON RANDY and POLICEMAN RICK

Who have seen the whole incident.

POLICEMAN rICK
I'll run him through the computer.

ext. Park - a minute later

Away from the crowd. Liz, concerned and alienated, walks a step to the side of Cris.

crIS
People shouldn't drive that fast
around kids. They shouldn't get
away with it.

LIZ
So you throw rocks at them?

CRIS
What do you want me to do? Wait for
people to die?

Liz is torn.

LIZ
Cris...I think you should move on.
Today.

Cris looks at her, almost bereft, and makes a tough decision.

CRIS
Look, there's something I've been
wanting to tell you.

LIZ
It doesn't matter.

CRIS
It does.

She's afraid to hear it. He's afraid to say it.

ext. another church - day

Cavanaugh is milling around after services when his cell phone chirps. He answers, peeved.

CaVANAUGH

Cavanaugh...No, you were right to call...Ring Ferris and have her meet me there.

He closes his cell phone. Turns to his WIFE.

CaVANAUGH

They've located him near Tahoe.

CaVANAUGH's wife

If you let him get away again, you may not have a job.

CAVANAUGH

I know.

Cavanaugh takes his leave.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Liz reacts to Cris' confession with disbelief.

LIZ

What are you saying, you're some sort of prophet?

CRIS

It's not religious. I just happen to see my life before it happens.

LIZ

Cris, it's sweet that you feel responsible for people. But I think you need help.

She looks down.

LiZ

And I'm...I'm not the one to help you, right now. I've got too much going on in my own life.

Cris can't let her go. He takes a quarter from his pocket and hands it to Liz.

CRIS

Flip it.

LIZ

Why?

CRIS
Just do it.

She takes the quarter and flips it. Cris calls it in the air.

CRIS
Heads.

She looks. It's heads.

CRIS
Flip it again.
(calls it in the air)
Tails.

Tails it is, but so what. She flips again.

CRIS
Tails.
(she looks; flips again)
Heads.
(she looks, flips again)
Tails.

She looks. Amazed. Disturbed.

CRIS
Now you believe me?

She stares at him like he's the devil.

LIZ
Yeah. And I don't want to have
anything to do with you.

She walks away.

CRIS
Liz.
(follows)
Don't you see? I can get us all the
money we need.

She turns abruptly.

LIZ
Don't follow me. Don't talk to me.
Get out of my life!

She walks on, leaving Cris bereft.

SNAPBACK TO:

WALKING IN THE PARK - FIVE MINUTES AGO

Cris
What do you want me to do? Wait for
people to die?

LIZ
Cris...I think you should move on.
Today.

Cris squints, then chooses his words carefully.

CRIS
Why? Because I care so much about
kids that sometimes I overreact?

His words hit the bull's-eye. Liz's whole demeanor softens.
Although still troubled, she takes his arm, and they walk on.

ANOTHER ANGLE - BINOCULAR MASK

ferris (o.s.)
Who's the woman?

Ext. Hillside overlooking park - day

Ferris, Cavanaugh, and Policeman Rick are each looking
through a pair of binoculars.

POLICEMAN rick
Liz Cooper. Nice girl, but very
erratic.

cAVANAUGH
Think she'll cooperate?

POLICEMAN RICK
Hard to say. She's impossible to
control.

Ferris
Sounds like you've tried.

POLICEMAN RICK
She's quite a challenge.

EXT. PARK - daY

Liz and Cris, still walking, holding hands.

LIZ
I swear, I can't figure you out.

CRIS
Believe me, the feeling is mutual.

LIZ
Sometimes you seem mindlessly
impulsive. But other times I feel
like you're utterly calculating,
saying exactly what you think'll
push my buttons.

CRIS
What do you mean?

LIZ
Don't you think it's kind of an
amazing coincidence that neither of
us can have kids?

CRIS
You want to talk to my doctor? I'll
get him on the phone. No, really, I
mean it. I'll have him send you my
records. Because I want you to
trust me.

He seems so sincere that she dismisses her concerns.

LIZ
Then open up. Talk to me. Where are
you going with your life?

Cris seems unprepared for the question.

crIS
Wherever it takes me.

LiZ
You never think about the future?

CRIS
All the time. - But mainly how to
stay out of trouble.

LIZ
No goals? Dreams? Ambitions?

CRIS
There's only one thing I've ever
wanted.

LIZ
What's that?

CRIS

A family.

She seems disappointed.

LIZ

That's all? Just a family?

CRIS

Well, I was, as they say, left on a
doorstep when I was two.

(makes light of it)

Never found foster parents who
could put up with me. - So to me, a
family sounds like plenty.

That certainly pressed her buttons again.

LIZ

You've got to be making this up.

CRIS

I wish.

She rests her head on his shoulder.

LIZ

You poor guy.

Ext. Hillside overlooking park - day

Still watching Cris and Liz as the couple get into her car.

CAVANAUGH

I say we get the whole department
up here and bust his ass.

Ferris

And by that time, his ass'll be
long gone.

CAVANAUGH

Then why won't he see through your
trap?

Ferris takes a deep breath.

Ferris

Let's try this one more time.

ext. old SHOPPING CENTER - day

Grocery, drug store, hardware, gas station. Liz and Cris get out of her Jeep. He heads for the grocery store.

LIZ

I'll meet you inside. I need to pick something up at the drug store.

They split up.

Ext. Across the street - unmarked car - day

Ferris, Cavanaugh, and Policeman Rick watch the couple go their separate ways. Ferris gets out.

FERRIS

Stay in the car. If he sees your shadow, he won't take the bait.

CaVANAUGH

We hear you.

Ferris

I'm serious. This guy can smell your farts before you even eat the beans.

rick

Miss, I won't even think about beans.

Ferris gets out of the car. Cavanaugh and Rick stay put.

Rick

Sounds like a crock to me.

CAVANAUGH

You haven't been chasing him for three years.

Int. DrugSTORE - day

Liz is in the female department, trying to choose between various brands when Ferris approaches.

Ferris

Miss Cooper.

LIZ

Yes?

FERRIS
Agent Ferris.

Ferris shows her badge. Homeland Security. Liz, frightened, is ready to listen.

Int. Drug store - dAY

Ferris and Liz huddle in a quiet corner. Liz is in shock from what she has just heard.

LIZ
He's not a killer. He needs help.

Ferris
I agree. But he has a long history of resisting arrest, and the state wants to hunt him down with fifty trigger-happy cops.

LIZ
(aghast)
You're not gonna let them.

FERRIS
That's why I came to you.

LIZ
Okay, I'll talk to him. I'll try to get him to...

Ferris shakes her head lamentably.

FERRIS
Even his best friend says he'll never turn himself in. - At this stage, there's only one way to keep him from self-destructing.

Liz knows she's facing an agonizing decision.

EXT. GROCERY STORE PARKING LOT - DAY

Cris waits impatiently by her Jeep. Liz finally approaches, carrying a couple of heavy bags filled with wine and booze.

crIS
What took so long?

LIZ
I ran into a friend I hadn't seen in a while.

Liz holds out a single key on a ring.

LIZ
She said we could use her cabin up
at the peak.

ACROSS THE STREET

Ferris rejoins Cavanaugh and Ferris in Rick's car.

caVANAUGH
Did you tell her about the future
thing?

Ferris
Of course not. I wanted her to
believe me. - But I loaded her up
with liquor, to dim his headlights.

Ext. Mountain road - day

Liz's Jeep grinds up a steep, winding road, past a sign that
says "State Line."

She turns onto a dirt driveway that leads to a cabin and a
glorious panorama.

CRIS
God, this is gorgeous.

Inspired, he kisses her, but she's distant.

CRIS
What's wrong?

She smiles wanly, then gives him a peck.

LIZ
Nothing.

She hops out of the truck.

Ext. STAKEOUT SITE across the CANYON - day

Cavanaugh and Rick look through binoculars. Ferris peers
through a telescope on a tripod. Baines approaches with a
half dozen tech and construction guys.

baines
 Okay, when you press the remote,
 the cabin will lock down like a big
 jail cell.

FERRIS
 But silently, right?

BAINES
 Unnoticeably.

CAVANAUGH
 And that's when we go in.

Ferris rolls her eyes with exasperation.

Ferris
 You still don't get it.
 (tries to be patient)
 This has to be clear to your whole
 army.
 (to Baines)
 And yours. -- After she comes out
 and we lock down the cabin...We
 don't do anything. We wait.

Policeman RICK
 But if he's already trapped...?

FERRIS
 Gentlemen, try to think like him. -
 If the plan is to go in right after
 he's trapped, he'll see it coming
 and he'll slip away before he's
 trapped...
 (to Cavanaugh)
 Like he's always done.

cavANAUGH
 How does your plan change anything?

baines
 At least he won't hear it when the
 trap closes.

FERRIS
 And if he doesn't know he's
 trapped, he can't foresee knowing
 he's trapped.

CAVANAUGH
 That kinda makes sense.

FERRIS

The eureka moment is when he realizes he's been trapped.

CAVANAUGH

When is that?

ferris

That's the point. We want to delay "eureka" for as long as possible. So by the time he sees trouble and decides to waltz away...

baines

(finally gets it)
He's already been in the trap for hours.

FERRIS

Voila.

Cavanaugh and Rick nod with a kind of awe.

RICK

You're smart.

Baines looks at her with new respect.

Int. Cabin bathroom - sunset

Liz looks in the mirror, torn.

Int. Cabin - parlor - sunset

Cris is lighting a fire he has built. Liz drifts in, pensive.

LIZ

Cris. Do you think we met for a reason?

CRIS

You mean, do I believe a higher power brought us together?

LIZ

Yeah.

CRIS

No. I think we're just the last in a long chain of accidents that started with the Big Bang.

LIZ

That's not very romantic.

CRIS

Oh, but it is. Think of it: For us to meet, everything from the very beginning, every sub-atomic event, every galactic cataclysm, every step of evolution, every act, every accident, every decision in the history of the universe had to happen exactly the way it did just so you and I could be together, right here and now.

She is moved by his words, but they make her strangely sad.

Cris pours two glasses of Scotch. Hands one to Liz.

CRIS

To whatever happens next.

She doesn't drink.

LIZ

I shouldn't.

CRIS

(concerned)
Why?

LIZ

I'm late.

CRIS

Late?

LIZ

That's why I went to the drug store. To get a pregnancy test.

Off his puzzlement, she hands him a small plastic tab.

A SQUARE CROSS is coming into focus.

He recognizes the image from the Donut Shop display case just before he met Liz for the first time.

LIZ

You know what this means?

CRIS

I do now.

They look at each other, equally perplexed.

LIZ

How did it...?

CRIS

I have no idea. Unless...But that still doesn't explain...

She struggles to make sense of it.

CRIS

Liz, I really did have this problem. I wasn't lying to you.

He can't read her reaction.

CRIS

But this is good. This is amazing. I want this baby more than anything.

She looks at him, emotional.

LIZ

It's like a miracle.

CRIS

For both of us.

She lets him hold her.

EXT. AROUND THE MOUNTAIN - NIGHT

State Troopers are camped out in two's and three's. Fifty of them. Plus Baines' SIX MP's, wearing different uniforms.

Int. cabin - Bedroom - night

Liz and Cris in bed. Her head on his chest. This time he's the one sleeping while she lies awake.

Ext. STAKEOUT SITE - NIGHT

Ferris and Baines sip coffee and wait. They find each other attractive.

baines

Think she'll come through?

Ferris shakes her head with certainty.

FERRIS

Women hate good-looking men.
Rejecting them makes us feel
powerful.

Baines

And that's more important than
love?

FERRIS

No. But she doesn't really love
him.

Int. cabin - Bedroom - night

Liz eases away from Cris, trying not to wake him. He stirs...but settles back into slumber. She slithers out of bed and tiptoes to the bathroom. Silently closes the door behind her.

Int. Bathroom - night

Liz stands there in the dark, heart pounding. She sees that the window is open. She looks at it, deciding.

Int. cabin - day

The morning sun on Cris' sleeping face. His foot slides in search of Liz. Not finding her, he opens his eyes. Checks the clock. 10:09 AM.

Cris

Liz... Liz?

No answer. He walks to the bedroom door.

Locked. He tries to force it. Won't budge.

Tries the window. Bars across it - that weren't there before. Shakes them. Solidly bolted. Looks outside. No one's around. He's about to shout, but stops himself.

Runs into the bathroom. Bars over that window, too. As he stands there, trapped, Ferris steps into view outside.

FERRIS

Surprise.

Snapback TO:

Int. Cabin - night

Cris' eyes flash open in bed. Liz isn't there.

He throws off the covers, pauses to scan ahead -- then rushes straight to the bathroom and throws open the door.

Liz is still there, in the dark, facing the open window.

CRIS

You lying bitch! You betrayed me!

She darts for the window and starts to climb through. Cris pulls her back by her robe. She SCREAMS.

Bars slide silently into place over the bathroom window, locking them both in. BLINDING LIGHTS spike on throughout the forest, converging like javelins at that cabin.

SnAPBACK TO:

Int. Cabin: MOMENTS EARLIER

Cris throws open the bathroom door.

Liz is still there, in the dark, facing the open window. Seeing the expression on his face, she darts for the window. This time, Cris doesn't move.

CRIS

(whispers)

Liz, please, I love you.

She hesitates.

CRIS

Let me talk to you for one minute.
I won't hurt you, I promise.

She turns around, trembling.

LIZ

Cris, I know you don't mean to hurt people. But you need help or you're going to keep on hurting them.

CRIS

The man I killed was there to rob the store. He was going to panic and shoot five innocent people.

LIZ
How do you know this?

CRIS
Because I saw them die.

LIZ
Like yesterday, with the car?

CRIS
Yes.

LIZ
You were afraid something bad might
happen so you...

CRIS
Not "might"! Those people died! -
They just hadn't died yet.

His certainty is almost convincing.

LIZ
What if you hadn't done anything?
Have you ever waited to see what
would happen?

CRIS
Once.

The trauma replays on his face.

CRIS
That's why I don't go out much. So
I won't be there to see.

Liz doesn't know what to believe, but she feels for him.

Ext. STAKEOUT SITE - NIGHT

Ferris, Cavanaugh, Baines, and Rick are watching through
night-vision scopes.

CAVANAUGH
What's taking so long?

BAINES
We could just do this the old-
fashioned way.

Int. CabIN / bathroom - NIGHT

Liz steps toward Cris.

LIZ

Cris, you're a good man. And I will stand by you through this. But you have to...

CRIS

If they catch me, they'll put me in a cell without a trial, and they'll never let me out. They do that, you know.

LIZ

I won't let it happen. I'll get you a lawyer.

Suddenly distracted, Cris squints with that faraway gaze.

LIZ

Cris...Cris.

He snaps out of it.

CRIS

There's one decent path.
(fixes her gaze)
But if we're gonna stay on it, I need you to do exactly what I say.

How can she listen to this madman?

CRIS

Will you give me one chance? One chance in exchange for a miracle?

STAKEOUT SITE

Ferris, Cavanaugh, Baines, and Rick are getting worried.

caVANAUGH

We can't wait any longer. We've got to go in.

Ferris looks at Baines, who doesn't encourage her.

FERRIS

Okay. Wait for my signal.

Int. cabin - bathroom - night

Liz listens, dubious, as Cris crouches beneath the window sill, scribbling a note on a scrap of paper.

CRIS

A few steps on, your robe will get caught on a thornbush. You won't be able to get unstuck. Ferris and a tough guy will come help you. She'll say, "You've done your country a great service."

LIZ

And then?

CRIS

Be unpredictable. Surprise works to my advantage. - And read this when you're safe.

He tucks the note into her robe pocket.

LIZ

Will I see you again?

CRIS

Bet on it.

She gathers her courage and steps to the open window.

StakeOUT SITE

Everyone is coiled, waiting for Ferris to give the word. Cavanaugh is on the radio with his men, ready to pass it on.

Ferris takes a last look through the nightvision binoculars. That's when Liz climbs awkwardly out of the bathroom window in her bathrobe.

Ferris

She's coming now.
(to Cavanaugh)
We stay put. Tell them.

CAVANAUGH

(disappointed, via radio)
We stand pat till notified. Don't make a sound.

When Liz is out of the cabin, Ferris activates the remote control.

ALL AROUND THE CABIN

Doors lock and bars slide into place almost inaudibly.

StakeOUT SITE

Ferris shines a flashlight toward Liz, on off. She heads in the general direction of the light, but stops BEHIND A THICK-TRUNKED OAK TREE, which blocks her from their view.

BEHIND THE OAK tree

Cris backs out from under Liz's robe.

StakeOUT SITE

Ferris, Cavanaugh, Baines, and Rick shine their flashlights on the oak tree, waiting for Liz to reappear.

FERRIS

What's she waiting for?

Liz steps into view from behind the oak tree. Ferris shines the light towards her again. She heads straight toward them.

ON LIZ

As predicted, the hem of her robe gets caught in the thorns. She tries to pull free, but she's stuck.

StakeOUT SITE

Ferris and Baines wade into the thicket to extricate her.

Among the thorns

Ferris and Baines reach Liz.

Ferris

You've done your country a great service.

The predicted words hit her hard.

LIZ

Then why do I feel like a traitor?

Ferris and Baines free her and lead her up the hill.

BEHIND THE OAK TREE

Cris scurries away, using the sound of their rustling to cover his escape.

ext. Forest - night

Cris scurries near a trio of STATE TROOPERS. He steps on a twig which SNAPS loudly. PAN BACK to find a SECOND CRIS approaching down the same path. Cris 1 dissolves as Cris 2 steps around the twig and continues undetected.

A few steps on, Cris 2 slips on mud and slides noisily down a slope. PAN BACK to find CRIS 3, who detours onto stepping stones then rejoins the original path, undetected.

STAKEOUT SITE

Baines and Ferris help Liz back to their camp.

Ferris
Rick, get her some coffee.

Liz pulls the note from her robe pocket and reads Cris' handwriting: "Then why do I feel like a traitor?"

CAVANAUGH
(relays a message)
We've got movement in the canyon.
(to radio)
Where are you?

A flashlight shines up at Cavanaugh from the canyon.

Ferris and Baines scan their infra-red scopes at the area.

FERRIS' INFRARED POV:

A hot human shape hurries over rough terrain with stealthy urgency.

BACK TO SCENE

Ferris and Baines looking through their scopes.

bAINES
She told him.

CAVANAUGH
We tried it your way.

Ferris
Go for it. But I want him alive.

Cavanaugh picks up the radio with evident satisfaction.

CAVANAUGH
Boys, now it's our turn.

FIFTY SEARCHLIGHTS BLAZE ON and stab through the forest.

FERRIS
I want him alive. Tell them.

CaVANAUGH
(afterthought, to radio)
And the Feds want him alive.

Ferris urgently takes Baines aside.

Ferris
We need to get to him first.

TROOPERS

Spread out through the steep terrain. SEARCHLIGHT BEAMS sweep over the landscape.

CRIS

moves erratically, presciently, in bursts, dodging the streaking spots of glare.

StakeOUT SITE

Liz is drinking coffee next to Rick's police car. Ferris approaches, coldly knowing.

FERRIS
You've made a very stupid mistake.

LIZ
I trust him more than I trust you.

Ferris
I wouldn't swallow the "I love you" part.

LIZ
You've never even met him.

FERRIS
But I've profiled him for months.
And I can tell you this: he doesn't love anybody. How could he? To him, we're not even human.

(MORE)

FERRIS (cont'd)

We're the characters in a videogame, and he's the player with the joystick. We say our lines, and he practices his moves until we do what he wants.

IN THE FOREST

Cris on foot, running over rough terrain. State Troopers converging. Searchlight beams crisscrossing.

A cone of light passes over Cris. Comes back. Finds him.

Trooper

There! I got him!

He finds himself face to face with two Troopers, guns aimed straight at him.

TroOPER 1

Stop!

Cris tumbles, draws fire, serpentine through the woods, feinting, freezing, unhittable - moving closer.

troOPER 2

Take better aim!

TROOPER 1

I'm trying!

Cris is within fighting distance. Chop to an arm. Punch to diaphragm. Cris is now holding Trooper 1's SIX-SHOT REVOLVER.

Trooper 1 runs. Cris does not fire after him. Instead, he takes aim at a searchlight at a great distance. Squints. Then fires and scores a direct hit with the first shot.

Turns to a second search light. Squints. Squeezes off a second shot. The lamp shatters.

ext. Stakeout site - night

Baines and Ferris watch as, around the mountain, gunshots sound and searchlights go dark.

baines

You might be right about this guy.

FERRIS

(shakes her head)

I underestimated him.

The searchlight next to her shatters.

FERRIS

By a lot.

THE HUNT

Cris gets pinned down behind a tree. A Trooper keeps firing, trying to drive him from hiding. Cris boldly comes out from cover and runs, giving the Trooper a clear shot. But the Trooper runs out of ammo at just that moment.

Trooper

Shit!

StakeOUT SITE

Watching through binoculars, speaking into radio.

ferris

Be thorough, gentlemen. If you
leave a way out, he'll find it.

ELSEWHERE IN FOREST

Baines' well-trained MP's have set up a triangulated trap. They operate like skilled Special Forces commandos. One of them signals, fingers to eyes, that he has spotted Cris. Cris enters a clearing and continues straight into the trap! The TEAM LEADER prepares to give the signal to shoot.

Cris' movement flushes a STAG from the hiding. It knocks over one MP and causes another to miss his shot. The Leader sees the stag and scans around for Cris. CAMERA repositions to reveal that the stag now stands between Cris and the Leader. The Leader shoots the stag, killing him, but not before Cris dashes to cover in another stand of trees.

Two MP's fire at Cris. But shoot each other.

TEAM leader

(to radio)

I've got two men down. Friendly
fire.

Stakeout site

Ferris, discouraged, comes to a tough decision.

FERRIS

(to radio and Baines)

Change of plans, everybody.

(MORE)

FERRIS (cont'd)
 Try to kill him. Use everything
 you've got.

CAVANAUGH (o.c.)
 Is this a joke?

FERRIS
 No, it's an order.

BAINES
 Don't get emotional here.

She wants Baines to understand.

FERRIS
 There's only one way to beat this
 man. He's got to see his own death,
 and not just maybe. He's got to see
 himself die again and again and
 know it's inescapable. And then,
 maybe, he'll surrender.

BAINES
 And if he doesn't?

FERRIS
 That'll be his choice. And he was
 no use to us anyway.

IN THE FOREST

Cris is suddenly the target of a turkey shoot. He hops around like a mountain goat while bullets CHING off rocks and SPLINTER trees. He stays alive, but only by a hair's breadth.

Cris finds himself pinned down by Four Troopers. He rushes Trooper One, who fires, and hits Cris solidly in the chest.

Snapback TO:

Cris rushes the position of Trooper Two. Before he gets there, Cris gets shot in the gut.

SNAPBACK TO:

Cris rushes the Third Trooper, who hesitates, frightened, then shoots -- and misses. Cris charges up to him, knocks his shooting arm away, takes his weapon, uses him a shield, then fires at a Fourth Trooper as he charges out from the trees. It's Cavanaugh, now covered in blood.

SnapBACK TO:

Cris uses Trooper Three as a shield, but when Cavanaugh comes charging from the trees, Cris DOESN'T FIRE. Instead he shoves Trooper Three at Cavanaugh, sending them both tumbling down a slope.

StakeOUT SITE

Another setback.

BAINES

Damn. Fifty men might not be enough.

FERRIS

Somehow we've got to bring him down to our level.

BAINES

Got any ideas?

FERRIS

I'm workin' on it.

IN THE FOREST

Cris crosses a ridge that leads him into steep ravine. He can't get back up.

StakeOUT SITE

Baines and Ferris listen to the police band. Liz stands nearby. She can hear the patter.

BAINES

He's crossed over into Maxwell Gorge.

FERRIS

Move in fast. Keep him moving. Don't let him rest.

Then it hits her.

FERRIS

Don't give him time to look ahead. That's the key.

EXT. MAXWELL GORGE - NIGHT

Slowly making his way through the steep redwood-covered slopes, Cris hears a NOISE. Looks up. Sees a STATE POLICE SUV CRASHING down the cliff across the Gorge.

SNAPBACK TO:

MAXWELL GORGE - NOW

Cris, catching his breath against a redwood, opens his eyes and looks back toward his approaching pursuers. He looks around the gorge, searching for the cliff where he FORESAW the SUV come crashing down. He recognizes the rock formations across the gorge. He heads in that direction. PAN UP and we see that the cliff is directly under the...

StakeOUT SITE

Baines steps closer to the edge and looks down.

BAINES
He's heading this way.

Ferris, suddenly confident, shouts into the radio.

feRRIS
Cavanaugh! We've got a fox hunt going in Maxwell Gorge, right beneath the stakeout. Throw everybody into it! We need to overload him!

Liz looks around for some way to help. She spots the State Police SUV that we saw crashing down the hillside. She sidles toward it.

MAXWELL GORGE

Thirty Troopers and Six MP's are converging on Cris.

FerrIS (o.c.)
Gentlemen, if he surrenders, fine, cuff him. But if he even shivers, shoot to kill.

StakeOUT SITE

Liz opens the door of the SUV, shifts into neutral, and starts pushing. - It's too heavy to budge.

MAXWELL GORGE

Cris moves toward a field of LARGE BOULDERS.

StakeOUT SITE

Slowly, with great effort, Liz gets the SUV to inch forward.

MAXWELL GORGE

Troopers and MP's are closing in on Cris.

CaVANAUGH

(megaphone)

Lie down on your stomach, hands
behind your head! You've got ten
seconds. Ten seconds and we shoot.

Cris climbs in among the large boulders, glances up, and waits for the future to happen.

StakeOUT SITE

Liz gets the SUV onto a slight downslope, and it picks up speed.

Baines and Ferris see the SUV rumbling straight toward them. They dive out of the way as the SUV plunges over the ledge.

MAXWELL GORGE

Troopers and MP's are advancing toward Cris, about to open fire.

CAVANAUGH

This is your last warning.

Thirty Troopers and MP's have their fingers on the trigger when the SUV sails over the ledge and plummets straight down towards them. Cris crouches down among the boulders just as the SUV crashes on top of him, then tumbles toward his hunters, who scatter.

Cris makes a run for it just as the SUV explodes in a fireball.

STAKEOUT SITE

Ferris and Baines watch the events below.

fERRIS

Keep after him! Quick! Stay on him!

While they are distracted, Liz climbs into the front seat of RICK'S POLICE CRUISER, cranks it up, slams into reverse, spins, and takes off down the road.

baines
What the...?

LIZ

fishtails down the twisting mountain road.

MAXWELL GORGE

Cris practically mud-skis down the slope.

Troopers and MP's hurtle after him.

At the bottom, Cris is carried by momentum onto the CREEKSIDE ROAD...

Into the path of A POLICE CAR that comes careening around a curve!

Liz at the wheel. She swerves and slams on the brakes, skidding and screeching to a halt.

Troopers and MP's slalom onto the road from the incline and rush after Cris.

Cris makes it to the car. Driver's side.

CRIS
Believe me now?

He climbs in and guns it.

LIZ
I'm getting used to miracles.

Three MP's grab onto the car's mirrors and door handles. Cris weaves violently until they lose their grip and fly off.

In Rick's Police Cruiser - dawn

Liz and Cris grin at each other.

CRIS
Where were you going?

LIZ
No idea. I was just trying to be unpredictable.

STAKEOUT SITE - dawn

Ferris urgently unrolls a road map and studies it.

In Rick's Police Cruiser - dawn

Cris speeds down the treacherous curves.

LIZ
So what's the plan? Bonnie and
Clyde?

CRIS
Remember that place in the South
Pacific?

LIZ
It's starting to sound really good.

He pulls out his cell phone.

CRIS
I'll check on our ride.

Int. LAS VEGAS PENTHOUSE - dawn

NEAL, a 60-ish tycoon with silvery hair, finishes packing an expensive suitcase. A high-maintenance SHOWGIRL puts the finishing touches on her make-up in his marble bathroom. Somebody's cell-phone plays the theme from "Peter Gunn." Pan across eight large suitcases, his and hers, ready to go, and find Guy on the sofa, watching CNBC financial news. He reaches into a coat pocket and flips open his handset.

Guy
Yeah...

Guy signals Neal. This is the call they were expecting.

Guy
No, the jet's not sold...I'm here
with him now...Of course, he's
pissed...I can ask.

With a smirk of triumph, he turns to Neal.

Guy
He wants to know how soon the jet
can be ready.

Neal conceals his evident satisfaction.

Neal
 I'll wait until eight o'clock. But
 if he's not there, I'm taking off
 without him.

Int. Rick's Police Cruiser - dawn

Cris, driving fast on the treacherous winding road, closes
 his cell phone.

CRIS
 It's arranged. But we have to get
 to the North Vegas airport by
 eight.

LIZ
 Will we make it?

He concentrates as he screeches around a curve.

CRIS
 Right now I'm just trying to stay
 alive.

They hit a patch of ice. Skid wildly.

MOUNTAIN ROAD

Rick's Police Cruiser swings over the side and tumbles down a
 steep slope. There will be no survivors.

Hold on curve.

Rick's Police Cruiser speeds into view AGAIN!?? But this
 time, Cris steers around the ice patch, skids dangerously,
 almost goes over the side, but continues safely downhill.

Rick's Police Cruiser

Liz, palpitating, tries to catch her breath.

LIZ
 Christ, you live dangerously.

CRIS
 Just the opposite. I never take
 chances.

MOUNTAIN ROAD - PREVIOUS CURVE

Cavanaugh's Car speeds into view, skids on the same patch of ice and skates over the side of the road, as Cris did, the first time.

There will be no survivors. And no second chances.

STAKEOUT SITE

As a Federal Chopper idles, Ferris marks up a ROAD MAP of the area with X's.

FERRIS

(to radio)

Cavanaugh, get all your men into town.

(waits)

Cavanaugh? Tell them.

Baines approaches.

BAINES

He's dead. Crashed.

Ferris winces, then moves on like a general in battle.

FERRIS

You take command of the chase.

(hands him the map)

Have cars block these intersection.

She heads over to the copter.

BAINES

Why these?

FERRIS

Get in the chopper.

He follows her inside, and the copter takes off.

MOUNTAIN ROAD

Cris takes blind curves at high speed.

CRIS

Did the doctors ever say why you couldn't have kids?

LIZ

I grew up at Love Canal.

CRIS
What's that?

LIZ
A neighborhood back East built over
a chemical dump. A bunch of my
friends had birth defects.
(looks back)
I always figured I was lucky just
to be sterile.

CRIS
Except you're not. And neither am
I. We're different, that's all. We
just had to find the right match.

A look between them.

LIZ
And somehow we did.

They approach the entrance to the town.

EXT. hendersonville - DAWN

Police vehicles converge on the area, systematically blocking
the intersections that Ferris indicated.

Rick's Police Cruiser

Cris threads his way through town, zigging and zagging down
streets and alleys.

FROM THE HELICOPTER

Ferris sees Cris maneuvering perfectly through the maze,
avoiding imminent traps and confrontation.

BAINES
(discouraged)
He doesn't miss a beat.

FERRIS
(pleased, to herself)
Come to momma.

Cris dodges another trap.

FERRIS

(to radio)

Stay after him. Keep the pressure
on.

The bypassed police cars chase after Rick's stolen Cruiser,
which leaves town on a street that merges with a WINDY NARROW
CANYONSIDE ROAD.

BAINES

(incredulous)

He's driving right into it...

Up ahead, beyond a blind curve, the road leads to a ONE-LANE
BRIDGE over a DEEP CHASM with RAGING RAPIDS at the bottom.

BAINES

Sometimes looking one step ahead
isn't enough.

On the FAR SIDE OF THE BRIDGE, out of sight, beyond a curve,
EIGHT STATE POLICE CARS form a barricade across the road.

INT. Rick's Police Cruiser - day

Having escaped from town, Cris and Liz share a glimmer of
relief.

LIZ

You make it look easy.

Cris' expression darkens.

CRIS

Oh shit. Oh no.

Liz

What is it?

CRIS

I blew it.

They round a curve and the NARROW BRIDGE comes into view.

FAR SIDE OF BRIDGE

Behind the barricade, Ferris' helicopter comes in for a
landing.

INT. Rick's Police Cruiser - day

Cris checks his rearview mirror. A six-pack of cop cars are right behind him. To his left, a steep rock wall. To his right, a vertical drop-off into the canyon.

Cris drives on, the blood draining from his face.

FAR SIDE OF THE BRIDGE

Ferris strides across the span, Baines in her wake. Arriving at the barricade, she approaches the biggest state police car, a HUMMER -- and flashes her badge.

FERRIS
I need your vehicle.

She walks through the Trooper and gets into his Hummer.

BAINES
What's the plan?

FERRIS
Playing chicken.

BAINES
Don't be stupid! He knows what you'll do!

FERRIS
But so do I. And for once, that makes us even.

She starts up the Hummer. It roars.

THE BRIDGE

Cris slams on the brakes. Stops the car. Police cars stop behind him, blocking retreat.

CRIS
GET OUT! NOW! OR YOU'LL DIE!

She hustles out.

LIZ
What's going to happen?

CRIS
We'll find out.

A quick look good-bye and he drives on.

HUMMER

Ferris gathers her determination and floors it.

ON THE BRIDGE

A game of chicken with a difference.

ON CRIS

Squinting.

CRIS' VISIONS:

Fast forward to the HEAD ON COLLISION! Then a COLLAGE of ALTERNATE CHOICES AND OUTCOMES: Cris swerves; slams on the brakes; gets shot making a run for the rail; spins out on the roadbed; crashes over the side, over the side, over the side! But in every version, the Hummer is unchanging. Unrelenting. Dead on.

THE BRIDGE - NOW

They're speeding closer.

FERRIS

Total focus. No doubts or decisions.

CRIS' VISIONS: FAST, QUICK, CONDENSED

The falling car crashes onto the canyon wall, tumbles downhill, explodes; falls again, this time crashing directly onto boulders at the bottom...

ON CRIS

He drives toward a specific segment of railing between two light posts.

THE BRIDGE

Rick's Cruiser crashes through the railing and plunges over the side of the bridge.

Liz runs to the rail and leans over the side, watching the Cruiser fall down, down, down through the narrow ravine.

IN THE FALLING CAR

Cris unbuckles his seat belt. Opens the door. Just before impact, he LEAPS OUT, away from the car.

BOTTOM OF CANYON

The car smashes into boulders at the shallow side of the river. A moment later, Cris SPLASHES a few yards away in the deepest part of the rapids.

ON THE BRIDGE

Ferris peers down into the canyon.

IN THE RAPIDS

Cris bobs to the surface and is carried away by the fierce current. The smashed Cruiser also gets carried into the river. Fighting the current, Cris watches as the smashed police cruiser surges ahead of him - then disappears!

Perplexed for a beat, he suddenly understands and desperately swims for a rock and clambers onto it.

CAMERA pulls back to reveal that Cris is stuck in the middle of the river -- about five feet from where it drops off into a WATERFALL!

A HELICOPTER

flies over him.

ON THE ROCK

Cris looks for a way out. Seeing none, he jumps!

And is swallowed up in dark thunderous death.

SnapBACK TO:

CRIS

Still on the rock. Looks up and sees a cable being lowered from the helicopter. He looks around? Is there another way out? Out of choices, he reaches for the cable. Misses! Loses his balance. Flails. At the last second, he steadies himself.

He wants to live.

The cable dangles back into range.

Cris grabs it.

The cable is hooked to A PAIR OF HANDCUFFS.

FERRIS

Watches through binoculars as Cris snaps one cuff around his wrist -- and waits. She shouts into her radio.

FERRIS

Cuffs on both wrists. Leave him if he doesn't.

BAINES IN HELICOPTER

BAINES

What can he do hanging by one arm?

FERRIS

I don't want to find out.

Baines speaks to Cris via loudspeaker.

Baines

Both wrists!

On the rock

Cris, defeated, attaches the second cuff to his other wrist. He is lifted up into the air, hanging by both arms.

Bridge

Liz sits, handcuffed, in the back of a second U.S. Government helicopter. Ferris approaches.

FERRIS

I was wrong about one thing. He is capable of love.

HELICOPTER

Descends, with Cris hanging below by a cable. MP's are waiting below with a tarp which they wrap around Cris, then tape him like a mummy, up to his neck. When he's bound as securely as Hannibal Lecter, Ferris steps close and gets her first good look at him.

Ferris

Cris Johnson, we meet at last.

CRIS

Why does everybody have amnesia but me?

FERRIS

I only ask one thing from you. Give me a chance to earn your trust.

cris

I did, and you failed.

She seems genuinely surprised.

FERRIS

Then give me another chance. You get 'em all the time.

She signals and Cris is dumped into the waiting helicopter. The door is slammed behind him.

INT. helicopter - DAY

Inside, Cris is surprised to find himself alone with Liz. He edges closer so they can hear each other.

CRIS

Don't let them know you're pregnant.

The helicopter takes off.

CrIS

You don't have to raise him. But at least let him be born. Can you do that? It might be the only chance either of us gets.

LIZ

I promise.

They gaze at each other with intense longing.

LIZ

Work with them Cris. So we can be together.

He shakes his head, fatalistic.

CRIS

I'll get us out of here. We can still make the plane.

She knows it's hopeless.

Ext. HOMELAND SECURITY - VEGAS OFFICE - day

Coming into view by air.

ext. HOMELAND SECURITY - MEDICAL LAB - day

MED TECHS perform a battery of tests on Cris and Liz. Wisdom, Baines, and Ferris watch through glass in an adjoining room.

Wisdom

Are you out of your mind? Did you ever play chicken before?

FERRIS

This game was different. He knew I wouldn't flinch.

Baines covertly makes the "big balls" gesture with two clawed hands. Wisdom nods knowingly.

baINES

What's new with the Code Orange?

WISDOM

It's red now. And we're out of leads.

fERRIS

Then you better hope he's what I say he is.

WISDOM

Please, make me a believer.

WHITE VESTIBULE

Size of an elevator. Cris stands there, bound ankle and wrist. Click, the metal shackles open automatically and drop to the floor.

Cris reaches down for them. Possible weapon. Struggles to lift them. Can't.

FERRIS (o.c.)

Electromagnets.

Int. Observation room - daY

Ferris, Baines, and Wisdom peer down into the White Vestibule through a window. Technicians operate a control panel.

WISDOM
Aren't you being a little over-
cautious?

FERRIS
Not possible with him.

She leans forward, flips a toggle. Down below, in the Vestibule, a door slides open.

FERRIS
Cris, please step into the next
room.

WHITE VESTIBULE

Cris gives up on the chains and sullenly steps forward.

WHITE ROOM

Size of a squash court. Cris enters gingerly and peers around. Twenty feet up, an OBSERVATION WINDOW, opaque. On the other walls, RIFLE BARRELS poke through NARROW SLITS. The door slides shut behind him.

Observation room

Ferris leans forward and speaks.

FERRIS
Cris, we'll be firing at you with
live ammo. Are you ready?

WISDOM
You're shooting your secret weapon?

Ferris signals Wisdom to be patient. Cris just stands there, flatfooted, arms folded, unafraid.

Ferris nods. A Techie presses a button. The THREE RIFLES
FIRE.

Cris is hit square in the chest!

By THREE BLUE PAINTBALLS.

CrIS
You're paying for the shirt.

WISDOM
(unconvinced)
I hope you've got more than that.

FERRIS

Now we are going to use live ammo.

WISDOM

Not on my watch, you're not.

FERRIS

I promise you, he won't be hit.

Wisdom looks her in the eye. Sees her certainty.

WISDOM

It's your experiment.

Ferris leans toward a microphone, but before she can speak...

CRIS

"From now on, Cris, the bullets are real."

Ferris sits back and nods to the techies to proceed.

BARE WHITE CHAMBER

Cris balances, at the ready, as the three rifles take aim at him. He LUNGES at the very instant that one rifle FIRES. A bullet ZINGS by his ear.

As the second rifle fires, Cris contorts -- and a bullet parts his hair.

As the third rifles fires, he tumbles away, almost a blur.

More shots, in rapid sequence, erratic rhythm. Two at a time. Three at a time.

Like a pinball, Cris pivots, crouches, dodges every bullet. Then suddenly stops. Stands there. An easy target. Click, click, click, the guns are out of bullets.

FERRIS

He's almost impossible to shoot, hit, surprise, capture, or contain.

WISDOM

Mind if I try?

FERRIS

Be my guest.

Wisdom takes out his handgun, carefully aims, and discharges six shots at Cris - doesn't score a hit.

WisDOM
 How do you know it's prevision?
 Maybe he's reading minds.

Ferris shows the aiming gantries to Wisdom.

FERRIS
 No minds to read. The guns are
 aimed automatically by infrared.

WisDOM
 (impressed)
 What other tricks can he do?

Ferris pushes a toggle, and a pocket door slides open in a wall.

ferris
 (to Cris)
 Please step into the next room.

CRIS
 I'm going. No need for a hotfoot.

BAINES
 (explains, to Wisdom)
 The floor is electrified. He must
 have tried resisting and foreseen
 the result.

Cris walks through the doorway into...

THE SMALLER WHITE ROOM

which is familiar from the opening sequence, but not exactly the same. Because it's not exactly the same future. A HEAVY CHAIR, bolted to the floor, faces a PLASMA SCREEN MONITOR on the wall. To the left of the screen is a MIRROR; to the right, a DIGITAL CLOCK-CALENDAR.

Ferris' FACE appears on the monitor.

Ferris on monitor
 Cris, it's time to get started with
 the next test. This won't be
 unpleasant. We just need to you sit
 in the chair.

Cris eyes the chair with suspicion.

Ferris on monitor
 I want you to look ahead, tell me
 the time on the clock and then tell
 me what film clip you see playing.
 Let's start with five minutes from
 now. Then we'll press ahead as far
 as you're capable of.
 (to Wisdom)
 The clips have been assembled at
 random by a computer, so nobody
 knows what'll be playing next.

Cris looks into the mirror and sees his face reflected - as
 an old man. He turns away.

cris
 Look, I'll stand here and tell you
 what I see.

INTERCUT BOOTH / WHITE ROOM

Ferris on monitor
 I'm afraid we need you to sit.

CRIS
 Why?

Ferris on monitor
 Why not?

CRIS
 I know what happens.

Ferris on MONITOR
 Tell us.

CRIS
 You tie me down and never let me
 out.

Wisdom looks at Ferris. She shrugs, sheepish.

Ferris
 That's only because you won't
 cooperate.

CRIS
 Because you're trying to force me.

Ferris
 Work with us, Cris, and you can be
 a hero. Fight us, and things will
 get worse and worse.

Cris squints, frustrated, looking for a way out.

Ferris ON MONITOR
 (severe)
 Now sit in the chair. One. Two.
 Three.

Ferris switches the toggle. The sizzle of electricity.

Cris hops and jumps in agony.

Ferris turns away, then makes herself look.

WISDOM
 Whoa, you are one tough bitch.

FERRIS
 We're still in a Code Red if I'm
 not mistaken.

She turns off the juice.

WISDOM
 He knew he'd get shocked, but he
 chose to resist.

FERRIS
 He's almost never had to face
 consequences.
 (flips toggle)
 Cris, are you ready to get in the
 chair?

Cris, recovering, shoots her the finger.

She switches the toggle again - and leaves it on. Wisdom
 doesn't have the stomach to watch.

FERRIS
 We need information, right?

Cris collapses, unconscious.

FERRIS
 Leave him there. We'll start again
 when he recovers.

Int. Wisdom's office - day

Wisdom and Ferris are both traumatized by the torture.

WISDOM

Okay, how do we use him to find the bombs?

FERRIS

Simple. We make him watch the news and tell us about it.

WISDOM

How far ahead can he see?

FERRIS

I don't know. But I suspect we can increase his range with practice. Especially if we restrict his future to only watching news. Then he'll be like a timescope.

Wisdom nods.

WISDOM

You were right. This is huge.

FERRIS

This is just for starters. You want to stage a pre-emptive strike, he can tell you if you'll hit the target and whether they hit back and what went wrong. And you can do this over and over until you get it perfect before you begin.

Wisdom chuckles at the enormity of the potential.

wisDOM

And all he's ever done with it is a little gambling and securities fraud?

FeRRIS

I know, it's amazing; but he's not ambitious.

WiSDOM

Damn, how will we control this guy when he figures out what he's capable of?

Ferris
We control him now. We just have to
keep it that way.

WISDOM
Right now, sweetheart, we can't
even get him to sit in a chair.

Dread suddenly washes over Wisdom.

WISDOM
We've got to think this through.
Your friend could be more dangerous
than the terrorists.

Ferris
Aren't you running ahead of
yourself?

WISDOM
With this guy, you have to. Or
it'll be over before it begins.

Ferris
So we'll keep him in chains.

WISDOM
That may not be enough. We may
have to cut off his arms and legs.
Then I might start to feel safe.

Ferris grins uncomfortably.

Ferris
You're not serious.

WISDOM
Think about it. What we're talking
about here is the next step in
human evolution. And I'm not gonna
make the same mistake the
Neanderthals made when they ran
across this good-looking Homo
Sapien fellow and all the lady
Neanderthals said, "He's so cute.
Let's keep him around."

FERRIS
Can we deal with your sexual
insecurities at another time?

WISDOM

You mean after it's too late?

Ferris seems to come around to Wisdom's logic.

Ferris

I wish you'd given me a chance to chain him up before you decided to prune him into a stump.

They are both filled with dread.

wisdom

You think he knows? Already?

white room

Cris on the floor. His expression hardens.

CorRIDORS

Ferris and Wisdom stride through the facility almost at a run.

WISDOM

I haven't made any firm decisions. Maybe we will just keep him tied up.

FERRIS

I told you, he doesn't read minds. He sees the results.

WHITE ROOM

Cris rises from the floor into a crouched position, like an animal ready to pounce.

The door flies open and A DOZEN ARMED MP's charge in, rifles at the ready, and surround Cris. Cris checks the time on the digital clock. It's 5:12 PM.

Corridors

Ferris and Wisdom getting closer; he's on a cellphone.

Wisdom

Tell Baines to meet us there. And bring a dozen men.

WHITE ROOM

Motionless, in a crouch...Cris suddenly dashes between two MP's, shoves them aside, makes for the door. He gets smashed by the RIFLE BUTTS of the nearest ones, then stomped by the full contingent. [Attempt #1]

AREA OUTSIDE THE White ROOM

Ferris and Wisdom arrive and look through the window.

THEIR POV:

Cris is alone in the room, in that crouched position. No MP's. What we've just seen...hasn't happened yet.

OUTSIDE THE WHITE ROOM

Baines arrives with THE DOZEN ARMED MP's we saw in the previous scene.

WISDOM

Wait for my signal, then go in and surround him.

Wisdom and Ferris hurry upstairs into the Observation Booth.

We pass through the wall into the...

White room

Where in some future Cris is once again surrounded by the Dozen MP's who are actually outside, waiting to charge in. Suddenly, Cris pounces low at one soldier's hips, shoving him into the soldier next to him, which knocks over a third soldier. Cris dashes for the door, but four MP's pull him away before he can get out. [Attempt #2]

Observation ROOM

Ferris and Wisdom enter and look down at Cris, who crouches alone, motionless, in the White Room. Ferris prepares to speak to him. Wisdom interrupts.

WISDOM

I'll do the talking.

Wisdom goes to the microphone.

WISDOM

Cris, this Eric Wisdom. I'm the director of this facility.

(MORE)

WISDOM (cont'd)
 We're in the middle of a Code Red,
 and we'd like your help in
 preventing a major catastrophe.

CRIS
 I don't believe you.

Outside WHITE room

BAINES and the DOZEN MP's wait, ready to charge in.

WISDOM (o.s.)
 I apologize for the way you've been
 treated. Agent Ferris got a little
 carried away.

White room

Cris, once again surrounded by the same Dozen MP's, suddenly punches one of them, kicks another, and now has the mobility to start using his Tai Chi moves. But the other MP's gang up on him and pile on, burying him under their weight. [Attempt #3]

wisdom (o.S.)
 Could I ask you as a favor to
 please sit in the chair so we can
 begin?

observation ROOM

Wisdom and Ferris watch as Cris still just crouches there, motionless, alone, in the empty room. He checks the clock. It's 5:09 PM. Just minutes before The MP's will charge into the room.

WHITE ROOM

Cris runs to the door and tries to bar it so they can't enter. He gets shoved aside by the force of the MP's as they charge in. [Attempt #4]

observation ROOM

Wisdom and Ferris watch as Cris still just crouches there, motionless, in the empty room. Wisdom flicks off the mike.

WISDOM
 What's he doing?

FeRRIS
 Looking ahead.

WISDOM
 (to microphone)
 Cris, time is running out.

White room -

Cris is again crouched and surrounded by the Dozen MP's.

wiSDOM (plasma screen)
 We need your cooperation right
 away.

Suddenly Cris attacks using his Tai Chi skills. He outfights four of them, but then is subdued by the others. [Attempt #5]

SnAPBACK:

Cris is again crouched and surrounded by the Dozen MP's.

wiSDOM (plasma screen)
 Cris, don't you feel some sense of
 obligation to the rest of us? Your
 ability could save so many lives.

Suddenly he repeats the martial arts attack, but refines it, beating six MP's this time before being subdued... [Attempt #6]

SNAPBACK:

Cris is again crouched and surrounded by the Dozen MP's.

wiSDOM (plasma screen)
 Cris, don't you feel some sense of
 obligation to the rest of us? Your
 ability could save so many lives.

Faster and faster, over and over, Cris relives the attack, perfecting his movements, finding new opportunities. His skill increases with each iteration as he anticipates every soldier's action and counters it with the greatest economy of means. [Attempts #7-12]

The fight takes on the quality of choreography as the MP's seem to step right into Cris' punches and kicks. Cris flips and throws them into each other, leveraging their movements to achieve his goals with perfect efficiency.

But Cris still can't quite get out the door.

OBSERVATION ROOM

Looking down at Cris, still crouched there, alone.

FERRIS

Don't give him time. Send them in now.

WISDOM

Baines, do it.

Ext. White ROOM

Baines gives the signal and the dozen waiting MP's charge in through the door, rifles at the ready. The foreseen attack is now beginning in real time.

Int. White room

The MP's surround Cris, as foreseen. He remains in the center of them, crouched, motionless.

For a long beat, they just stand there, rifles aimed at their frozen quarry.

wISDOM (plasma screen)

Cris, don't you feel some sense of obligation to the rest of us? Your ability could save so many lives.

Cris suddenly attacks...and with perfect economy of movement, like a diver executing thirteen twists in the second before he hits the water, Cris executes the previous routine with a new "finale" and...

Elegantly slips past all the MP's into the hall - and slams the door behind him, locking them in!

The escape has the quality of magic. It takes a beat for the MP's to realize what has happened.

OBSERVATION BOOTH

Wisdom and Ferris are agog.

wISDOM

What happened? - You idiots!

Ferris draws her gun and charges down the stairs.

OUTSIDE white room

Cris is waiting for her and somehow he has her gun in his hand.

CrIS

Don't make me do what I can do.

Cris spins and shoots Wisdom in the shin as he starts down the stairs. Wisdom collapses.

CRIS

Don't get too attached to your arms and legs.

Cris spins and gets the drop on Baines.

CrIS

Don't.

Baines sets down his gun. Cris takes off.

WISDOM

Don't let him out of here alive.

Baines opens the door to the White Room. MP's stampede out in hot pursuit.

baINES

Isolate the building. If there's one exit overlooked, he'll know it.

FERRIS

If there's one soft heart, one slow shooter, he'll know it.

Ferris attends to Wisdom, bleeding on the stairs.

FeRRIS

Don't worry. I caught him once; I'll catch him again.

WISDOM

Be careful. I don't want anything to happen to you.

They care about each other more than they've let on.

corridors

Cris. Running. MP's and general Security Police close behind. No place to hide. Soldiers open fire. Cris dives for the floor, tumbles, gets to his feet, serpentine, and ends up behind a door that opens at the moment, as if by mental command, shielding him from gunfire.

Security Police pour out from the other side. Cris reaches around and grabs someone's gun. He opens fire, buying himself enough cover to get to a doorway.

Cris stops, thinks, then charges out shooting, fighting, running -- completing a condensed burst of four impossible tasks that get him to the next point of refuge.

He waits, thinks, charges and, with another burst of choreographed action, makes it into an elevator whose doors conveniently open at that moment. He darts inside, keeps shooting, presses certain buttons - starting several stories up, and waits for the doors to close.

Sergeant
You five, up. You five, down. The
rest stay with me.

INT. SURVEILLANCE ROOM - day

Banks of monitors, each containing a grid of mini-frames containing the pov of a surveillance camera -- hundreds in all. LEO, the Soldier at the console, is twitchy and hyper-alert.

Leo watches as the Security Forces split up. He scans the monitors to see where Cris will resurface.

INT. ELEVATOR - day

Cris climbs up through the ceiling panel.

Int. Elevator shaft - day

When the elevator stops, he rips open a VENTILLATION DUCT and climbs inside.

OUTSIDE WHITE ROOM

DR. FIELDING approaches Wisdom with a syringe.

WISDOM
No demerol. I need to be alert.

FERRIS
Get him a local.

Amanda, Ferris' junior analyst, rushes in with lab reports.

amanda
You asked for these as soon as they
were ready.

FERRIS

Not now.

amanda

You might want to check this result.

She points to a particular page. Impatient, Ferris reads. Her eyes widen.

FeRRIS

How pregnant?

amanda

A few days.

Ferris turns to Wisdom.

FERRIS

This is getting interesting. We have a mating pair.

WISDOM

Secure the female.

POV FROM CEILING - THROUGH VENTILLATION GRILL

Liz sits in a waiting room by herself, reading a magazine. Psst! She looks up at the camera.

Cris (o.c.)

Unscrew the vent.

She moves a chair under the vent and prepares to stand on it. The door opens and several MP's march in.

SOLDIER

(to Liz)

We're here to protect you.

Without looking up at Cris, she moves the chair back against the wall and sits in it.

VENTILLATION DUCT

Cris, frustrated, shimmies back through the vent.

SURVEILLANCE ROOM

Leo checks all the video screens. Cris is nowhere.

Leo
He must be in the walls.

VENTILLATION DUCT

Settling in, Cris looks at his watch. 5:17. He concentrates and time speeds by - until a flashlight beam lights up the duct from a distance.

SOLDIER
I found him! In here!

As more Security Police and flashlights fill the shaft, Cris checks his watch: 5:33.

SNAPBACK:

VENTILLATION DUCT

Which is once again dark, quiet and empty. Cris looks at his watch. 5:17.

Cris
(to himself)
Sixteen minutes.

Cris takes a deep breath and crawls forward. Remarkably, he seems to be CRAWLING OUT OF HIS MOTIONLESS BODY like a snake shedding its skin! - In fact, Cris 1 lies there in deep concentration, while Cris 2 creeps onward.

EXPLORATION SEQUENCE

Cris drops down from a ventilator shaft into an office. He opens the door, walks into a corridor, and strides forward, preternaturally calm.

He advances through an unfolding panorama of "stage sets" on which different hypothetical scenarios play out, one at a time, several simultaneously, or layered in like the melodic themes in a round or fugue, creating the visual equivalent of harmony and counterpoint.

Cris encounters Security Police searching for him. When they discover Cris, they aim their weapons at him. He checks the time. Snapback a few seconds. He hides before they arrive.

He goes through a door into a room. People are there. Snapback. Hides in a different room. It's empty. Cris searches the room. Looks in the desk drawers. Puts things in his pockets. The door flies open. Security Police find him and shoot. Snapback.

Cris treads down empty corridors. He multiplies into a legion of Cris Johnsons, duplicated again and again, as he explores room after room, searching them sequentially. Simultaneously.

He spends much time in a Handyman's Storeroom, while other Cris Johnson's fade away.

Cris 27 finds the surveillance room with Leo in charge. Cris scans the room. He is seen. He waits to see who will shoot him first. He is hit in the chest. Fade out.

Cris 35 gets caught by two Security Police. He fights them, takes their guns, but gets killed by reinforcements.

Cris 63 waits in a room and peers through a crack in the door as his POV FAST FORWARDS, and he charts the comings and goings of the search parties, until they discover him, at which point he snaps back and hides in a different room. He's hiding in many rooms simultaneously. Spying. Piecing together the schedule of the patrol in that corridor.

The same situations repeat. Scanning for security cameras. Fighting. Winning. Losing. Dying.

He goes down a stairwell. One version of himself exits at a landing. A second iteration of himself continues to the next floor down. At that landing, two iterations of himself turn in different directions, left and right.

We follow the one that went to the left.

He sees MP's taking Liz from her holding room and escorting her somewhere else.

He follows. Gets seen. By her. By them. Snapback.

He is waiting in several locations, watching to see where the MP's will emerge with Liz. The MP's and Liz emerge from an elevator in one of the locations. The other Cris' fade out.

Liz is ushered into a room and locked inside. Four guards depart. Two guards remain posted outside. They see Cris.

He runs down stairs. Into the corridor. Into the room directly under the room where Liz is being held.

Cris enters A FORENSICS LAB where the captured bomb is being studied. There is a barrel of C4 PLASTIC EXPLOSIVE. MP's in the room turn on him and open fire. Cris is blasted and falls to the floor, dead. Snapback to...

VENTILLATION DUCT

Cris, where he started, motionless as a hibernating bear, exploring his futures. CAMERA passes through walls, floors, ceilings and finds Baines rushing through the corridors. Baines enters...

Wisdom's office

Where Wisdom paces with one crutch while Ferris sits on a sofa like Rodin's Thinker, in concentration almost as deep as Cris'.

Baines
He hasn't gotten out through any exit. The bad news is...

wisdOM
You've lost him.

BAINES
I'm issuing infrared to all my men. We should have a fix in a few minutes.

WISDOM
You realize if he gets away now, we'll never get him back. He'll be out there, and he'll be our enemy.

Ferris looks up.

FeRRIS
I know how to flush him out.

bainES
(at a loss)
Fine. Tell me what to do.

The thought crystallizes as she speaks.

FERRIS
We don't actually have to do anything.
(beat)
We just have to decide to do something...unthinkable.

Ferris shudders at the dark brilliance of her own idea.

int. ground floor of facility - day

Guards stand in a solid line. No way out. Cris off to one side, in a niche just inside the door. Camera pans and finds a second Cris standing back, away from an exit. Pans and finds a legion of Cris Johnsons, duplicated again and again, trying each exit.

At one dim exit, he lies on the ground, charred and dead, next to the gauntlet of MP's he has tried to outrun.

Wisdom's office

Wisdom and Baines are looking at each other, appalled, then turn to Ferris.

WISDOM

You want me to threaten to kill a pregnant woman?

FERRIS

Threats don't count. When he foresees that you actually did kill her, that she's dead...

(beat)

He won't let it happen. - He'll come to us. Surrender. And she'll live.

Wisdom regards her with perverse admiration.

FERRIS

But it only works if we're not bluffing. Because he'll know.

Wisdom considers the decision that lies ahead for him.

INT. NEAR THE LOBBY - day

Cris is still trying to get out the front door, but there's one Soldier, call him CRACK SHOT, who kills Cris repeatedly. Cris snapsback and tries various tactics, but he can't get past Crack Shot alive.

He gives up. Turns and runs back into the heart of the building.

Cris' mental pov expands to include the entire facility, like a crystal doll house. Simultaneously, he is observing every room, present in every room, charting the place, testing possible actions.

The facility is a bee hive of activity. A bee hive that accelerates to fast forward -- until all times are simultaneous. Until the simultaneous activity is made even denser by the accumulated layers of possibility.

Cris-134 spies Ferris and Wisdom walking together. He follows them for a while, until he is discovered. Cris-134 fades out. The Ferris and Wisdom who saw him fade out. But another Ferris and Wisdom continue through the building, and their trail gets picked up by Cris-62, who has detoured in order to encounter them.

As Cris' goals are accomplished, superfluous versions of himself fade away.

The surveillance of a sequence of Ferris-and-Wisdoms is continued by Cris-91, then Cris-14, who watches as Wisdom and Ferris approach two guards standing outside an INTERROGATION ROOM. We recognize them as the MP's who are guarding Liz, inside. Wisdom is let into the Interrogation Room by the MP's. Ferris proceeds into a nearby office alone.

SnapBACK TO:

VENTILLATION duct

Cris comes out of his trance. Checks his watch. Sixteen minutes have passed.

Cris composes his thoughts, takes a breath, then crawls forward, leaving no Cris behind. Now it's for real.

A moment after he rounds a corner, A FLASHLIGHT BEAM stabs into the duct that he vacated. It scans around. Withdraws.

NOTE:

The situations that Cris has just previewed from the Ventillator Shaft constitute the raw material that he will now re-craft into a single narrative: the story of his actual escape attempt, staged in long takes, unfolding in almost-real time. When appropriate, to illustrate Cris' ability, we will portray several locations simultaneously via split-screens which change in number, size, shape, and placement.

Int. HANDYMAN'S STOREROOM - day

Ceiling. The ventillator grill pops open. Cris drops to the floor. He grabs a backpack conveniently hanging on a hook. Without the slightest hesitation, he goes from shelf to box to drawer, loading particular objects into the backpack.

CORRIDOR

Empty. A door opens. Cris steps out into the hall carrying the backpack and a foot stool. He stays close to a wall, steps on the foot stool, and spray-paints over the lens of a surveillance camera.

SURVEILLANCE ROOM

Leo spots Cris as he blinds one camera after another.

Leo

I've got him. Third level, building C. Pete, Brian, get up there. Kyle, block off the west staircase. Jason, bring your dogs in from the east.

CORRIDOR

SOLDIER PETE and SOLDIER BRIAN charge into an empty corridor and begin their search for Cris.

A door slams open, bashing Pete in the face. Cris breaks his shooting arm, grabs his M-16, hides behind the door, and sprays bullets low, hitting Brian in the shins. He runs to Brian, breaks his shooting arm, takes his rifle. Drags Brian and Pete into an open room. Tapes their mouths.

SURVEILLANCE ROOM

Baines arrives and takes command.

Leo

He was on third level seventy seconds ago.

BAINES

But where is he now?

Int. WEST STAIRWELL - day

Cris pours floor polish in specific places.

SOLDIER KYLE and his TROOP charge out off the stairwell. Each one steps directly into the polish and slips.

As they fall, Cris punches them out or puts them in chokeholds, utilizing the elegant minimum of force or violence. Child's play. As soon as they are unconscious, Cris takes their guns, tear gas, and a gas mask.

CORRIDOR

SOLDIER JASON and THREE TROOPS are on the way, each with a GUARD DOG.

ANOTHER CORRIDOR

Cris lies in wait for the patrol. When they appear, he is perfectly placed to mace each dog and each soldier with a quick spritz. He goes back and sprays them again, to keep them out of commission.

Surveillance room

Cris appears on several screens.

leo
He's on this floor!...Shit! He's
coming here!

The door opens. A tear gas canister flies in. A moment later, Cris charges in wearing a gas mask.

He opens fire at the video monitors, shattering every one.

By the time the MP's are ready to respond, Cris reaches and grabs Baines' handgun. He swings out into the corridor with Baines' gun in his hand...Without looking, his hand aims and shoots several times.

CORRIDOR

Emerging into the hallway, Cris looks down at the end of the hall and sees two MP's falling to the floor, wounded.

Cris wraps electrical tape around the door handle and a pipe on the wall, sealing the room shut, then turns and maces the last of the dogs.

SurVEILLANCE ROOM

As the tear gas clears, the damage is visible. Every monitor in the surveillance system has been shattered. Leo, coughing, feels his way to a phone.

WISDOM'S OFFICE

Wisdom answers on speakerphone.

LeO (o.c.)
He blinded us.

BAINES (o.c.)
And the dogs are useless.

Ferris stares at Wisdom expectantly.

FeRRIS
He's getting away.

CORRIDOR

Cris, on the run, encounters CRACK SHOT - not where he was seen in prevision. Crack Shot reaches for his gun. Cris breaks his arm before Crack Shot can fire.

WISDOM'S OFFICE

Wisdom on the phone. Ferris watching in suspense.

WISDOM
Any developments on the Code Red?
...Let me know if there are.

He hangs up, discouraged. Dials a number.

WISDOM
Baines, bring the girl friend to
the Interrogation Room.
(to Ferris)
I'll deal with her there.

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Cris sneaks into room where he foresaw that Liz will be brought. The door is recognizable by its industrial look.

WAITING ROOM

Where Liz is being baby-sat by four MP's. Baines enters.

BAINES
We're moving her.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Cris writes a note. Slips it onto a side table. Opens the drawer of a desk. Writes in it. Puts something inside.

CORRIDOR OUTSIDE INTERROGATION ROOM

Baines and the four MP's arrives with Liz. Baines, Liz, and two MP's wait while two officers carefully open the door and check out the room.

We expect them to find Cris. But they don't.

Outside, in the hall, a pencil rolls on the floor toward Liz. She notices it and looks where it came from. Sees Cris, hiding behind a janitor's cart. He puts his fist over his heart. Gesture of love.

The two MP's in the room signal for Liz to be brought inside.

Two MP's outside the room bring her in. Baines stays on guard outside.

INTERROGATION ROOM

While the Guards stand on alert, Liz sits in a chair and discovers a piece of paper on a side table, placed exactly where her hand has come to rest. On the paper, in pencil, a square with a square cross within. She flips over the note. It reads, "GO CRAZY!"

She considers, then SCREAMS as loud as she can while running around wildly.

OUTSIDE INTERROGATION ROOM

Hearing the commotion, Baines opens the door. Behind his back, Cris steps from hiding, opens the door to a room and slips inside, closing the door just as Baines looks back.

INTERROGATION ROOM

The MP's force Liz into a chair behind a desk.

SOLDIER

Sit there and shut up.

Liz sees a drawer which is partially open. She looks inside. Sees a hefty pair of scissors. Inside the drawer, a message is written on the wood. "5:44, stab Wisdom." She looks at a clock in the room. 5:41. But Wisdom isn't there.

CORRIDOR

Wisdom and Ferris, walking.

FERRIS

You understand what's at stake here? We're playing for the future. Not just what happens next, but what the future is. What the rules are.

(MORE)

FERRIS (cont'd)

If one man will know it and control it -- and have power over the rest of us. Or if we'll have power over him.

WISDOM

By killing an innocent woman.

She looks him in the eye.

ferrIS

If you want, I'll pull the trigger.

WISDOM

I think that might be...more reliable.

She accepts the terrible responsibility.

FERRIS

I'll join you in a minute. I need to take care of some details.

Wisdom turns to Baines.

wISDOM

Get more men up here.

Ferris walks to a nearby office and goes inside.

INTERROGATION ROOM

Liz anxiously checks the clock. 5:43 and still no Wisdom. Then the door opens. And Wisdom enters.

They study each other, neither knowing the other's plans. She glances aside at the clock.

FERRIS' OFFICE

She picks up the phone. Dials a number.

FERRIS

This is Ferris. I'll need a chopper tanked up and ready.

Behind her, Cris steps out of hiding. By the time she sees him, his forearm is around her neck.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM

At 5:44, Liz grabs the scissors, lunges at Wisdom, and stabs at his neck. He raises his arm in time to block the blow.

WISDOM
Don't shoot.

BAINES
Then how are we going to stop him?

WISDOM
We don't. We let him go.
- It's part of the plan.

Baines tries not to be insubordinate.

BAINES
You're sure about this?

WISDOM
No, but Ferris is.

Wisdom takes a deep breath - then grabs Liz by the arm and aims his gun at her head.

WISDOM
I hope he loves you as much as I
love her.

CORRIDORS

Cris marches Ferris through the building, flanked by Security Police who aim at him but hold their fire. WISDOM'S VOICE comes over the public address system.

wisdom (o.c.)
Cris Johnson...I've got your girl
friend. We know her condition.

That gets his attention.

wisdom (o.c.)
Something very bad will happen at
six o'clock unless you're back in
custody.

CrIS
(to Ferris)
He hasn't got the balls.

FERRIS
We'll find out, won't we?

INTERROGATION ROOM

Wisdom holds Liz at gunpoint. She seems remarkably calm.

LIZ

You're not going to kill me. That's what the bad guys do.

WISDOM

In war, you have to be as ruthless as your enemy.

LIZ

(emphatic)

Cris isn't the enemy.

WISDOM

I didn't mean him.

CORRIDORS

Near lobby, where Crack Shot repeatedly nailed Cris. This time Crack Shot's shooting arm is in a sling, and he crouches next to a substitute sniper, who lies in wait.

Cris walks into view and fires one shot, which wings the substitute sniper -- causing him to miss his shot at Cris.

Cris pulls Ferris to the next location.

INTERROGATION ROOM

Wisdom and Liz. He watches the clock. Now she's afraid.

LIZ

Can't you just leave us alone?

He shakes his head, trying to gather courage.

IN THE RAFTERS

Another sniper takes aim at a section of hallway that Cris is approaching.

CROSSHAIRS

As Cris enters the sniper's field of vision, he shifts Ferris to a different position, blocking the shot.

CORRIDOR

As they pass under him, Ferris sees the sniper above. Cris takes aim at an empty space and fires just as a soldier charges from hiding and absorbs the bullet as if deliberately catching it with his body.

FERRIS
God, you're remarkable.

Cris breaks a window. Tosses a grenade outside.

FERRIS
I wish you had a little more sense
of duty.

CRIS
I'd say you have way too much.

EXT. HOMELAND SECURITY BUILDING - DAY

The grenade explosion attracts many of the guards. Cris and Ferris slip out the front door where the Guards were previously stationed.

He addresses a Soldier in a patrol car.

CRIS
Give me your keys.

The Soldier obeys. Cris shoves Ferris into the car and gets in after her.

CRIS
(to soldier)
If I see you, I'll kill her.

They drive off.

INTERROGATION ROOM

Wisdom, agonized, is about to pull the trigger. Liz, trembling, sees that he's going to do it.

WISDOM
I'm sorry.

Ext. Car - DAY

Driving away. Ferris realizes that Cris' escape is going to be successful. She checks her watch. It's 6:13.

FERRIS
You know what our problem is?

CRIS
"We got off on the wrong foot."

He has taken the words right out of her mouth.

FERRIS
It's really...

CRIS
"all been a big misunderstanding."

FERRIS
Exactly.

CRIS
"We've never meant you any harm."

FERRIS
It sounds so insincere when you say
it.

CRIS
I guess you're a better liar than I
am.

FERRIS
You know what I'm going to say
next?

Cris nods.

CRIS
It'll never happen.

She offers her card.

ferRIS
My door will be open. We can start
from scratch.

He takes it. The phone number stands out: 888-CFerris. Flips
the card out the window.

FERRIS
The magic word is cooperate. That's
all we've ever wanted to hear from
you.

A helicopter lands on the road ahead, blocking the way.

CRIS
When are they going to give up?
After you're dead?

Cris holds his gun threateningly to Ferris' head. Two MP's
get out of the helicopter, carrying something heavy.

Cris reacts to what he can't see yet.

They are carrying a body. They remove the hood from its head. It's Liz. Dead.

Quaking with rage, Cris prepares to shoot Ferris.

SNAPBACK TO:

Int. HOMELAND SECURITY - Corridors - DAY

Twenty minutes earlier. Cris is marching Ferris through the corridors to the exit.

ferris
I wish you had a little more sense
of duty.

Cris stops in his tracks, quaking with rage.

CRIS
To a gang of murderers?

Ferris seems pleased.

FERRIS
I see you got our message.

He checks his watch. 5:54.

CRIS
What's about to happen...you've
brought it on yourselves.

Cris changes course and charges into a...

STAIRWELL

which he descends at a run, roughly dragging Ferris with him.

fERRIS
It's not too late Cris. You can
save her.

CRIS
I'm planning on it.

Cris shoves Ferris in front of him as a shield. Approaching a turn in the stairs, he fires blindly. Rounding the turn, he sees his would-be assassin collapsing, dead.

INTERROGATION ROOM

Wisdom keeps his gun aimed at Liz's head as he watches the clock: 5:55 PM.

Soldier
He's heading this way.

CORRIDOR

Cris charges out of the stairwell, shooting without hesitation - forward, left, right, back - efficiently targeting Security Police in the precise order of their imminent readiness to fire at him. For each bullet, one soldier dies.

Wisdom's voice comes over the P.A. System.

WISDOM (o.S.)
Johnson, this is Wisdom. It's 5:55.
You have five minutes to turn
yourself in...

Cris and Ferris keep moving.

Wisdom (o.S.)
Or your worst nightmare will
happen.

Cris marches right up to the Interrogation Room where Wisdom holds Liz prisoner, using Ferris as a human shield.

WISDOM (o.S.)
Look ahead if you don't believe me.

Cris opens the door to the room, revealing Wisdom, Ferris, and thirty Security Police and MP's - who take aim at him and fire. Cris gets chopped to pieces.

SnAPBACK TO:

Cris crouches on the floor outside the Interrogation Room, reaches up and opens the door. He gets off a shot at Wisdom, who lives long enough to put a bullet in Liz's heart.

SnAPBACK TO:

Cris uses Ferris as a shield, gets off a burst of shots at Wisdom, killing him instantly.

But a Soldier at Wisdom's side puts a bullet in Liz's heart -- then the thirty Security personnel blast Cris and Ferris to pieces.

SnAPBACK TO:

STAIRCASE - ONE MINUTE EARLIER

Cris, dragging Ferris, arrives at the level of the Interrogation Room and continues down one more flight.

Using Ferris as a human shield, he shoots his way into...

INT. FORENSIC LAB - DAY

Where Cris previously saw the seized barrel of C4 Explosive. He guns down several armed MP's whom he knows would be present, then threatens the technicians.

CRIS

Get out!

They flee. Cris locks himself and Ferris inside.

Cris goes over to the bomb. Squints for a beat. IN FAST FORWARD, CONDENSED TIME, MULTIPLE SNAPBACK, he goes through the whole learning curve on bomb detonation, blowing himself up - and snapping back to life -- several times before figuring out the right way to set it off.

INTERROGATION ROOM

Wisdom holds Liz at arm's length with his gun pointed at her head. Watching the clock count up to 6:00 PM. It's 5:59:41/42/43...

THE LAB

Cris moves the bomb. Closes his eyes for a beat. Moves the bomb again. Closes his eyes. Opens them. Sets the detonator to 10 seconds.

CORRIDOR OUTSIDE LAB

MP's wait, preparing to gun down Cris when he emerges. The door opens. Ferris sprints out.

feRRIS

It's going off in ten seconds!

The crowd flees with her.

INTERROGATION ROOM

Wisdom watches the clock count advance. 5:59:55/56/57...

CORRIDOR

Now empty. Cris runs for it. Dives.

INTERROGATION ROOM

As Wisdom prepares to pull the trigger, the bomb explodes in a giant cataclysm.

Smoke and dust

Roiling. Opaque. Then clearing.

The center of the building

is gone. A jagged raw atrium extends several stories down and up.

To the side, on a narrow ledge of floor extending from a wall...crouches Liz. The only person remaining. She has survived by inches. Very precise.

As she recovers from the blast, a door opens behind her. Cris appears, extends a hand and helps her from her perch.

Ext. North vegas airport - night

A private jet warms up on the tarmac.

ext. Private jet - night

Cris and Liz bound up the entry steps, exhausted but elated.

INT. JET - NIGHT

At the door, no one is present to greet them. Odd.

They continue into the main cabin, where Neal, the Showgirl, the Pilots, and the Flight Attendant are glued to the television. Neal sees Cris and Liz, but hardly acknowledges them. He's in shock. They all are.

Cris and Liz turn to the TV.

TV NewsCASTER (o.S.)
 The situation in Chicago is not quite as severe as in the other nine cities where the dirty bombs exploded, as prevailing winds blew the nuclear waste across Lake Michigan rather than straight into town. Radiation levels in Detroit, on the other hand, may require the entire city to be evacuated.

Liz and Cris look at each other, ashen.

LIZ
 This is what they wanted you to prevent?

CRIS
 I guess...

LIZ
 And you wouldn't help?

CRIS
 They didn't explain. They were trying to force me.

Liz shakes her head, incredulous.

CRIS
 They were gonna make me a slave.

She looks at Cris like he's scum - and heads for the front of the plane.

CRIS
 Liz? Where are you going?

Liz
 To the doctor.

She walks out of the jet and down the steps.

NEAL
 She's not coming with us?

Cris stands there, bereft, and watches her go. He has run out of futures.

CLOSE ON CRIS

Tears escaping from his eyes. ROTATE FRAME and discover that the previous cut was actually a...

SNAPBACK TO:

LIZ'S HOUSE - DAWN

Where Cris lies in bed with Liz's head on his chest, the morning after their first night [p. 45]. Since that point, Cris has been up for hours - scanning the futures. Finding no path worth taking.

Int. Wisdom's HOUSE - dawn

Ferris sleeps next to Wisdom. She's hogged the covers. Her cell phone rings. Drowsily, she answers.

FERRIS

Ferris.

Cris (o.c.)

This is Cris Johnson.

She sits up.

FERRIS

Where did you get this number?

Int. Liz's kitchen - dawn

Cris is dressed. Despondent.

CRIS

I want to cooperate.

FERRIS

That's music to my ears.

CRIS

But I have conditions.

FERRIS

I'm sure we can work something out.

liz's bed - dawn

Liz. Sleeping. Cris sits next to her on the bed.

CRIS

Liz...

Her eyes flicker open. She sees him looking down at her like an angel.

LIZ
Come back to bed.

CRIS
I can't. - I have to go.

LIZ
(incredulous)
You're not leaving?

CRIS
There's something I have to do.
Something you'd want me to do. And
I can't put it off any longer.

LIZ
(wounded)
Fine. Then go. What do I care?

CRIS
Liz, it's not like that. I searched
for you for a long time. I want to
be with you forever.

LIZ
Don't overdo it. We just met last
night.

CRIS
But a lot has happened since then.

LIZ
While I was sleeping?

He proceeds with difficulty.

CRIS
We're going to have a child.

LIZ
Then you really are an angel.

CRIS
I don't expect you to believe me.
But when you do find out, remember
that we came together for a reason.
That this wasn't just...one night.
It was a special chance for both of
us.

Seeing his misery, she softens.

LIZ

Then why are you running away from me?

He holds back tears.

CRIS

I'm not...I'm taking the long way around.

Now she's crying.

LIZ

I don't understand. We got off to such a great start.

He nods, wistful.

CRIS

And I looked for a happy ending...
But this was the best I could do.

They kiss good-bye, and she makes it so wickedly sweet that he can barely pull himself away.

Liz watches, mystified, as he leaves - stirred by feelings for Cris that are just coming into being.

LIZ

See ya?

CRIS

I wouldn't be surprised.

And he walks out the door.

Ext. LIZ'S HOUSE - day

Cris walks down the driveway to the street. He stands there a beat, then Ferris' car drives up and stops in front of him. Cris opens the passenger door and gets in.

Int. Ferris' car - day

They look at each other, coming from very different places.

Ferris

Mr. Johnson, we meet at last.

CRIS
I wasn't ready till now.

Ferris shifts into gear and drives off.

FERRIS
We don't have time to waste. Maybe
you could start by telling me how
your talent works.

He thinks how to phrase it.

CRIS
"The future ain't what it used to
be." Ever hear that expression?

Ext./Int. front window of cottage - day

Liz watches from inside as Ferris' car pulls away.

CRIS (v.o.)
It's a joke, but it's true. The
future changes every time you look
at it. Because you looked at it.
Cause once you see it, you're
different. And that changes
everything else.

Liz puts her hand on her belly.

Fade out.