

HOLY SH!T

By

Christian J. Hearn

#100-3989

07730894857
outpost32@gmail.com

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

A DEAD DOG lies on the asphalt. Insects traverse the corpse, weaving in and out the matted fur.

A party hat sits atop the Dog's head and a whistle protrudes from the animal's jaws.

SOPHIE (21), short dark hair tied at the back of her head, and QwikGas shirt open at the collar, stares at the dead animal. Laconic.

Sounds of heavy traffic do little to pull Sophie from her trance.

Finally she picks up the dog by the scruff with a gloved hand and drops it into a garbage bag.

A chalk outline and patchwork of crawling maggots serve as reminders of the dog's presence. Sophie dumps the bag in a trash can.

HOMELESS DUDE

The end is nigh! Doomsday is upon
us! Armageddon! The end of
days!...Spare a quarter?

Sophie turns, squinting from the sun, and watches a Homeless Man across the street yell at anything that moves. And anything that doesn't.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Sophie pumps gas into a car and wipes down the windshield. She steals glances at the family inside the vehicle - a MOTHER, FATHER, and TWO YOUNG CHILDREN smile, laugh, giggle, swap snacks.

She shoves the leather cloth into her back pocket, replaces the pump and accepts the folded cash offered to her through the gap in the window.

MAN

Keep the change.

SOPHIE

I might as well retire.

The car drives away and Sophie separates her tips from the rest of the cash.

INT. GAS STATION - DAY

Sophie is still counting her tips when she steps inside. The small store section of the gas station is like an out-dated corporate mini-mart. If gas stations were bitter D-list celebrities desperate for a comeback.

The phone on the counter rings and she picks up.

SOPHIE

Yes, Joe?

DUMONT (OVER PHONE)

Is that how you greet all callers?

SOPHIE

You're our only caller. Ever. And you're here in the building.

DUMONT (OVER PHONE)

Sophie, could I see you for a moment, please?

Sophie hangs up the phone and pushes open a door that leads into the back of the gas station.

INT. GAS STATION, BACK AREA - DAY

She enters a tight, cluttered hallway. Sophie is forced to navigate a chicane of crates of soda and boxes of potato chips.

She opens yet another door, the word "MANAGER" displayed on it.

JOE DUMONT (35), suit and tie (ill-fitting), is already stood, waiting for her. He's going for dramatic.

He holds a sheet of paper out in front of him. Again, an attempt at dramatic.

DUMONT

What's this?

SOPHIE

Paper. They make it from trees.

DUMONT

(Reading from the sheet)
No sleeping, no eating, no drinking, no ball games, and no bodily functions?

He screws up Sophie's makeshift sign and tosses it into a wastepaper basket.

(CONTINUED)

DUMONT

There's protocol to be followed when erecting or displaying public information.

SOPHIE

You ever worked the night shift, Joe?

DUMONT

First of all, it's mister Dumont. Or at the very least, Joseph. And second of all, do you think I got to the position I'm in today - a family man -

He gestures towards a framed picture of himself, and who are presumably his wife and young daughter.

DUMONT

- with managerial qualifications, by wishful thinking? I paid my dues, as will you, as will Phil.

SOPHIE

Who's your speech writer. And who's Phil?

DUMONT

Phil is the new guy I'm expecting to be on the premises at no later than nineteen hundred hours. And you're going to show him how we do things around here. Aren't you?

SOPHIE

(Forcing a smile)
It'd be my pleasure.

DUMONT

Delightful.

He dismisses her with a wave of his hand.

INT. GAS STATION - DAY

Sophie steps behind the counter and picks up where she left off - counting her tips.

The phone rings. She picks up.

DUMONT (OVER PHONE)

And Sophie, don't count your tips in front of the customers.

(CONTINUED)

She puts her tips away, hangs up the phone, and sits. The phone rings again and Sophie immediately answers.

DUMONT (OVER PHONE)

And don't sit. Sitting is a precursor to complacency. And complacency is failure's bedfellow.

She stands, making a show of it for the CCTV camera that is pointed at the counter.

A CUSTOMER enters carrying a GALLON-SIZED gasoline canister and heads straight for the self-serve Slushy machine where he proceeds to fill the canister with a gallon of Raspberry.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

The Slushy addict exits with his latest fix and passes by the window just as Sophie slaps a freshly-made sign against the glass. It reads; "JUST DON'T BE A DICK".

EXT. GAS STATION, BACK LOT - DAY

Sophie stands smoking...next to a "NO SMOKING" sign. She stares across several lanes of heavy traffic at a billboard and images of beautiful people in exotic places.

She stamps out her cigarette and heads inside.

INT. GAS STATION - DAY

Sophie enters the store, interrupting Dumont mid-conversation. He's been giving instructions to PHIL (21), tall, tattoos on his neck and hands, piercing blue eyes. He wears a freshly-pressed QwikGas shirt.

DUMONT

Ah, Sophie.

(Checking watch)

As if on cue. Sophie meet Phil,
Phil meet Sophie.

SOPHIE

Consider us met.

PHIL

Hi.

DUMONT

Sophie, I trust you'll train Phil
to the level of excellence that

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DUMONT (cont'd)
we like to nurture here. And
Phil, no doubt you'll be a
studious sponge, soaking up every
drop of guidance Sophie
dispenses.

PHIL
Yes, Sir.

DUMONT
(Points a finger, winks)
"Sir". I like it. Well, I'll
leave you both to it.

Sophie waits until Dumont has left for his office.

SOPHIE
"Sir"?

Phil shrugs.

INT. GAS STATION - DAY

Sophie and Phil each pump gas into waiting cars. As the
dials tick over on the working pumps...

SOPHIE
So what's your problem, Phil?

PHIL
My problem?

Sophie replaces the pump, takes the payment - tips in her
pocket - the rest in her fist. Phil does likewise.

PHIL
(To his customer)
Have a nice day.

As the cars drive away Sophie and Phil convene on the
forecourt.

PHIL
I don't know what you mean?

SOPHIE
You know what a problem is?

PHIL
Yeah.

SOPHIE
And you know who you are?

(CONTINUED)

PHIL
Better than most.

SOPHIE
So what's your problem?

PHIL
You always looking to start a
fight with people you just met?

SOPHIE
If I wanted to pick a fight I'd
just come right out and call you
a fuckface.

Phil laughs.

SOPHIE
Or something to that effect. If
we're gonna get to know each
other we gotta do the chit-chat
thing. Everyone always starts
with likes, interests, hobbies. I
prefer to start with dislikes,
objections, and ailments.

PHIL
So instead of getting to know who
I am, you want to know who I
aint?

SOPHIE
If you wanna call it that.

INT. GAS STATION - DAY

Sophie and Phil deposit their payments into the cash
register drawer.

PHIL
Bad-pointers.

SOPHIE
What's a bad-pointer.

PHIL
Someone who points at something
with little to no accuracy. I
once fell out with a friend all
because he was a bad pointer.
He'd ask for one thing, but point
to something else entirely and
never admit culpability when it
caused confusion. I can't tell
you the trouble it caused.

(CONTINUED)

SOPHIE

I dropped a friend when I saw she hung a swastika above her bed.

PHIL

Jesus.

SOPHIE

She said it made for a good conversation piece. Our conversation after that went something like "go fuck yourself".

INT. GAS STATION - EVENING

Sophie and Phil are on opposite sides of the aisle, both making sure each and every product label is facing out.

SOPHIE

Any vices, bad habits, addictions?

PHIL

Not if I can help it.

SOPHIE

Bad habits can be good for you.

PHIL

Not me, I'm as clean as an irrigated colon.

SOPHIE

Never trust a man who doesn't have a dark side.

PHIL

Never trust a woman who does.

SOPHIE

You know what they call men without a mean streak? Liars.

(Pause)

I'm all done here. You had all your hepatitis shots?

PHIL

Why?

INT. GAS STATION, BATHROOM - EVENING

Phil and Sophie are in neighboring stalls. Phil is busy mopping, his shirt pulled over his nose and mouth, while Sophie puffs on a cigarette and reads the graffiti on the tiles.

An ARROW points towards the toilet paper beside the words "SOCIOLOGY DEGREES".

The toilet seat reads "DO COCAINE OFF OF ME".

"GLORY HOLE...COMING SOON, PLEASE BE PATIENT" above a dark circle drawn with magic marker.

"ONLY GOD FORGIVES" - and in different colour and penmanship - "NO I DON'T".

"DICK DRAWING COMPETITION"...and below an assortment of different shapes and sizes, each drawn by a different hand.

Sophie takes out a purple pen and gives her best attempt at an artistic interpretation of male genitalia.

Below Sophie's rendering is an outline which the artist has titled "My Big Peanus".

SOPHIE

I hope you know how to use it better than you spell it.

PHIL (O.C)

You say something?

SOPHIE

You know a guy called Jesus?

PHIL

Just the one.

SOPHIE

Does he give good blow jobs?

PHIL

That must have been in a chapter I skipped. Why?

SOPHIE

You ever tempted to call any of these numbers?

PHIL

And spend a second longer in here than I have to?

(CONTINUED)

Sophie takes out her cellphone and dials, double-checking the number against the one written on the back of the stall door.

SOPHIE

(Into phone)

Hi, is Jesus there?...Well, by all accounts he's everywhere. You don't by any chance "give great head" do you? I'm asking for a friend...That's not what I heard.

(Hangs up. To Phil)

Must have called at a bad time. Shall we call up Tammy...see if she is indeed a "fat, swollen, vagina with a face"?

She scans the walls, a crooked smile creasing her lips until she reads; "I can't take it anymore. Help me".

SOPHIE

...Come on, lets finish up.

She grabs her own mop and cleans the floor in silence.

EXT. GAS STATION, BACK LOT - NIGHT

Sophie smokes while Phil stares up at the sky. He levels his gaze at Sophie, then to the NO SMOKING SIGN over her shoulder. She follows his line of sight and rips the sign from the wall.

SOPHIE

Is this all there is?

PHIL

Between the stars and the Earth?
What more could you want?

SOPHIE

Right now? A sick bag.

(Pause)

Nothing on the horizon but the certainty of death?

Phil is taken aback, but he is still able to keep his smile.

PHIL

I'm not in a position to answer that kind of question.

SOPHIE

Here's another; what does it say about me that I find that as reassuring as I do worrying?

(CONTINUED)

(Pause)

You know this was meant to be a temp job, a brief detour on the way to somewhere better.

PHIL

It's not that bad.

SOPHIE

"Not that bad" is not good enough.

PHIL

It could be worse.

SOPHIE

"Could be worse" is just another way of saying "not that bad".

PHIL

I'm the last person who should be telling anybody else how to live their life...

SOPHIE

...But...

PHIL

...But...live it. I'll meet you inside.

Sophie gives a quick wave of her cigarette-clutching-hand and Phil pulls the door open and steps inside.

Sophie finishes her smoke then attempts to replace the NO SMOKING sign. It hangs crookedly from one corner. Good enough. She steps inside.

INT. GAS STATION, BACK AREA - NIGHT

Sophie catches Phil and Dumont at the end of the hall, partially hidden by a busted vending machine.

DUMONT

If you don't like it here, I'm sure they'd be happy to have you back in county jail?

PHIL

But -

Sophie ducks out of view and listens. She has not been seen.

(CONTINUED)

DUMONT

Are you being disruptive on your first day?

PHIL

No sir.

DUMONT

Because I can either extol your virtues when parleying with the parole board, or I can malign you with extreme prejudice. The choice is of course, yours.

PHIL

...Sir.

DUMONT

So we're in agreement then? Your tips and ten percent of your pay check every month are to go to me?

(Pause)

I believe you have a customer waiting.

Sophie waits for the sound of the door THWACK-A-WACKING open and closed before stepping out and feigning ignorance.

Dumont doesn't quite manage to hide his surprise.

DUMONT

Sophie?

(Checks watch)

Your shift is over. I imagine you're pleased to be heading home?

SOPHIE

You would imagine.

EXT. SOPHIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

SCREAMING. From inside the house a male and female voice battle it out, deploying every curse word in their vocabulary. The windows are one decibel away from rattling.

Sophie stands at the end of the path, cluttered with forgotten toys, leading to the house, a rucksack over one shoulder.

After a moment she heads down the path but bypasses the small house, ducking beneath a kitchen window - through which her MOTHER and FATHER are seen fighting - and enters the backyard.

EXT. SOPHIE'S HOUSE, BACKYARD - NIGHT.

Sophie makes a beeline for a dilapidated TREE HOUSE. She climbs the tree and sticks her head through the hatch into the belly of the tree house.

INT. TREE HOUSE - NIGHT

Sophie finds FAYE (12), dark blonde hair, button nose, and eyes beyond her years. She wears a faded pink tee shirt and faded jeans.

Faye sits on a rolled out sleeping bag, knees to her chest, snacking on a bag of potato chips.

After a brief pause while half-in, half-out the tree house, Sophie squeezes through the hatch and lays down on a second sleeping bag.

FAYE

Soon you'll be too big to fit.

SOPHIE

I stopped growing about six years ago, Squirt. If I fit then, I'll keep on fitting now.

She reaches over and takes a potato chip for herself.

SOPHIE

Unless I keep eating these. How long you been up here?

FAYE

About twenty minutes after they started. And about thirty minutes after I heard Mom stomping her feet. I hate it when she does that.

SOPHIE

How long ago was that?

FAYE

About an hour.

SOPHIE

What's it about this time?

FAYE

Does it make a difference?

Sophie shrugs.

She takes another potato chip and bites down on it.

(CONTINUED)

FAYE

Don't eat too many, that's my dinner.

Sophie thinks, reaches into her back pocket and pulls out her meager collection of one dollar bills.

SOPHIE

Want pizza?

INT. PIZZA PARLOR - NIGHT

A hole in the wall joint, faded orange seats (cracked) lined up in a row in front of a narrow counter. Sophie and Faye chew on slices and sip down cokes.

FAYE

Why do the cheap places always taste the best?

SOPHIE

I prefer not to think about that. I guess it's the same reason why the most repulsive looking people always have the most kids; as long as ugly people are gettin' laid, rancid food is being eaten.

FAYE

You check the mail today?

SOPHIE

Yes.

FAYE

Still waiting?

SOPHIE

No news is good news.

FAYE

That's a stupid saying.

SOPHIE

You're right, but all I got right now is stupid sayings and four bucks. You want a refill or ice cream?

FAYE

We're gonna have to go back some time. The longer we're gone, the worse it'll be.

(CONTINUED)

SOPHIE

Fine. But it's your turn to be first through the door.

EXT. ICE CREAM TRUCK - NIGHT

The purchasing of ice cream cones is made problematic by the bars on the windows of the ice cream truck.

The VENDOR struggles to take the money, and Sophie struggles to get the cones through without losing some of the precious whipped goodness.

SOPHIE

(Eying the bars)

It get's that rough?

VENDOR

No, but it reminds me of home.

He winks at her and flashes a gold tooth.

Sophie hands Faye her ice cream while she starts licking her own. The two of them start the slow walk home.

EXT. STREETS OF LA, SUBURBIA - NIGHT

With their cones melting and the constant drone of traffic floating in the air the two sisters meander, taking their time. They walk and talk.

FAYE

What if we never went back?

SOPHIE

It's a nice dream, Faye. But dreams are like toilet paper; thin, prone to tearing, and destined to be shit all over.

FAYE

It could be like this, every night.

SOPHIE

The ice cream and pizza slices would soon run out.

FAYE

...You're going to leave me, aren't you?

SOPHIE

No. Every big sister needs a little sister to annoy.

(CONTINUED)

FAYE

But you will be leaving.

Sophie takes a lick of her melting ice cream.

FAYE

Take me with you.

SOPHIE

Your time will come. You need to stay in school.

FAYE

Why?

SOPHIE

So you don't wind up pumping gas for a living.

They pass a house, similar in style to their own, but shabbier. The front yard is littered with household items and a makeshift sign speared into the ground boasts; "GOING TO JAIL SALE".

EXT. SOPHIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The *SCREAMING* continues, the voices heard now more raw and battle-weary.

Faye leads the way to the front door but at the last instant Sophie lays a hand on her shoulder, halting her, and steps ahead. She is first through the door.

The shouting, screaming and yelling shifts a pitch. Faye slips inside and gently pushes the door closed behind her.

INT. SOPHIE'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - MORNING

Sophie is awake. She lies in bed, listening to the ever-present sounds of traffic outside. Sunlight hits her face.

The furniture is old, mismatched, chipped. Old posters of curtain-hair-do'd boybands, out of fashion for a decade, peel from the walls.

INT. SOPHIE'S HOUSE, LOUNGE - MORNING

Sophie stands in her pajamas and takes in the sight of her Father, lying sprawled, face down, on the sofa. Empty cans and bottles are left strewn across the dirty carpet.

INT. SOPHIE'S HOUSE, BATHROOM - MORNING

The door swings open to reveal Sophie's mother sitting upright with her head slumped across one shoulder, wedged between the toilet and the wall.

Vomit has dried on the outside of the toilet bowl and down the front of her Mother's LA Lakers tee shirt.

LATER:

With her Mother sitting semi-conscious in the bath tub, Sophie sponges the woman's back and washes her hair.

INT. SOPHIE'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - MORNING

Faye, also still in her pajamas, prepares breakfast; two glasses of orange juice (spilled), two cups of coffee (looking more like mud), and toast (burned).

Outside the window the MAILMAN makes a delivery. Faye hurries from the kitchen.

EXT. SOPHIE'S HOUSE - MORNING

Faye runs excitedly from the house, her bare feet dodging toys along the front path to the mailbox.

She grabs the envelopes from inside and quickly sorts through them, evidently looking for something in particular.

Faye gasps with anticipation and looks with wide eyes at a large brown envelope - its top right corner stamped; NEW YORK UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS BOARD.

Faye sprints back to the house - this time tripping on a plastic dog with wheels instead of legs. She soldiers on, caring not one iota.

INT. SOPHIE'S HOUSE, BATHROOM - MORNING

Sophie gathers up her mother's vomit-stained clothes and tosses them in a laundry basket when Faye crashes in brandishing the envelope.

She's reluctant to accept the proffered envelope until Faye practically shoves it against her. Sophie pauses before opening it, unfolding the letter inside, and reading.

She scans the words quickly before reading "WE REGRET TO INFORM YOU...". She slowly screws the letter into a ball.

(CONTINUED)

Sophie's mother, just conscious enough to do so, locks eyes on Sophie, smiles, and lets out a cold and malicious laugh.

Sophie picks up the remainder of the dirty laundry and carries the basket with her on her way out. Faye watches her leave.

MOTHER

Well.

Faye looks at her mother, fearful, sad, and pleading. She's at a loss.

MOTHER

Christ, girl, I ain't gonna do yer thinking for yer, get me a goddamn towel.

Her mother punctuates the last few syllables by stomping her feet and splashing water out of the tub.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Sophie walks to work but stops for a second at the precise spot where the sidewalk becomes the gas station entrance. She regards the place for a moment and wipes away a tear.

HOMELESS DUDE

Spare a quarter, Mam?

The Homeless Dude smiles shyly at her. Sophie drops a few coins into his cup.

Phil, just seeing off a customer turns his "bye" wave into a "hello" wave when he sees Sophie.

PHIL

Hi.

Sophie passes by quietly and steps inside.

INT. GAS STATION - DAY

A DUDE WITH A PATCHY BEARD freezes upon Sophie's entering. He stands, statuesque with a beer can half in/half out of his pants. Several others have evidently made it as far as the pant legs.

Sophie and Patchy Beard lock stares for a second before she nonchalantly looks away and heads for the back area.

Patchy Beard makes his escape.

Before Sophie reaches the door Dumont emerges from it. He taps his watch.

(CONTINUED)

DUMONT

One of us is mistaken, Sophie.

SOPHIE

Not now, Joe.

DUMONT

(Narrowing his gaze)

Either I'm mistaken, and your shift does indeed begin at eight-o-four, or it is you that is mistaken and you are in fact four minutes late commencing your duties.

SOPHIE

You really wanna do this?

DUMONT

By my calculations, taking your hourly wage into account, four minutes is equivalent to one dollar and sixteen cents. Which is the amount I'll be deducting from your paycheck this month.

SOPHIE

What's the monetary equivalent of being an intolerable dick?

DUMONT

You might not care much for this job, or this establishment, but I do. I care. And as the most senior member of staff here it is my duty to make you care. Consider it a moral obligation.

(Pause)

Now, go smile for the customers.

Sophie is still, silent. After a moment she takes her place behind the counter.

Dumont heads for the back.

Phil enters, smiling.

PHIL

How's it going?

INT. GAS STATION - DAY

Sophie and Phil watch TWO KIDS (13) - a FAT ONE and a SKINNY ONE, have a food fight in the store.

(CONTINUED)

From opposite sides of the central isle they hurl morsels at each other. As they each run out of ammo they grab whatever is closest to hand from the shelves, rip the packaging away and use it as a missile.

CUT TO:

INT. GAS STATION - DAY

An ELDERLY WOMAN (78) creeps around the store and systematically damages every item she picks up before dropping it in a basket.

She dents a can of beans. She crushes a packet of Oreos. Squeezes a Twinkie until the white cream oozes from its center.

Finally she dumps her items on the counter.

ELDERLY WOMAN

These items are damaged. I insist on getting a discount for every one of them.

CUT TO:

INT. GAS STATION - DAY

A BLEEDING MAN, blood seeping from some unseen wound in his head and streaking down his face, asks, rather calmly;

BLEEDING MAN

Pack of Marlboro's and some band aids?

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Sophie folds a dollar bill and shoves it in her back pocket as one car drives away and another takes its place.

A MAN (40's) wearing DUNGAREES pulls to the pump, puts it in park, and climbs out.

DUNGAREES

Fill her up with ethanol, would ya?

SOPHIE

Want me to check under the hood?

DUNGAREES

Go ahead. You got a bathroom?

(CONTINUED)

SOPHIE

Is it urgent?

DUNGAREES

Semi.

SOPHIE

If you can hold it, hold it. If you can't, remember to breathe through your mouth.

DUNGAREES

I'll take my chances.

SOPHIE

They don't look good.

Sophie opens the gas tank on the car, pops the nozzle in and lets the pump do the rest.

While the dollars rack up she lifts the hood on the car and gives it a once over.

Satisfied, she slams the hood down. Dungarees stands close behind her...a little too close. White powder paints his top lip. He gropes her bottom.

DUNGAREES

My turn.

Sophie is startled but quickly recovers. Her tough exterior kicks in.

SOPHIE

To get punched in the nose?

DUNGAREES

C'mon, don't be like that.

SOPHIE

You were expecting me to swoon?

DUNGAREES

Just havin' a little fun, is all.

SOPHIE

(Holds out her open palm)
One of us was. Thirty-four-fifty for the gas.

DUNGAREES

Why are you girls always so uptight?

SOPHIE

Thirty-four-fifty. And I ain't saying please.

(CONTINUED)

DUNGAREES

Search me for it.

He turns around.

DUNGAREES

That's a lot of pockets.

(He starts unzipping)

Or maybe I'll just save you the time.

SOPHIE

Keep going, I could do with a laugh.

DUNGAREES

Fuck you, bitch.

He backhands her across the face and splits her lip.

DUNGAREES

I tried being friendly.

He grabs Sophie and backs her up against his car.

DUNGAREES

I just wanted to be friends, is all.

PHIL(O.C.)

Let her go, mother fucker.

Dungarees finds himself with a knife - a small switchblade - against his throat. He puts up his hands and backs away from Sophie.

She kicks him in the groin, sending him to his knees doubled over in pain.

SOPHIE

Thirty-four-fifty.

Dungarees keeps one hand on his throbbing testicles and uses the other to reach for his wallet.

Sophie snatches the wallet, counts out the money then throws the wallet in his lap. She runs away down the side of the building and out of sight.

After Dungarees falls back into his car, clutching his testicles, Phil throws the wallet back in at him and slams the door shut as hard as he can.

Dungarees drives away with a spin of his tires.

Phil looks back in the direction from which he saw Sophie slip away.

EXT. GAS STATION, BACK LOT - DAY

Phil finds Sophie sitting on the curb, smoking, her eyes red. He looks at his own hands, finds he still holds the knife. Phil throws it in the nearest trash can.

SOPHIE

I didn't need you to rescue me.

PHIL

Don't think of it as a rescue.
And don't think of me as a
rescuer. I'm just your sidekick,
and in this week's adventure the
hero of the story got in a spot
of trouble so we teamed-up.

SOPHIE

I'm the hero?

PHIL

You told the guy to go fuck
himself...in as many words. Makes
you a hero in my book.

SOPHIE

Do I get a cape?

PHIL

A cape will only slow you down,
Super Sophie.

Sophie smiles at that.

SOPHIE

So who are you?

PHIL

My sidekick name?

SOPHIE

Your Rap sheet?

Phil's smile disappears. Not unfriendly, just cautious.
Almost afraid.

SOPHIE

I overheard you and Dickless last
night.

PHIL

Oh.

SOPHIE

Why'd you let him treat you like
that?

(CONTINUED)

PHIL
I can't afford to not. You
believe in second chances?

SOPHIE
I'm still waiting on my first.

PHIL
I gotta fly straight...or...I
crash and burn.

SOPHIE
What did you do?

PHIL
Stole Candy from a baby.

Sophie laughs.

SOPHIE
Seriously?

PHIL
I'm deadly serious. I have one
helluva sweet tooth.

SOPHIE
C'mon. I won't tell.

PHIL
It's stupid.

SOPHIE
I expect it to be stupid, you got
caught, didn't you?

Phil looks at her sideways with one crooked eye.

PHIL
I robbed an art gallery. Sort of.

SOPHIE
Sort of?

PHIL
We only made it as far as the
gift shop. The gallery itself was
too tough to get into.

SOPHIE
We?

PHIL
Me and my friends. We were
seventeen. So we stole poster
replicas of the piece we went to
steal, thinking maybe we could

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

PHIL (cont'd)
sell 'em, and that thirty of
something was better than one of
something.

SOPHIE
Holy shit. That is stupid.

PHIL
That's not the stupid part.

SOPHIE
You did it dressed as clowns?

PHIL
Close. I err...I went in carrying
a water pistol. I painted it
black and hoped that nobody would
notice. And so ended my
illustrious career in armed
robbery.

SOPHIE
And now you're going straight?

PHIL
I'm a born again citizen.

INT. GAS STATION - DAY

Phil stands behind the counter while Sophie takes the
place of the customer on the other side, perusing the
adult magazine covers above Phil's head.

SOPHIE
You think you could tell the
difference between a man's ass
and a woman's ass?

PHIL
Definitely.

SOPHIE
Forget the legs, forget
everything else, all you can see
is ass; one crack, two cheeks,
both shaved and waxed. You're
positive you can tell a chick
from a dude?

PHIL
I bet you a dollar.

SOPHIE
I see your dollar, and I raise
you a lifetime of shame.

(CONTINUED)

She takes a dollar bill - her only tip for the day - from her back pocket and lays it on the counter. Phil does the same.

SOPHIE

Ok, look away.

She eyes the magazines, a selection for the straight man, and another for the gay man. She makes her choices and spends a few moments selecting the right images before covering them with cigarettes and gum until only two ASSES remain.

SOPHIE

Done.

Phil turns and his confidence drastically fades. He looks back and forth, back and forth, making comparisons.

PHIL

This is surprisingly hard.

SOPHIE

Is that a euphemism?

PHIL

(Tapping one)

That one. That's the woman.

Sophie removes the cigarettes and gum to reveal the rest of the surrounding anatomy. Both men.

SOPHIE

Gotcha.

PHIL

Shit.

He sets about re-stocking the magazines, smokes, and gum. Sophie picks up her two dollars.

SOPHIE

My good sir, I would like to purchase two scratchcards please.

He swaps her cash for scratchcards and flips her a penny, which she then uses to chip away at the silver layer covering the cards.

SOPHIE

Nada.

She tosses the spent card into the trash and gets started scratching away at the second card.

SOPHIE
(Reading)
You've won one dollar.

PHIL
Congratulations. What are you
gonna spend it on?

SOPHIE
Another scratchcard.

Smiling, Phil slides a third scratchcard across the counter. Sophie works the penny back and forth...

SOPHIE
Fuck this.

It goes in the trash with the others.

SOPHIE
On that note, I'm gonna go take a
piss. Standing up. Just because.

INT. GAS STATION, BATHROOM - DAY

Sophie lines the entire toilet seat with individual squares of toilet paper before sitting down.

While she pees she reads the graffiti on the back of the door - "YOU SUCK".

Finished, she reaches for the toilet paper. Empty.

INT. GAS STATION, BACK AREA - DAY

Sophie knocks on the MANAGER'S DOOR rapidly and opens it before waiting for a response.

SOPHIE
Joe, we're out of toilet pa-

Dumont is obviously startled. He drops some of the CASH he's counting in front of an OPEN SAFE.

Sophie catches sight of STACKS of money, inside the safe and piled on the floor in front of it.

DUMONT
Did your parents not bestow upon
you some manners or common
courtesy?

SOPHIE
Sorry.

She eases the door shut but remains in front of it for a second or two, a glimmer developing in her eye.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Phil and Sophie sit at a booth, a bottle of beer each in front of them. Dim lighting, the crack of billiard balls, the murmur of chatter, the disgruntled curses from drunken mouths gathered around a TV showing a football game.

PHIL

No. Absolutely not.

SOPHIE

But this is right up your alley.

PHIL

Remember when I said "it could be worse"? Prison is worse, and there are things worse than prison.

SOPHIE

Remember when you told me to live my life?

PHIL

Yeah, I remember that. And knocking over your own boss will be the fastest way to end your life.

SOPHIE

I'm not living, Phil. I'm surviving. Barely. I'm not waiting on second chances no more, I'm making my own.

PHIL

With money that's not yours.

SOPHIE

Are you moralizing with me?

PHIL

I'm being a friend.

SOPHIE

I don't need a friend.

PHIL

Maybe you do. You got anyone that's gonna miss ya when this plan of yours goes shit-shaped?

(CONTINUED)

SOPHIE
(Hesitates)

No.

Phil senses the lie, takes a sip of beer.

SOPHIE
This is the same man that's
fucking you over.

PHIL
Trust me, it's preferable to
fucking yourself over. Ain't
nothing worse than hating
yourself. Think about it, Soph.
Please.

SOPHIE
I've thought about it all I need
to. I'm doing this, with or
without you.

PHIL
Then it'll have to be without me.

He gets up and throws down a few screwed up notes.

PHIL
Thanks for the beer.

Sophie sits alone then downs the remains of her bottle.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

Sophie sits at one of the many computer screens lined up
in a neat row.

On the screen an empty SEARCH BAR awaits...Sophie's
fingers hover in mid-air above the keys.

She types - "TEENS ROB ART GALLERY". Hits the RETURN KEY.

In the blink of an eye the search results pop up. She
clicks on a news article which shows a MUGSHOT of PHIL
alongside two other MUGSHOTS.

The news article names Phil's two teen accomplices -
FRAZER TURNER and GARETH NEWMAN.

Sophie opens a NEW TAB and goes on FACEBOOK. She then
enters their names, in turn, into the search bar.

After scrolling through a dozen other Frazer Turners and
Gareth Newmans she isolates the ones she's after easily;
Turner has used his mugshot as a 17 year-old as his
profile picture and Newman has barely changed in the
passing years, save for a beard.

(CONTINUED)

She clicks the MESSAGE button on Newman's profile page and types "I have a proposition for you..."

Sophie smiles gleefully as she continues to pound the keys.

INT/EXT. BUS (MOVING) - NIGHT

Sophie is anxious. Fidgety. Tries to hide it. She pushes a cigarette between her lips but when the BUS DRIVER'S eyes single her out from the mirror, she puts it away.

As the end of town gets shittier, the bus grows emptier.

BUS DRIVER

End of the line.

Sophie gets out of her seat and is about to step off the bus.

BUS DRIVER

Bad people out, this part of town, this time o'night, miss.

SOPHIE

It'll be a wasted journey if they aint.

She steps off the bus and the doors hiss as they close behind her. The bus pulls away and Sophie finds herself beneath a gargantuan concrete overpass.

EXT. UNDERPASS - NIGHT

A single, dim streetlight singles out two shadowed figures in the distance, leaning against a dark MUSCLE CAR. Sophie heads their way.

When she's within ten metres of the two men, NEWMAN (28), black, bearded, wearing plain dark clothing, shows his palm.

NEWMAN

Stop right there.

Sophie stops.

TURNER (28), white, square jaw, dressed in a red tracksuit and wearing a gold chain around his neck, walks towards Sophie with a limp.

SOPHIE

What's with the limp?

TURNER

I tried a cure on my webbed feet.

SOPHIE

How'd you cure webbed feet?

TURNER

Scissors.

SOPHIE

How'd that work out?

TURNER

I got a limp.

SOPHIE

That makes you the muscle.

(Nods towards Newman)

He the brains?

TURNER

We ask the questions. You Sophie?

SOPHIE

Yeah.

Newman joins them. Unlike Turner, Newman moves with a grace and ease that belies his stern features.

NEWMAN

Who sent you?

SOPHIE

I sent me.

NEWMAN

Who gave you our names?

SOPHIE

I read about you in the paper,
what you and that other guy,
Phil, did.

TURNER

That sucker.

SOPHIE

Strange, I didn't think the press
could name minors.

NEWMAN

They can't. Somebody fucked up.

TURNER

Still, nothing that a little
payback couldn't sort out.

(CONTINUED)

NEWMAN

So you want us to rob the place
where you work? Why?

SOPHIE

Because it's there.

Newman and Turner smile at each other - a show of
appreciation.

TURNER

What's in it for us?

SOPHIE

Half. The way I see it, I'm
taking a risk as the inside man -
or woman in this case - when I
let you in, and you two take a
risk when you do the job.

Newman and Turner exchange looks again, turning down the
corners of their mouths and nodding in silent agreement.

NEWMAN

It's a deal.

He offers his hand and Sophie shakes it. Without letting
go...

SOPHIE

Providing nobody gets hurt, it's
a deal.

NEWMAN

Providing that nobody includes
us, it is.

Sophie nods.

SOPHIE

Just be there at eight tomorrow
night.

The three conspirators are silent, dwarfed by the
seemingly infinite blackness of the concrete diorama
surrounding them.

SOPHIE

Don't suppose you know when the
last bus is, do ya?

INT. SOPHIE'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - MORNING

Sophie is packing. She takes a few essential garments (jeans, t-shirts, panties, socks) and shoves them into a rucksack on the bed.

She takes DIARY from her underwear drawer, flips it open, reads, "Fuck. Another day." The diary gets tossed back in and the drawer is slammed shut.

She takes a family photo out of its frame, rips off the half of her parents and slides the half of herself and Faye into her passport, which then too goes in the bag.

Sophie pulls a bundle of notes, mostly ones and fives, from a sock and packs them.

INT. SOPHIE'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - MORNING

Faye clears the table of the breakfast remains. The TV can be heard from another room. Loud. Sophie enters.

FAYE

You not hungry this morning?

SOPHIE

I'll pick up something later.

FAYE

Why you staring at me?

SOPHIE

Am I?

FAYE

You're weird.

SOPHIE

It's what big sisters are for,
Squirt. Love ya.

FAYE

Smell you later.

SOPHIE

Not if I smell you first.

Sophie opens the front door but doesn't yet leave. She hollers...

SOPHIE

Bye Mum, Dad.

After she waits for a response but none are forthcoming, she and Faye raise their eyebrows at each other - "what ya gonna do?"

Faye doesn't quite catch sight of Sophie wiping the tear from her eye as she turns, leaves, and closes the door behind her.

INT/EXT. TRAVEL AGENCY - DAY

Sophie leans forward in the cheap plastic chair. Sat across from her is the TRAVEL AGENT wearing a cheap (plastic-looking) suit and well-rehearsed smile.

TRAVEL AGENT

Ok, so that's a one-way greyhound ticket, LA to Mexico City, leaving tomorrow night.

He gives her the printed tickets and shakes her hand.

TRAVEL AGENT

Don't miss that bus. That'd be one mighty stroke of bad luck.

SOPHIE

My luck's changing.

INT. BUS STATION - DAY

Sophie strides through the zig-zagging crowds of travelers towards the rows and rows of storage lockers.

She drops a quarter into the slot, stows her bag - leaving the bus ticket poking out of the front zipper - casts her possessions one last lingering gaze, smiles, and locks them away.

The LOCKER KEY goes in the pocket of her work uniform.

INT/EXT. MUSCLE CAR (MOVING) - NIGHT

The vehicle barrels along with a deep, chesty purr.

Inside the car, Turner loads and cocks a Glock 9MM from his seat on the passenger side. He drops the gun in a bag at his feet, then loads a 44. Magnum, which he buries in his waistband.

NEWMAN

Where'd you get that?

TURNER

Fluffy Ben.

NEWMAN

Would've been cheaper just to stuff a sock down your pants.

(CONTINUED)

TURNER

You got any "Yee-hah" music?

Newman ignores his partner in crime. Instead he pulls the wheel to the left, steering the car into the wrong lane, and steps on the gas.

He hits the DOG he was aiming for and the vehicle bumps up and down.

Newman returns to the correct lane and drops back down to cruising speed.

He flips down the visor, attached to which is a list and a corresponding score card - SKUNKS 3, RACCOONS 7, CATS 5, DOGS 8, BEARS 1, MOUNTAIN LIONS 0, PEOPLE 1.

He takes a pencil held in place by elastic to the visor and changes the "8" that comes after "DOGS" to a "9".

The visor gets flipped back up with a flick of Newman's wrist.

TURNER

How about some "fuck you" music?

EXT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

The clock is ticking...oh...so...slowly.

Sophie stares at the large, round, analogue clock (encased behind metal bars) above the coolers. The time is 7:56.

She checks her watch. Time doesn't pass any quicker on her wrist.

Dumont is checking off items on a clipboard. After counting boxes of cornflakes he tries writing on his form but the pen is apparently out of ink.

DUMONT

Damn it.

He searches his pockets but comes up empty.

DUMONT

I'll be at the rear of the premises, if in case you require my assistance, Sophie.

Sophie, eyes still fixed firmly on the clock, nods stiffly.

A CUSTOMER enters, pays for her goods, accepts her change and exits, without Sophie ever once looking at the woman. Only the top of a head becomes a nuisance in her peripheral vision.

(CONTINUED)

The door chiming signals the Customer's exit.

7:57...

The door chimes again...

Still Sophie's attention remains on the clock. As before, the top of a head bobs in and out of her line of sight.

POLICE OFFICER (O.C.)
Miss? Miss?

Sophie lowers her gaze - and comes face to face with a UNIFORMED COP. He stands at the counter, a pack of pink-glazed donuts under his nose.

A SECOND OFFICER, his partner, joins him and dumps a second packet of donuts beside the first. These ones are brown.

SECOND OFFICER
I like the chocolate ones.

Sophie can only stare in silence with wide eyes, the whites like twin moons.

FIRST OFFICER
Hold on one goddamn minute.
(Pause)
You can't have donuts without coffee. Am I right?

7:58...

FIRST OFFICER
Dougie, go get us a couple of decafs, will ya?

SECOND OFFICER
Decaf? That serves as much purpose as sugar on a suppository.

The TWO COPS head to the rear of the store to debate the virtues of decaf and non-decaf coffee.

Sophie watches the door to the back area - sees Dumont through the small square window at the far end of the short hallway, testing pens.

She watches the clock...

...7:59..

...The Cops...

...The front entrance...and sees Phil pushing open the door and buttoning up the collar on his work shirt.

SOPHIE
Phil? But this is your night off?

PHIL
Turns out I was needed.

SOPHIE
But...

The bell above the door chimes.

Newman and Turner, both wearing ski masks, storm into the building just as Dumont emerges from the back with a working pen in hand.

TURNER
Listen up, Cunts. This is a robbery.

Dumont drops the pen.

The First Officer draws his sidearm and aims at Newman.

FIRST OFFICER
Drop it like it's on fire.

The Second Officer, weapon also drawn, moves slowly down the isle towards the activity.

Turner grabs Dumont and uses him as a human shield and the two Cops back off slightly.

PHIL
Don't.

Turner and Newman turn to their former partner, almost as if startled.

NEWMAN
Phil?

TURNER
What the fuck?

PHIL
Just walk away. You know how this ends, boys.

TURNER
What the fuck is he doing here?

SECOND OFFICER
Drop the fucking gun, NOW.

TURNER
You first, Wyatt Earp.

Newman points his gun at Sophie.

(CONTINUED)

NEWMAN

You, you're coming with us.

As the two Cops inch closer to the thieves, Phil, and Dumont, Sophie steps out from behind the counter. Newman shoves her towards the door to the back area.

NEWMAN

Open it.

After she gets the door open Newman pushes her inside and Turner, still using Dumont as a shield, takes up the rear.

The First and Second Officer race towards the door but they are too slow and Turner slams it shut and locks it.

While the Second Officer slams his fists uselessly against the door in frustration the First Officer gets on his radio.

FIRST OFFICER

Officer Prior reporting a 10-64
in progress at the Kwik Gas on
Wilson and Hastings, requesting
all units.

Phil can only watch the proceedings with a mixture of regret, betrayal, and lost hope.

The Two Officers don't even register his presence as they barge past and charge out the front door.

INT. GAS STATION, BACK AREA - NIGHT

It's a tight fit but Newman, Turner, Dumont, and Sophie move swiftly down the narrow hall and into Dumont's office.

INT. GAS STATION, MANAGER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Turner kicks the door open and pushes Dumont ahead of him into the room, where he falls over his desk, knocking the photo of his wife and daughter, and cuts his head.

Newman and Sophie follow.

Newman kicks away stacks of folders and innocuous office paraphernalia to reveal the hidden safe.

NEWMAN

(To Sophie)

Right where you said it would
be.

(CONTINUED)

Dumont turns to Sophie, a genuine wounded look on his face. Sophie caves under his gaze and opts to take in the sight of her own feet.

NEWMAN

(Gun to Dumont's head)
Open it.

DUMONT

No.

NEWMAN

I'm asking nicely.

DUMONT

I wouldn't want to see you ask un-nicely.

NEWMAN

You a husband? A father? Husbands go home. Heroes don't.

DUMONT

I'm just doing my job, not that you'd know what that feels like.

NEWMAN

Is taking a bullet in your job description?

SOPHIE

Just open the safe, Joe.

Phil regards Sophie with a cold, hard glare.

NEWMAN

You can either keep the cash inside the safe, or your brains inside your skull. Can't have both.

After a moment's hesitation Dumont gets to his knees and works the combination lock.

Sirens.

Newman and Turner each drop a large black sports bag at Dumont's feet.

NEWMAN

Fill 'em. If you go any slower than top speed I got ways of making you go faster. And the loud bang aint the scariest part.

Dumont starts filling the bags with money.

NEWMAN
(To Sophie)
Anything like what you imagined?

Sophie stays silent.

TURNER
Be fun to have a real life girl
on the team.

DUMONT
She'll only stab you in the back.

He dumps the last bundle of cash in the bags.

DUMONT
Done. Now please leave.

TURNER
How much is in there?

DUMONT
About nineteen, twenty thousand
dollars.

NEWMAN
The security tapes too.

Disappointment and defeat evident in his expression, Dumont ejects three tapes from the security monitors and dumps them along with the cash.

Turner picks up one of the bags and Newman wraps his fingers around the strap of the second bag.

SOPHIE
Mine.

Newman thinks it over. He kicks the bag towards Sophie's feet and she picks it up.

Newman grabs Dumont by the back of the collar, holds him at arms length and effectively uses him to clear the path ahead.

INT. GAS STATION, BACK AREA - NIGHT

With Dumont and Newman up front, Sophie behind, and Turner taking up the rear, robbers and robbed alike head for the front of the store.

INT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

As the four of them step out into the store amid flashing red and blues Dumont turns on his heels and rips the ski mask from Newman's face.

Taken by surprise, Newman can only stare for a second before going on the offensive and laying into Dumont with kicks and punches.

Sophie tries to put herself between Newman and Dumont.

SOPHIE
Leave him alone.

BANG.

Smoke drifts from the muzzle of Newman's Glock.

Everyone freezes, falls silent.

Sophie looks down at herself and is surprised to see a single trail of blood leaking from a hole in her chest.

SOPHIE
Fucking water pistol.

She drops to her knees.

Newman takes aim at her head and fires. A bullet digs a trench along the side of her head and blood sprays the window, painting the "JUST DON'T BE A DICK" sign red.

Dumont is frozen, looking down at Sophie, crumpled on the floor.

Newman grabs the bag of cash from over her shoulder and attempts to untangle the strap from her body.

TURNER
We gotta go. Now!

Newman and Turner aim their guns at the glass and the cops on the other side.

BANGBANGBANGBANGBANGBANGBANG

Glass shatters.

The First and Second Officers run and duck for cover behind their black and white, and Newman and Turner make a break for it.

To the sound of gunshots, sirens, angry shouts, and squealing tires, Phil steps over broken glass to take in the sight of Sophie lying in a pool of blood on the floor.

Dumont regards Sophie...and the bag of cash.

INT. AMBULANCE (MOVING) - NIGHT

Sophie is lifeless. Her body rocks and sways with the motion of the ambulance.

A plastic oxygen mask covers her mouth and nose and an EMT rips open her bloodied shirt.

INT. HOSPITAL, OPERATING THEATER - NIGHT

Sophie is wheeled in on a gurney and the SURGEON and her team of DOCTORS immediately begin working on her.

HARD CUT:

INT. HOSPITAL, SOPHIE'S ROOM - DAY

Sophie opens her eyes. She is clean, fresh, and calm. She sits up in bed and takes in her surroundings before planting her bare feet on the floor.

She pads to the door.

SOPHIE
Hello?...Hello?...Hello?

GOD
(Off)
Hello.

Startled, Sophie turns back to the room.

Sitting in a chair by the window is a withered OLD WOMAN (77) with skin like leather and curlers in her hair. She flicks ash from a cigarette and takes a long drag.

SOPHIE
Who are you?

GOD
I'm God.

SOPHIE
Right.

Sophie is about to leave the room...

GOD
And you're in purgatory.

Sophie goes to address the woman but falters when she sees herself, still lying lifeless in the hospital bed, wired to a series of life-support machines.

(CONTINUED)

GOD

Bit of a mind-fuck, aint it? A coma. Death tried havin' his way with ya. He got the next best thing.

SOPHIE

You're God?

GOD

You were expecting someone else? You try looking this good when you're as old as time itself.

God takes in another lungful of smoke and flashes a mouthful of yellow teeth.

GOD

C'mon, I'll show ya.

INT. HOSPITAL, HALLWAY - DAY

God leads, Sophie follows while the sick, the wounded, Doctors, and Nurses appear oblivious to their presence.

GOD

I see everything. Well, almost everything. I can't help someone find their car keys and cure cancer at the same time.

Sophie watches in disbelief as a MAN rises up out of his own body and drifts upwards, riding a shaft of light into a growing, golden maw.

GOD

One of the good ones.

In a room opposite a WOMAN is dragged screaming into a fiery pit by a thousand scorched claws.

GOD

One of the not so good ones.

SOPHIE

Oh God.

GOD

You called?

SOPHIE

Where am I going? Up...or down?

GOD

Don't be one of those.

(CONTINUED)

SOPHIE

One of what?

GOD

One of those assholes who acts like a fuckhead their whole life only to "repent" at the last second and try to pull a fast one. I hate that. But I saw what you did.

SOPHIE

What did I do?

GOD

You saved your boss.

SOPHIE

But -

GOD

Actions speak louder than words. What happens next all depends on you.

EXT. HOSPITAL ROOF - DAY

While a small gathering of hospital staff are huddled in a corner enjoying their smoke break, God invites Sophie to look out across the vast city.

GOD

Look at 'em all. Nearly eight billion people in this world and I gotta take responsibility for every single one of 'em. Natural disasters, famine, disease, tragedies - these aint easy things to manage.

SOPHIE

You can stop those things?

GOD

Prevent them? Who d'ya think causes 'em?

Sophie starts to laugh.

GOD

That's funny to you?

SOPHIE

I just realized, I'm hallucinating. That's all this is. I'm fucked up on morphine and

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SOPHIE (cont'd)
you're a figment of my
imagination.

God burns the back of Sophie's hand with her cigarette.
Sophie yelps and snatches her hand away.

GOD
Convinced yet?
(Pause)
As I was saying, tough jobs
require tough choices...and
occasionally extra staff.
Congratulations, you're hired.

SOPHIE
What does that mean?

GOD
You're now an angel. A guardian
angel if you wanna get specific.

SOPHIE
Angels don't exist.

GOD
Look down.

Sophie does as she's told and finds herself several feet
above the roof.

SOPHIE
Shit. I can fly?

GOD
More like float. Well, just kind
of hover actually. It's more for
effect than anything else.

SOPHIE
You said what happens next
depends on me?

God pulls a scroll from nowhere, unravels the thing, and
reads from it, bored.

GOD
Your life as a mortal hangs in
the balance. So I might as well
make use of what's left of ya for
now. A Guardian's job is to
protect a mortal. Succeed before
your body dies and you'll return
to it. But the body can only
exist for so long without the
spirit. The longer you are
separated from your body, the

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GOD (cont'd)
stronger your abilities get, the
closer to the spirit world you
become.

SOPHIE
And if I fail?

GOD
Your body will die and you'll
remain a spirit. Your actions as
a Guardian will determine whether
you join me in Heaven or spend an
eternity burning in the fires of
damnation.

Done reading, God tosses the scroll over her shoulder.

GOD
It's as bad as it sounds.

SOPHIE
No, no, I can't. I can't. There's
somewhere I have to be.

GOD
I know all about that. I'm God,
remember?

SOPHIE
So what does a Guardian do?

GOD
Give advice.

SOPHIE
That's it? That's shit.

GOD
There's a few perks. You're also
invincible.

SOPHIE
What good is that when I'm
already dead?

GOD
Not dead, purgatory.

SOPHIE
Whatever, I'm still a fucking
ghost.

GOD
(Laughing)
You think ghosts exist, that's
hilarious.

SOPHIE

So I just wander around,
invisible, dispensing words of
wisdom like a fucking magic 8
ball?

GOD

That's always been your problem,
you never could appreciate the
value of such things, not in life
or the afterlife. You refuse to
see the signs. Besides, you're
not strictly invisible - you
choose who you reveal yourself
to.

SOPHIE

Do I get a costume? Wings? A
halo?

GOD

Now you're just being ridiculous.
Anyway, I gotta go. I got two
rival football teams, both
praying real hard the other team
loses. I got a decision to make.

God starts walking away.

GOD

Good luck. Whatever you do, don't
come into contact with your
physical self otherwise you will
unravel space and time and the
whole universe will implode.

SOPHIE

Really?

GOD

Nah, I'm just fucking with ya.

God drifts pass the huddling DOCTORS, NURSES, and PORTERS.
She taps three of them on the shoulder but they each show
no reaction.

GOD

Lung cancer...throat
cancer...lung cancer.
(To Sophie)
When will they learn?

SOPHIE

Wait, who am I supposed to be a
Guardian to?

INT. JOE DUMONT'S CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Dumont is cultivating a 5'o'clock shadow and his collar and tie are in disarray. His eyes are two dark circles. He drives with one hand, talks on the phone with another.

DUMONT

No, I haven't forgotten the hearing is today, what do you take me for? She thinks she can turn my own daughter against me? No. I'll be there...on time...early. Two hours. Ok. See you this afternoon. Bye.

SOPHIE

Hi.

She's in the backseat, seen in the mirror.

DUMONT

JESUS!

Dumont momentarily loses control of the car and it swerves across several lanes of traffic before he tames the vehicle.

SOPHIE

You really shouldn't use your cell and drive at the same time. Someone could get hurt.

DUMONT

What are you doing in my car?

SOPHIE

I'm not exactly.

DUMONT

I thought you were dead.

SOPHIE

That's not exactly accurate either.

DUMONT

Give me one good reason why I shouldn't drive directly to the police with you right now.

SOPHIE

I'll give you two - there's not much the police can do if they can't see me, and and even if they could, who would that leave to protect you?

(CONTINUED)

DUMONT

Protect me? That's a good one.
Last night you almost got me
killed.

SOPHIE

Well it seems I'm here to atone.
I'm your Guardian Angel.

EXT. LOCK-UP GARAGE - DAY

Turner and Newman stash the BAG OF CASH in a lock-up
before driving away in the MUSCLE CAR.

EXT. L.A RIVER- DAY

Newman's MUSCLE CAR rolls up to the water's edge. Newman
pockets his HIT LIST of assorted wildlife then he and
Turner douse the car in gasoline.

Newman ignites his lighter then throws it down onto the
wet trail of gas. A flame races towards the car and Turner
and Newman watch the vehicle burn.

TURNER

Damn, man. I love that car.

NEWMAN

You never loved nothing your
whole rotten life.

TURNER

I love me. That count?

NEWMAN

He saw my face.

TURNER

I loved my mother.

NEWMAN

Until you beat her.

TURNER

I beat her 'cause I loved her.

NEWMAN

He saw my fucking face.

TURNER

Phil?

NEWMAN

Fuck Phil. I don't wanna talk
about Phil.

(CONTINUED)

TURNER

But we both saw -

NEWMAN

I said I don't wanna talk about Phil. I wanna talk about the needledick who's the last one left alive that can ID me. We're going back.

TURNER

Back where?

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

The whole place is bordered with POLICE TAPE and CRIME SCENE tape.

A TV NEWS crew is positioned on the sidewalk across the street, the ANCHORWOMAN practices her smile, flashing her too-white teeth.

INT/EXT. JOE DUMONT'S CAR - DAY

Dumont's CAR pulls into the curb across the street from the KwikGas.

DUMONT

So kind of like 'It's a Wonderful Life'?

SOPHIE

Kinda. Only without all the nice bits or any of the sentimentality.

DUMONT

Bullshit.

SOPHIE

You need convincing?

DUMONT

I need to call the police.

SOPHIE

I'll do you one better, I'll put you in touch with God.

DUMONT

He available toll-free?

SOPHIE

He's a she.

(CONTINUED)

DUMONT

Right. And from whom do I need protecting?

SOPHIE

Look, I don't wanna be here anymore than you want me here. But we're stuck with each other until I can get back to my body.
(Looking around)
What are we doing here?

They both climb from the car, cross the street, and head for the gas station.

INT/EXT. STOLEN CAR - DAY

With Newman at the wheel and Turner riding shotgun, the criminal duo pull to the curb directly behind Dumont's car.

NEWMAN

We're doing what anyone would least expect us to do.

TURNER

Returning to the scene of the crime?

NEWMAN

And diverting suspicion. When I was a kid I set fire to the park. First thing I did after - ran home, changed into my pajamas, returned to the park and asked everyone there "what happened?" They never suspected a thing.

Newman slides his HIT LIST of wild and domestic animals under the sun visor.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Sophie and Dumont walk and talk.

DUMONT

I spent all of last night down at the police station giving, then re-giving, the same statement.

SOPHIE

What'd you say about me?

(CONTINUED)

DUMONT

The truth.

(Pause)

I've got a couple of things I
need to pick up.

INT. STOLEN CAR - DAY

Two pairs of steely eyes peer out through the window,
surveying their surroundings.

TURNER

Holy shit. Is that him? Is that
the guy?

Newman follows Turner's line of sight until he spots
Dumont, seemingly talking to himself.

Turner and Newman ready their respective handguns.

INT. GAS STATION - DAY

Dumont lifts the police tape over his head. Sophie is
about to do the same but is surprised when she simply
passes through the tape.

They walk across the shattered glass and enter the
building.

Sophie regards the dried blood on the floor while Dumont
heads into his back office.

She takes a look around, taking in the damage and
destruction, her gaze settling on the view outside the
busted window. Something she sees grabs her attention.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Sophie's Mother and Father - in church-going attire, but
the garments are outdated and ill-fitting - walk briskly,
tight fingers wrapped around Faye's wrist.

One of the NEWS CREWS directs them in front of the camera.

Mother makes a point of holding Faye's hand and brushing
the girls hair from her face. Faye brushes her hair back
the way it was.

ANCHORWOMAN

As we discussed.

CAMERAMAN

Ready in three, two -

(CONTINUED)

The cameraman extends a finger and the Anchorwoman takes this as her cue to talk into the lens before shoving the microphone under Sophie's Mother's chin.

ANCHORWOMAN

Last night's robbery at this gas station has left one young woman in a drug-induced coma, fighting for her life. We're here today with that young woman's family.

(To Sophie's Mother)

Mrs Shepherd, how are you feeling?

MOTHER

We're devastated. She's the light of our lives - her and Faye, here.

Faye suddenly finds her Mother's unwelcome arm around her shoulder, pulling her tight against her side. Faye does what she can to resist. Her Mother kisses the top of her head and looks to the camera.

MOTHER

An' I tell ya, a lot of people have got a lot to answer for - the pi-police officers, the gas station company people, even you people - someone's gonna pay, and I mean pay big time.

ANCHORWOMAN

But what can you tell us about your daughter as a person? What kind of young woman is she?

INT. GAS STATION - DAY

Sophie is stirred from her vigil by Dumont's feet crunching over the broken glass.

She turns, finds him zipping up a bag, two sides of the bag meeting and hiding the photo of DUMONT'S FAMILY from view.

He steps up beside her and pokes her with a finger, curious.

DUMONT

So how does it work? Are you somewhere between "Casper the-not-so-friendly Ghost", and "I'm having a nightmare about Jeannie"?

(CONTINUED)

SOPHIE

I'm kinda figuring that out as I go along.

DUMONT

Do you need to sleep? Do you get hungry? Thirsty?

SOPHIE

I don't know, but if I get even the slightest hint of a period cramp I'm going to work for the other guy.

Dumont looks outside.

DUMONT

Who are they?

SOPHIE

Some people I know.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

The Anchorwoman is wrapping up...

ANCHORWOMAN

This is Karen Simpson, KWZZ News.

Her smile vanishes and the SMALL CREW immediately set about returning themselves and their gear to their van.

Sophie's Mother and Father light up smokes.

Faye is forced to tug on her Mother's faded Sunday dress to get her attention.

FAYE

Can I go see Sophie now?

MOTHER

You know your way to the bus stop.

INT. GAS STATION - DAY

Sophie takes a step forward, eyes on Faye, full of longing. But then she sees Turner.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Turner sidles up to Sophie's family.

TURNER

Hey, any you guys know what happened here last night?

INT. GAS STATION - DAY

Sophie stops dead in her tracks.

SOPHIE

Oh shit.

DUMONT

What?

SOPHIE

That's the other robber. The one you didn't see.

DUMONT

Are you sure?

SOPHIE

I hired him, didn't I?

DUMONT

What's he doing back here?

SOPHIE

Why don't you stroll up and ask him?

DUMONT

Is that your official recommendation as my appointed Guardian Angel?

SOPHIE

C'mon, let's get you out of here.

They head for the back.

EXT. GAS STATION, BACK LOT - DAY

Sophie and Dumont swing open the back door and step out into the harsh daylight and head for Dumont's car...until they simultaneously spot Newman, sat waiting in the car parked behind Dumont's own.

Sophie leads Dumont in the opposite direction, away from his car.

(CONTINUED)

DUMONT
Any more sage advice?

SOPHIE
We need a car.

Sophie guides Dumont to the nearest hunk of junk parked in the street. She makes a fist and swings at the window - her hand passes through the glass as if it were mist.

SOPHIE
Damn. You're gonna have to do it.

DUMONT
You want me to steal a car?

SOPHIE
You'd prefer to die?

DUMONT
Since when are they my only options? Wait, I know. Since you got me involved with whatever it is you're involved in.

SOPHIE
Tick tock, Joe.

DUMONT
Is this going to hurt?

SOPHIE
No.

DUMONT
You're positive?

SOPHIE
Insight is one of my special powers. I see the future.

Dumont punches with all his might. The glass doesn't break but the bones in his hand come close.

SOPHIE
I made that up.

DUMONT
I think I'm going to cry.

SOPHIE
Use your shoe.

Dumont slides one shoe off, picks it up with his good hand and slaps the heel of it against the car window. The glass breaks on the third strike.

INT/EXT. STOLEN CAR - DAY

Newman, in hunt-mode, takes a look around in search of prey. The sound of breaking glass draws his attention and he sees Dumont climbing into a rust-bucket on wheels.

He whistles.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Turner, in mid-conversation with Sophie's parents, hears Newman's whistle.

TURNER

S'cuse me.

As he's about to turn away Faye's almost-knowing squint ensnares him for a just a moment. He then runs over to join Newman.

INT/EXT. STOLEN CAR - DAY

Newman fires the engine as Turner jumps in the vehicle.

INT/EXT. HUNK OF JUNK - DAY

Dumont is attempting to hot-wire the car.

DUMONT

How can you possibly be sure I'm doing this right?

SOPHIE

My Dad taught me. The only worthwhile thing he ever did.

The engine coughs to life. The tailpipe spits clouds of black and grey exhaust.

INT/EXT. STOLEN CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Newman makes the tires spin on asphalt before they find traction and send the car shooting off towards their intended target.

The car fishtails a little across the back of the gas station lot as it heads for the street opposite.

INT/EXT. HUNK OF JUNK (MOVING) - DAY

Dumont fights to control The Piece of Shit as he weaves through traffic, trying to put distance between themselves and their pursuers.

CAR CHASE

And so it goes; Newman and Turner chase Sophie and Dumont through the streets of Los Angeles, Newman and Turner in their stolen car, Dumont and Sofie in theirs.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

Sophie suddenly finds herself on the sidewalk, watching, as others do, the two cars race by.

She looks around, down at herself. Perplexed.

GOD

Yeah, you can spiritually migrate. Or teleport, if you prefer. But your powers are still weak, you need to be able to see your intended destination.

God smokes, chews on a hot dog. Sophie sees the two speeding cars past God's shoulder.

GOD

They're getting away.

SOPHIE

...How...?

GOD

Think, focus, do.

INT. STOLEN CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Sophie sits in the back seat, looking ahead at the backs of Newman's and Turner's heads. She sights the HAND CANNON in Turner's hand.

SOPHIE

Shit.

She focuses on the car up ahead, seen through the windshield.

Turner looks around, sees the backseat is empty.

(CONTINUED)

TURNER
You hear something?

INT. HUNK OF JUNK (MOVING) - DAY

Dumont starts when Sophie materializes on his lap.

SOPHIE
Urgh.

DUMONT
Urgh.

Sophie disappears before reappearing on the hood of the car. She screams.

DUMONT
I can't see.

Sophie lands in the passenger seat with a slight bump, as if waking from a dream of falling.

SOPHIE
They've got a gun.

DUMONT
Maybe they're just water pistols.

Sophie dismisses his quip with a humorless smile.

DUMONT
Of all the cars you could have stolen.

SOPHIE
Next time you and my disembodied spirit are being chased by two unhinged thieves-for-hire I'll remember to steal a more high performance vehicle.

DUMONT
The Flintstone's car is more high-powered than this.

Sophie looks out the back window. Sure enough, their pursuers are gaining on them.

SOPHIE
Hang on.

Dumont swings the car around a tight corner and is stunned to see Sophie now standing on the sidewalk. She appears to push the button for the crosswalk.

EXT. CROSSWALK - DAY

Newman and Turner make a speedy approach.

Sophie attempts to push the button to cross but her finger is not solid - it passes through.

She focuses and makes another try. Still no good.

Sophie sees the approaching car...watches the smoking junk heap Dumont drives zig and zag in the distance...and focuses once again on her own finger - it makes physical contact.

The button goes down with a satisfying click, the lights turn red, and Newman doesn't slow one iota. The car races by.

Sophie nods.

EXT. FURTHER DOWN THE ROAD - DAY

Sophie pushes a hot dog cart out into the road and in front of Newman and Turner's car - they swerve around it.

EXT. FURTHER DOWN THE ROAD...SOME MORE - DAY

An OLD MAN gets down on his haunches to clean up after his dog. Before he gets a chance to bag the muck...

INT. STOLEN CAR (MOVING) - DAY

...It lands with a SPLAT on the windshield.

NEWMAN

Shit.

He slams the brakes and the car skids to stop. He and Turner step out of the car to watch Dumont's stolen, Tetanus on wheels disappear down the road.

Newman then turns with piercing eyes to the Old Man stood clutching a dog's leash and an empty poop bag.

INT. HUNK OF JUNK (MOVING) - DAY

Sophie and Dumont each breathe a sigh of relief and keep on driving, a little steadier now.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Faye sits by Sophie's bedside. Sophie's body is wired up to a bunch of life support machines that quietly bleep. A ventilator does her breathing for her.

A NURSE enters and replaces the DRIP that feeds into the I.V line going into Sophie's vein.

FAYE
What's that?

NURSE
This is what's keeping her asleep, Honey. It's so she can get better.

The Nurse leaves.

Faye playfully, hopefully, touches the end of Sophie's nose with her fingertip.

Phil watches the scene through a window from the hallway.

EXT. DUMONT RESIDENCE - DAY

The Hunk of Junk hisses, spits, and creaks to a stop in front of a row of uniform bungalows.

Dumont and Sophie exit the car, Sophie noting the ease with which she is able to pull on the door handle, and not without a slight hint of concern.

Dumont limps toward the house wearing only one shoe.

SOPHIE
So this is where you live, huh?

DUMONT
Are powers of perception now among your repertoire?

He unlocks the front door and they go inside.

INT. DUMONT RESIDENCE - DAY

While Dumont dumps his bag and heads straight for the bathroom Sophie meanders around the house, snooping.

The signature water splashes of a running shower.

The place is sparsely furnished. Just the basics. A sofa (threadbare and stained), a TV (old), a small breakfast table (no dining table), a single chair.

The bedroom contains just a bed and a wardrobe.

(CONTINUED)

A smaller bedroom however, comes with everything a little girl's heart is likely to desire. A small bed, adorned with soft toys, a princess castle, a chest of drawers and mirror, posters of cartoon characters and animals. Everything looks brand new.

She goes to Dumont's bag, left outside the bathroom door. She takes out the framed picture of Joe, his wife, and daughter.

Sophie places the picture on the otherwise empty mantle.

Dumont emerges from the bathroom, freshly shaved, drying his hair with a towel. He sees Sophie with the picture and stiffens.

SOPHIE

You must love your daughter very much.

DUMONT

...Of course. She's my daughter.

SOPHIE

If only that's all it takes.

DUMONT

What?

SOPHIE

Never mind.

Dumont takes his bag and heads for his...

INT. DUMONT RESIDENCE, BEDROOM - DAY

With the door firmly closed, Dumont places the bag on the bed and empties it of the BUNDLES OF CASH stowed inside. He sets about shoving them under the mattress.

SOPHIE (O.S.)

I was thinking, you need to lie low. Have you got a place you can hide out.

DUMONT

Joseph Oscar Dumont does not hide.

The vast wad of money now hidden, Dumont opens the door. Sophie stands in the doorway. She watches him take a shirt and tie from the wardrobe before struggling with both with his bruised and swollen hand.

Sophie buttons his shirt and ties his tie for him.

(CONTINUED)

SOPHIE

You should also get yourself a gun.

DUMONT

Are you insane?

SOPHIE

You have one already?

DUMONT

I'm not stockpiling for World War Three. I'm going to the courthouse for a custody hearing. Because if I don't get to spend time with my little girl, living or dying makes little difference to me anyway. You were sent to protect me, so protect me.

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Newman takes the STOLEN CAR slowly through the quiet streets.

INT/EXT. STOLEN CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Turner and Newman look up and down every alley and side street, searching.

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

TWO KIDS pass a MODEL AIRPLANE back and forth. It sails over the SHORTER KID'S head and out of his reach and lands in the road.

Newman swerves to hit it. The model plane snaps and crunches beneath the wheels.

INT/EXT. STOLEN CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Newman stops the car and backs up until he and Turner can see down the length of the previous street they just passed.

Newman directs Turner's focus with a nod.

Parked by the curb, in front of a small, neat house, is the Hunk of Junk. Newman smiles - not easy on the eyes.

NEWMAN

Nothing like the good ol' fashioned scent of prey, is there?

He takes the car down the street and towards the Hunk of Junk.

INT. DUMONT RESIDENCE - DAY

Dumont does a full 360 twirl for Sophie, arms out at his sides.

DUMONT
How do I look?

SOPHIE
Like somebody's dad.

DUMONT
I can't work out if that's supposed to be an insult or a compliment.

SOPHIE
Ya know what? Me neither. Let's go.

They head for the front door.

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Newman and Turner draw their weapons as they approach the front door to the bungalow, the Hunk of Junk at their backs.

They exchange quick glances and curt nods. Turner readies himself to kick the door in.

INT. DUMONT RESIDENCE - DAY

Dumont opens the door and steps outside into the sun. Sophie is at his heels.

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Turner kicks the door open.

A barking, snarling German Shepherd greets the intruders. The Dog latches its jaws onto Turner's ankle and drags him around the front yard.

EXT. DUMONT RESIDENCE - DAY

The sound of a Dog attacking an Asshole draws Dumont's attention to the front yard of house a few doors down. The bungalow with the Hunk of Junk parked out front.

SOPHIE

Told ya it was a good idea to
park out front of your
neighbor's.

DUMONT

Good boy, Rexy.

They hurry along on foot in the opposite direction.

EXT. FRONT YARD - DAY

Turner screams bloody murder, his pants leg red.

Newman takes aim at Rexy's head with his Glock but the Dog releases Turner's calf only to snap down on Newman's wrist.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

Dumont paces while Sophie sits. A few other Passengers-to-be wait for the bus.

DUMONT

What do you need to sit for?

The other PEOPLE at the bust stop slide further away from Dumont, who appears to be talking to himself.

SOPHIE

You wanna swap?

Dumont keeps on pacing up and down like a sentry.

DUMONT

Why?

SOPHIE

'Cause you're making my fucking
teeth itch.

DUMONT

No. Why steal from me?

SOPHIE

Oh, that.

(CONTINUED)

DUMONT

Yeah, "that".

SOPHIE

...I was making the best of a shitty situation. The universe saw fit to put you up there, and me way down here. So think of it as "balancing things out".

DUMONT

Spare me the sob story.

SOPHIE

Why should I? You're a supporting character.

Dumont looks at her sharply.

DUMONT

Me?

SOPHIE

I grew up with the smell of shit. I was born smelling shit and it's followed me around ever since. Then I went to work for you. Picking up shit, wiping up shit, dealing with shit.

DUMONT

Are you asking for my sympathy?

SOPHIE

I'm asking you to understand.

DUMONT

I'm a good - no, a great manager.

SOPHIE

But you're a crappy boss, Joe. And you can't see the difference.

DUMONT

Have you ever thought that maybe the smell of shit that followed you everywhere was you?

SOPHIE

Fuck you.

DUMONT

Fuck me? Fuck you.

SOPHIE

Where's your wife and Kid? Huh? Mister family man.

(CONTINUED)

DUMONT

You don't know a thing about it.

SOPHIE

But I can make a pretty good goddamn guess. You work all hours, never home, thinking all it takes to be a Dad is to bring home a half decent paycheck?

Dumont's silence speaks volumes.

SOPHIE

Until one day you come home and all that's there to greet you is a microwave dinner and a note.

(Pause)

You saw more of me than you did your own daughter. And that's fucking tragic. For all concerned.

Dumont finally sits down, prompting everyone else at the bus stop to scoot further away.

SOPHIE

Food and a home are great, Joe. But they're nothing next to feeling like our Dad's love us.

DUMONT

Please stop talking. Please.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Newman, his wrist bandaged, is wheeled onto the ward on a hospital bed. The Orderlies park him beside Turner, who sits in a bed of his own with his leg bandaged. A pair of CRUTCHES lean against the wall.

The two men acknowledge each other silently beneath heavy lids.

The Orderlies leave the two men and turn on the TV as they exit. The scene on the screen is of the KwikGas gas station. The Anchorwoman interviews Sophie's mother.

MOTHER (OVER TV)

An' I tell ya, a lot of people have got a lot to answer for - the pi-police officers, the gas station company people, even you people - someone's gonna pay, and I mean pay big time.

(CONTINUED)

ANCHORWOMAN (OVER TV)

But what can you tell us about your daughter as a person? What kind of young woman is she?

MOTHER (OVER TV)

She's an angel. She never did anything wrong, never hurt anybody. What the police are saying about her having anything to do with this business is slanderous. We're gonna sue 'em for everything they're worth. Mark my words.

Sophie's Father whispers in his wife's ear.

MOTHER (OVER TV)

Oh yeah, and we love our little Sophie very much and we're going immediately to the hospital. We're praying she'll pull through...

Turner and Newman exchange "holy shit" looks before returning their attention back to the TV.

ANCHORWOMAN (OVER TV)

A police search is currently underway for the two men behind the robbery and the estimated twenty thousand dollars in cash that they escaped with. This is Karen Simpson, KWZZ News.

TURNER

The cops never recovered the other half of the money?

NEWMAN

And the bitch is alive. And she's here.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

Dumont and Sophie sit next to each other. There's bad air between them. Dumont shuffles away an inch. Sophie makes a point of doing the same.

DUMONT

Don't suppose you can fly us to the county courthouse? Or do your
(mimics Jeannie crossing arms and nodding)
thing?

(CONTINUED)

SOPHIE

Don't think I'm at that standard yet. Nor do I wanna be. I intend to get back to my body and live.

DUMONT

Typical.

Two buses appear in the distance.

Dumont and Sophie stand to take their places in line. A hand falls on Sophie's shoulder.

SOPHIE

(Turning)

Fuck o - Phil?

She and Dumont find themselves facing Phil.

SOPHIE

What are you doing here?

PHIL

Same as you.

SOPHIE

You can see me?

(Thinking. Realizing)

Holy fucking shit.

PHIL

I never said I survived my robbery.

SOPHIE

And you were my Guardian Angel? Good job.

PHIL

My job was to help steer your choices, but to see that you still made your own...and live with the consequences. Or die with them.

SOPHIE

I could kill you if you weren't already dead.

PHIL

We don't have time to argue. You're in danger, Sophie.

The bus pulls to the stop with a *hiss*. The doors open and the people in line begin boarding.

(CONTINUED)

PHIL

The guys you hired, Turner and Newman, they're bad people.

SOPHIE

Well I didn't hire them for their social skills.

PHIL

And you didn't hire them to kill you either.

SOPHIE

What?

PHIL

Which is what they plan on doing. I failed to save you, but there's still time for you to save yourself, Sophie

DUMONT

I thought she is supposed to be saving me?

PHIL

You need to go now, both of you.

DUMONT

I can't.

PHIL

Sophie can only do so much. But you, you're flesh and blood.

SOPHIE

Joe, please.

DUMONT

It's like he said, you make your own choices. You made yours, let me make mine.

Dumont steps on the bus and the doors close behind him. Sophie watches the vehicle pull away.

INT. BUS (MOVING) - DAY

Dumont takes his seat but he does not appear relieved.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

SOPHIE
Can't you help me?

PHIL
I did all I can do, Sophie.
Remember, choices. Choose right.

Phil fades away.

SOPHIE
Fucking Angels.

Sophie levitates and begins drifting off in the opposite direction from the bus.

INT. HOSPITAL, RECEPTION - DAY

Newman approaches the over-worked RECEPTIONIST.

NEWMAN
Good afternoon. I'm hoping you
might be able to assist me. I've
come to visit a very dear friend
of mine.

The Receptionist looks him over, taking in his bandaged arm and hospital gown.

RECEPTIONIST
Hun, it's usually the sick and
injured getting the visitors, not
the other way around.

NEWMAN
Amusing. You see, through our
mutual misfortune of suffering an
injury we've been handed the good
fortune of winding up in this
very same hospital. The rain has
delivered the rainbow.

RECEPTIONIST
Lucky you.

NEWMAN
Not as lucky as folks who don't
damn near get their arm eaten off
by man's best friend.

RECEPTIONIST
Your friend's name?

(CONTINUED)

NEWMAN

Sophie.

RECEPTIONIST

Surname?

NEWMAN

Is that important?

RECEPTIONIST

Important enough to know if
you're as good a friend as you
say.

NEWMAN

Just give me the room numbers of
every cunt named Sophie you got
in this shithole.

RECEPTIONIST

With a friend like you, who needs
an enemy?

NEWMAN

Nobody wants me as their enemy.
Especially not any fat,
pus-sucking hospital
receptionists. Now tell me where
she is.

RECEPTIONIST

I'm calling security.

NEWMAN

Be sure to tell them what I did
to you.

RECEPTIONIST

(Picking up the phone)

What did you do to me?

He punches her in the face. Her head snaps back and her
nose spits blood.

NEWMAN

I'll wait right here.

He sits down.

EXT. BUS/BUS STOP - DAY

Dumont shuffles off the bus, fighting his way through a
crowd. Free of people, he sets off running.

EXT. STREETS OF LA - DAY

Joe Dumont runs and checks his watch.

INT. COUNTY COURTHOUSE - DAY

SUMMER (10) waits with her mother, MEGAN (33). Both are dressed in sombre, formal attire appropriate for their respective ages.

A CLERK opens the beige door to the courtroom and formally announces...

CLERK

Mister Joseph Dumont and Miss
Megan Dann.

Summer looks for her father.

The courtroom awaits. As does the Clerk. As does the
JUDGE.

EXT. COUNTY COURTHOUSE - DAY

Now breaking a sweat and red-faced, Joe mounts the steps to the courthouse.

INT. COUNTY COURTHOUSE - DAY

The black Judge peers over the rims of his spectacles to address BERKOWICZ, a man in a gray, striped suit, with a briefcase.

Megan sits with her lawyer on the other side of the room, Summer behind her in the pews.

JUDGE

Counselor, can we expect your
client any time soon?

BERKOWICZ

I'm sure he'll be here any second
now.

JUDGE

Just last summer a young
gentleman who drank his own urine
and frequented the front steps of
this building was absolutely sure
the world was gong to end on new
year's eve. Yet here we are. When
I was 21, I was so sure the
Seattle Mariners were finally
going to win the world series

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JUDGE (cont'd)
that I bet my virginity on it.
Alas it is something I can never
get back. My mother was damn sure
that my father was just working
late all those nights. And still
she found herself stabbing my
father's secretary in the ass
with a letter opener. My point,
mister Berkowicz, is that being
sure of something is almost
certainly a guarantee of
absolutely nothing. Your client
forfeits his right to -

Dumont barges into the courtroom.

DUMONT
I'm here, I'm here.

SUMMER
Daddy!

DUMONT
Hi sweetheart.

MEGAN
I'd say something to make you
look like a dick, but you don't
need me for that.

Summer wraps her arms around her father's legs. He
crouches, hugs her, face to face.

SUMMER
Mommy says we're moving to New
York. Are you coming too?

DUMONT
Daddy's got a back up plan
(Taps his nose)
...and it's much better than
smelly New York.

MEGAN
Joe.

JUDGE
Let's proceed.

INT. HOSPITAL, RECEPTION - DAY

While a team of nurses attend to the receptionist and her
bloody nose, Newman sits patiently waiting. Whistling. The
nurses take turns in shooting angry looks his way.

He stops whistling.

(CONTINUED)

NEWMAN

Sorry, annoying habit.

Two BURLY SECURITY GUARDS arrive, both huge, one muscle, one fat.

MUSCLE

You're coming with us.

NEWMAN

You're coming with me.

Newman takes his place between Muscle and Fat and the three of them head for the elevator.

Fat presses the DOWN button and looks Newman over, head to toe, and back again. Newman smiles.

NEWMAN

How's the pay?

FAT

Enough.

MUSCLE

(Cracking his knuckles)

Job satisfaction is more important.

The three men look to the ROW OF LIGHT-UP DIGITS that indicate what floor the elevator is on. Two neighboring numbers flash on and off in rapid succession.

MUSCLE

Damn.

NEWMAN

Problem?

FAT

Looks like you're taking the stairs, asshole.

NEWMAN

After you.

The three men walk to the stairwell.

INT. HOSPITAL, ELEVATOR SHAFT - DAY

A single CRUTCH has been jammed between the elevator doors. The elevator now straddles two floors.

INT. HOSPITAL, STAIRWELL - DAY

NEWMAN

I was thinking.

MUSCLE

You don't wanna cause yourself
another injury.

NEWMAN

I was thinking, whatever the pay,
it can't be enough. Not for this.

Turner steps out from a doorway and plants his remaining
crutch across the back of Fat's neck, sending the
overweight guard rolling down the stairs.

Turner then delivers the blunt end of the crutch into
Muscle's genitals.

NEWMAN

Satisfied?

Newman grabs Muscle by his shirt and hurls him over the
guardrail. He falls ten feet, hits the stairs and rolls
down to meet his colleague.

NEWMAN

Fuck.

TURNER

I though we did good.

NEWMAN

We probably should have got the
uniforms first.

TURNER

We'll take the elevator.

INT. COUNTY COURTHOUSE - DAY

Megan is berating Dumont without pausing for breath. The
Judge, Berkowicz, Summer, and Dumont himself are compelled
to listen to the tirade - delivered with a particularly
nauseating pretense of class.

MEGAN

He never listened, he wore odd
socks, he was never willing to
understand the needs of a woman.
He's selfish. He eats beans
straight out of the can. His
world is small and he likes it
small. He's only ever cared about
work and he's neglectful. He

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MEGAN (cont'd)
barely qualifies as human. His smile is robotic. All our wedding photos were of me stood next to the terminator. He only understands what can be bought, sold, or traded. And Joe, that does not include lives. When will you get it Joe? Don't pay your way with money. Pay with decency. Give yourself. There's no such thing as better late than never. Late is still too late. And you're late to your own life.

DUMONT
I need to go.

MEGAN
What?

JUDGE
Mister Dumont?

BERKOWICZ
Joe, what are you doing?

SUMMER
Daddy?

DUMONT
Summer, I want to be your father more than I ever wanted anything. But a father is a man his daughter looks up to.

Joe runs for the doors at the back of the court room.

INT. HOSPITAL, BASEMENT - DAY

Turner and Newman finish buttoning the shirts on the stolen SECURITY uniforms they now both wear.

They dump the bodies of Fat and Muscle inside a huge, yellow "BIOLOGICAL WASTE ONLY" dumpster.

Newman presses the "UP" button, summoning the elevator.

NEWMAN
We'll search floor by floor. You go to the top and work your way down, I'll start at the bottom and we'll meet in the middle.

The elevator doors PING open and the two killers step inside.

EXT. COUNTY COURTHOUSE - DAY

Dumont runs down the steps and around the side of the building, trampling the lawn in front of a "KEEP OFF THE GRASS SIGN". He tears the sign from the soil.

Dumont slams the pointed end of the wooden stake into the window of a parked car, turning the single pane into a thousand crystals.

He reaches in, unlocks the car and gets behind the wheel. After hot-wiring the vehicle he speeds away, cutting the corner and rapping the lawn with four tires.

A dozen tin cans trail behind the car, tethered to the rear bumper, eliciting an obnoxious sound. The words "JUST MARRIED" adorn the rear windshield of the car in white paint.

A BRIDE and GROOM run laughing from the building just in time to see their car being driven off.

EXT. STREETS OF LA - DAY

Sophie, in spirit form, sails along twelve inches off the ground.

SOPHIE

It'd be quicker to run. Shit.

INT. HOSPITAL, LOWER FLOOR - DAY

Newman's head pans left to right like a surveillance camera as he stalks from ward to ward.

INT. HOSPITAL, UPPER FLOOR - DAY

Turner takes an untouched sandwich from a tray of food that's been placed in front of an unconscious PATIENT.

He limps through the hallways and corridors as he eats, checking every room he passes.

INT. HOSPITAL, SOPHIE'S ROOM - DAY

Faye combs her comatose sister's hair whilst humming a bittersweet tune.

The Nurse (the very same who tended to Sophie's I.V) gently knocks before entering. She carries a small bundle of folded clothes - Sophie's work uniform and jeans.

(CONTINUED)

NURSE

Sweetie? You're the young lady's
sister?

Faye nods.

NURSE

Perhaps you'd like to take care
of her things while she's
sleeping? I took the liberty of
washing them.

Faye accepts the proffered garments and places them in her
tiny lap. The Nurse smiles and exits.

The POLICE OFFICER guarding Sophie's room lowers his
magazine long enough to admire the passing Nurse's legs.
He resumes reading up on the latest fishing equipment.

EXT. STREETS OF LA - DAY

The stolen wedding car runs a red light, bounces over
curbs, cuts off traffic, and weaves in and out of lanes.

INT/EXT. STOLEN WEDDING CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Dumont beats the horn with his fist, presses the gas pedal
into the depths of hell with his foot, and wipes sweat
from his brow.

EXT. STREETS OF LA - DAY

Sophie continues to float upon the air and sees the
towering HOSPITAL in the distance.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Newman steps from the elevator and walks down the hall. He
passes under a sign that reads "NEUROSURGERY".

He rounds a corner and sights the seated Police Officer,
engrossed in the fishing magazine.

Turner appears around a corner opposite from Newman and
also sees the Police Officer. The two men nod.

CUT TO:

The Police Officer's spit-shined shoes kick against the
linoleum as he's dragged by the neck into Sophie's room.

INT. HOSPITAL, SOPHIE'S ROOM - DAY

Now that the Police Officer has been sufficiently starved of oxygen, Turner releases his arm from around the law enforcer's throat.

Newman shuts the door.

Faye, still clutching to Sophie's clothes like they're a comfort blanket, drops the KwikGas shirt, and backs up against the wall. Turner and Newman tower over the girl.

The two killers look to the bed, and to Sophie's comatose form.

FAYE

I'll scream.

NEWMAN

Try it. See what happens.

Turner switches off the HALTER MONITOR that's connected to Sophie by several wires. The quiet and rhythmic *beep...beep...beep* ceases.

Faye rushes to her sister's aid.

FAYE

No.

Newman stops her with a hand to her shoulder.

NEWMAN

You wouldn't be the first child
I've been forced to...discipline.

FAYE

You wouldn't be the first bully
I've had to put up with. They
were twelve. What's your excuse?

Turner's finger is within grazing distance of the OFF SWITCH on Sophie's VENTILATOR.

NEWMAN

Hold it. She might know where the
money is.

TURNER

She was half dead when we left
her...and the money.

NEWMAN

We'll give her good reason to
find it.

He tightens his grip on Faye's shoulder, forcing her to squirm and groan under the pressure.

(CONTINUED)

TURNER

She's in a coma.

NEWMAN

So we wake her up.

INT. HOSPITAL, ADMITTANCE - DAY

The automatic sliding doors close shut on Sophie in the wake of a PATIENT'S exit, but she passes straight through the solid matter.

All around her levitating spirit, dead and dying souls ascend on rays of light and descend on shards of black fire.

A MAN with several stitches above one eye heads for the exit and fishes keys from his pocket. Lurking in the Man's shadow is a fellow LEVITATOR - a Guardian Angel, shaking his head.

GUARDIAN ANGEL

There he goes, getting right back
in his car again.

As Sophie and her fellow Angel pass each other by...

GUARDIAN ANGEL

What's yours gone and done?

Sophie doesn't have time for chit chat or pleasantries.

INT. HOSPITAL, SOPHIE'S ROOM - DAY

A BESPECTACLED DOCTOR stands with his hands in the air while Turner holds a SCALPEL to the physician's neck.

Newman keeps his hand on Faye's shoulder as a constant reminder. The foursome encircle the bed that houses Sophie's prone form.

DOCTOR

(Shaking breath)

She's in a drug-induced coma. We
had to protect the brain during
surgery.

NEWMAN

Her memory?

DOCTOR

I wouldn't care to presume.

(CONTINUED)

NEWMAN

Guess.

DOCTOR

She should make a full recovery.

NEWMAN

Wake her.

DOCTOR

That's a gradual process. We would need to gradually withdraw her doses of Thiopental.

NEWMAN

I don't like the sound of "gradual".

DOCTOR

That may be, but it is the situation.

NEWMAN

Then we have no use for you. Would you prefer the stairs, elevator, or window? That's rhetorical.

Turner grins and marches the Doctor towards the window by the tip of the shining scalpel.

NEWMAN

There might be an alternative.

INT/EXT. STOLEN WEDDING CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Dumont pisses sweat from every pore. His suit, fresh on that morning, is soaked at the collar. He swerves the vehicle left and right as he navigates the freeway.

Dumont is forced to stomp the brake when he comes up against an impenetrable row of fenders and red taillights.

He spies the hospital above the simmering heat radiating off the few-dozen car roofs.

INT. HOSPITAL, DISPENSARY - DAY

The Doctor, with Turner breathing down his neck, selects a syringe and a vial of ADRENALINE.

Turner watches the man up-end both items and draw the clear liquid up into the syringe via its long needle.

INT. HOSPITAL, HALLWAY - DAY

The Doctor and Turner exit the dispensary, the former rigid and nervous, the latter exhibiting a reassuring smile above his stolen guard's uniform.

INT. HOSPITAL, HALLWAY - DAY

Sophie drifts along and passes beneath the "NEUROSURGERY" ward sign.

INT. HOSPITAL, SOPHIE'S ROOM - DAY

All eyes (Faye, Newman, Turner, and the Doctor) watch with nervous apprehension as the Doctor steadies his hand and slides the needle into Sophie's vein.

INT. HOSPITAL, HALLWAY - DAY

Spirit Sophie passes through the door to her room and...

INT. HOSPITAL, SOPHIE'S ROOM - DAY

...she immediately poises to act. Seeing Newman with his hand on Faye, she targets him first. Her face a mask of fury, she make a fist, brings it back...

The Doctor pushes the plunger on the syringe. Physical Sophie's system is flooded with pure adrenaline.

Spirit Sophie vanishes.

Physical Sophie wakes gasping for air, her eyes white donuts around black holes. She bolts upright, staring at nothing, then collapses back onto the bed.

NEWMAN

Thanks, Doc.

EXT. HOSPITAL, EMERGENCY BAY - DAY

A row of ambulances. Scores of PARAMEDICS enjoy lunches and cigarettes.

The Doctor lands on an ambulance roof, creating an inverted pyramid of the roof and smashing its red lights.

The startled Paramedics take tentative steps back from the ruined ambulance in a widening ripple.

The Doctor's lifeless limbs hang over the edge of the vehicle's roof and drip blood onto the asphalt.

INT/EXT. STOLEN WEDDING CAR (MOVING) - DAY

The traffic blocking Dumont's way shunts forward enough to create a gap for him to exploit.

The car shoots forward, prompting an assortment of honks and beeps from aggravated commuters.

Dumont zigs and zags his way closer to the hospital.

INT. HOSPITAL, ADMITTANCE - DAY

Newman, now dressed in a stolen white coat, pushes a drowsy and disoriented Sophie in a wheelchair towards the exit. Keeping pace beside them are Turner, limping, and Faye, still clutching Sophie's remaining clothes.

The foursome saunter past the array of Doctors, Nurses, Paramedics, and the morbidly curious. The doors slide open for them and they're ushered out into the EMERGENCY BAY.

EXT. HOSPITAL, EMERGENCY BAY - DAY

With all hospital personnel sufficiently distracted, Newman and Turner deposit Faye and Sophie into an unattended ambulance.

INT. AMBULANCE - DAY

Newman straps Sophie to a gurney and directs Faye to take a seat opposite.

Turner climbs behind the wheel and finds the key in the ignition. He fires the engine.

EXT. HOSPITAL, EMERGENCY BAY - DAY

A car dragging a tail of tin cans and with the words "JUST MARRIED" scrawled across the windshield fills the space just vacated by an exiting AMBULANCE.

Joseph Dumont jumps out of the car, runs past the damaged ambulance-turned mausoleum and the crowd of onlookers, and into the HOSPITAL.

INT. HOSPITAL, RECEPTION - DAY

Dumont runs to the counter, dripping sweat. A Receptionist with two black eyes and a bandaged nose greets him with a nasal voice.

(CONTINUED)

RECEPTIONIST

Yes?

DUMONT

Sophie Shepherd?

INT/EXT. AMBULANCE (MOVING) - DAY

The four passengers are silent. Their bodies sway as dictated by the vehicle's motion.

Sophie's eyes do a slow swim in their sockets before locking onto Faye. Then Newman.

NEWMAN

We've got a few thousand things to talk about.

EXT. STREETS OF LA - DAY

The ambulance moves at a steady pace. After a few moments the red lights mounted on its roof flash and rotate and its siren begins to wail.

The traffic ahead clears a path.

INT. HOSPITAL, HALLWAY - DAY

Dumont sits with his head bowed and his elbows on his knees. The pose of shame. Too late. He clutches Sophie's KwikGas shirt in two tight fists.

Around him, chaos. The hospital is now a disaster area.

After several long moments of contemplation, Dumont rises out of the plastic chair and takes determined steps toward the exit.

His fingers tighten around the KwikGas uniform as he makes a straight path back towards the STOLEN WEDDING CAR.

INT/EXT. STOLEN WEDDING CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Dumont climbs in the car. The tires spin and spew white smoke as the vehicle accelerates towards the street.

INT. LOCK-UP GARAGE - EVENING

The rattling metal door swings upward. Warm amber light from the setting sun spills into the concrete cube.

Four silhouettes of varying shapes and sizes stand in the entryway.

(CONTINUED)

Newman sends Sophie rolling into the lock-up in her chair with a push of his foot.

Faye runs to her sister's aid.

FAYE

Are you ok?

SOPHIE

Depends on your definition of ok.

She puts two tentative fingers to the bandages around her head before reaching under her hospital gown.

SOPHIE

I feel like shit. But it means
I'm alive.

(Pause)

Hi, Squirt.

Turner shuts the door. Newman flicks on an overhead light. An old sofa, TV, coffee table, and shelves of tools fill the small space. Multiple posters of the same work of art adorn the walls.

The bag of money lies on the floor.

SOPHIE

The deal was nobody gets hurt.

NEWMAN

The deal also stated half. A man
can change his mind.

SOPHIE

I have holes in me.

TURNER

You already got three. What's a
couple more?

NEWMAN

Turner, go watch your cartoons.

FAYE

Sophie? What deal do they mean?

SOPHIE

I fucked up.

NEWMAN

Your sister did a lot more than
fuck up, little one.

(To Sophie)

Welcome back to the land of the
living.

(CONTINUED)

SOPHIE
I feel welcome.

FAYE
Sophie, who are these bad men?

SOPHIE
Dicks, Pricks, Assholes,
Fuckheads. One of the above.

FAYE
Why do you know them? And why do
they know you?

NEWMAN
We'll leave you to explain things
to your sister.

Newman and Turner retreat to the back of the lock-up.

Turner settles in front of the TV while Newman puts his
back to the wall, ever-vigilant, keeping watch over the
two sisters.

INT. DUMONT RESIDENCE, BEDROOM - EVENING

Dumont flips the mattress from the bed hurriedly to unveil
the stacks of money. He begins throwing them into a BAG.

EXT. DUMONT RESIDENCE - EVENING

Dumont tosses the bag of money into the stolen wedding car
and jumps in after it. After firing the engine he backs
the car out onto the road and speeds away.

INT. LOCK-UP GARAGE - EVENING

Faye chews on her bottom lip, fighting back tears. Sophie
can't bare the weight of her little sister's gaze and
looks to her own bare toes.

FAYE
You did all that?

SOPHIE
Yes.

FAYE
Why?

SOPHIE
I was trying to balance things
out.

(CONTINUED)

FAYE

That just sounds like another stupid saying.

SOPHIE

You're right. It is stupid. You forgive me?

FAYE

I thought you were gonna die.

SOPHIE

I'm sorry. Pizza and ice cream?

FAYE

You messed up. You messed up big time.

SOPHIE

...I'll give you that sweater you like?

FAYE

With the blue sleeves?

SOPHIE

Yeah.

FAYE

Nah, I know how much I like it.

SOPHIE

Make you a mixtape?

FAYE

Ok. Cool.

SOPHIE

I would say "deal"...but I'm done making deals. How're mom and dad?

FAYE

The same.

SOPHIE

"Good" same or "bad" same?

FAYE

The same.

SOPHIE

And how are you?

FAYE

...At least I'll have a good story for Show and Tell.

(CONTINUED)

SOPHIE
(Smiling)
Smell you, Squirt.

FAYE
(Smiling)
Smell you too.

Newman snuffles dramatically and wipes at imaginary tears from his cheeks.

Faye and Sophie respond with synchronized middle fingers.

FAYE
(Handing her the clothes)
Here.

SOPHIE
Thanks, Squirt.

Sophie grabs the hem of her hospital gown but waits for Newman to look away before stripping it from her body.

Newman doesn't even blink.

Faye confronts Newman from across the room, folding her arms and staring back, and blocking the man's view of Sophie.

Sophie removes the gown.

INT. STOLEN WEDDING CAR - EVENING

Dumont has the car parked in the WORST PART OF TOWN. The vehicle sits in the shadow of a boarded up storefront and across the street from a mountain of piss-soaked mattresses.

Over the top of the wheel and the whites of his knuckles, Dumont spectates a DRUG DEAL between DEALER and CUSTOMER.

He waits until there is sufficient distance between the tracksuit-wearing Dealer and his client then exits the car and crosses the street towards the chemically-inclined entrepreneur.

His walk is a lesson in self-consciousness...and don't-belong-here-ness.

DEALER
The fuck you want?

DUMONT
I wish to discuss business with you, sir.

(CONTINUED)

DEALER
The fuck you say?

DUMONT
I want to buy something.

DEALER
Aint got nothing for you.

DUMONT
(Flashing some cash)
I've got something for you.

DEALER
You show the money out here again
and I'll show you your fucking
insides. What you got a taste
for?

DUMONT
I need to buy a gun.

DEALER
Get the fuck outta here.

DUMONT
You expect me to believe you
don't carry one?

DEALER
I got it pointed at your balls.

Dumont notes the man's hands buried deep in his pockets.

DUMONT
Show me.

DEALER
I'll show you the muzzle.

DUMONT
A thousand dollars.

DEALER
Fuck off.

DUMONT
And five hundred for every round
of ammunition.

DEALER
(Nods to the wedding car)
That your car?

DUMONT
It is.

(CONTINUED)

DEALER
Wedding night not go to plan?

DUMONT
She has...peculiarities.

DEALER
That a fancy fuck word for kinky?

DUMONT
I aim to please.

DEALER
I feel ya. Let's go.

Dumont and the Drug Dealer-turned-Arms Dealer walk to the car, each man exhibiting a gait that betrays their place in life. They get in the car.

INT. STOLEN WEDDING CAR - EVENING

DEALER
Drive. I'll tell you where.

Dumont does as instructed.

INT. LOCK-UP GARAGE - EVENING

Sophie, now dressed in a white vest top, is helped into her jeans by Faye.

Detecting something in the pocket, Sophie pokes her fingers under fabric and pulls out the LOCKER KEY.

SOPHIE
...How long was I out?

FAYE
You were shot just last night.

SOPHIE
There's still time.

FAYE
Time for what?

NEWMAN
(Off)
Ready to begin?

Sophie pokes the key back in her pocket.

She watches nervously as Turner retrieves a HANDGUN from beneath the coffee table.

(CONTINUED)

Newman drags a chair across the floor, positions it facing Sophie, sat in her wheelchair.

NEWMAN

Faye, have a seat. Sophie, you brought your own.

SOPHIE

Whatever you think there is to be resolved between us doesn't involve her.

Turner shuts off the TV.

NEWMAN

Uh-uh. Leave it on. And turn the volume up.

Turner does as he's told. The sounds of frying pans whacking anthropomorphized cats in the head grow louder.

NEWMAN

Sit.

Faye sits. The two sisters are forced to face each other.

Turner limps towards the trio.

SOPHIE

Let her go.

NEWMAN

She's vital to the equation.

SOPHIE

The equation?

NEWMAN

A few things currently stand between Turner and I, and our money. Just how many things, and just how surmountable those things, depends on you.

SOPHIE

What money?

NEWMAN

You're not as stupid as you look.

SOPHIE

The gas station money? You mean you only got away with half?

(Laughing)

Holy shit. If you couldn't take it from a dying woman when it's right under your nose, how the

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SOPHIE (cont'd)
fuck do you expect to get hold of
it now?

NEWMAN
You know Charlie Chaplin?

Sophie ignores the question, keeps laughing.

NEWMAN
Harold Lloyd?

More laughter.

NEWMAN
Buster Keaton? They were funny.
This. You. Our money. Not so
funny.

SOPHIE
This is all your fucking problem.

NEWMAN
Our problems are your problems.
And your problems can quickly
become Squirt's problems.

SOPHIE
The cops would have recovered it,
so good luck with that.

Newman shakes his head.

SOPHIE
Well, I don't know what to tell
ya, I don't know where the money
is.

NEWMAN
However much we want you to find
it, your sister here will want
you to find it so much more.

SOPHIE
If I don't have it, you don't
have it, and the cops don't have
it...oh shit.

TURNER
Oh shit?

NEWMAN
NeedleDick.

EXT. LAUNDERETTE - EVENING

The WEDDING CAR creaks to a stop outside a dingy launderette that neighbors an equally uninviting TOY SHOP. The sign above the launderette window proclaims "Fluffy Ben's".

DUMONT

Here?

DEALER

The IRS get funny if you put "drug dealer" down under occupation.

INT. LAUNDERETTE - EVENING

Dumont follows the Dealer past a SEMI-CONSCIOUS PATRON sat watching their clothes go around, and around, and around inside the spinning drum.

The duo pass through a door and into an even dingier back area.

Dumont watches the Dealer take down BOXES OF DETERGENT from a shelf.

DUMONT

Why can't you just sell me yours?

DEALER

(Takes out his own weapon)
This gun stays within touching distance when I go to bed. My wife didn't. This gun spends most of the day down the front of my pants. My wife didn't. And this gun has never shot me. My wife did. You know what I did to my wife?

DUMONT

Shot her?

DEALER

Sold her. But I aint never selling this gun.

He opens the detergent boxes and lines up several handguns for Dumont to chose from.

DEALER

But any one of these can be yours.

Dumont picks one out.

(CONTINUED)

DUMONT
What on Earth is this?

DEALER
A Luger.

DUMONT
I'm not looking to invade Europe,
I just want to...scare some
people.

DEALER
You show a jew a Luger and it
don't scare 'em, I give you a
refund.

DUMONT
(Thinking)
You haven't by any chance sold a
Dirty Harry gun recently have
you?

DEALER
A 44 Magnum?

DUMONT
If that's the gun Dirty Harry
uses.

DEALER
That's the gun Dirty fucking
Harry uses.

DUMONT
You sold one to a man with a
limp?

DEALER
What's it to ya?

DUMONT
Another five hundred dollars.

Dumont slides the money towards the Dealer.

DEALER
A man with integrity.

DUMONT
Only recently.

DEALER
Since you asked nicely, yeah. I
sold a 44 Magnum to a mutha
fucker with a fucked up foot.

DUMONT

Can you tell me where I can find them?

DEALER

If you ask as nicely as you did just now.

Another five hundred dollars makes the journey from Dumont to Dealer.

DEALER

Two guys, do a bit of business out of a lock up garage. Go ten blocks, point your car at the LA river and go another two blocks. Now how about that Luger?

INT. LOCK-UP GARAGE - EVENING

SOPHIE

If he has it, then he's done what I was gonna do and left.

NEWMAN

You know where he'd go?

SOPHIE

No.

NEWMAN

Think.

SOPHIE

You two are the criminal masterminds, you figure it. Last time I saw him he effectively told me to go fuck myself and left my fate in your hands. So we're not exactly friends.

EXT. LAUNDERETTE - EVENING

Dumont exits the place with a BROWN PAPER BAG in his hand. He opens the door and starts climbing into the stolen wedding car - when the door is slammed on his head.

Dumont's back hits the pavement. He drops the paper bag, spilling the luger and some loose rounds of ammunition.

DEALER

The way I see it, I'm doin' you a favor before you shoot your dick off.

(CONTINUED)

The Dealer reclaims what was his. He also reaches into Dumont's inside pocket and steals a handsome bundle of notes.

DEALER

A little something for my troubles.

While Dumont rolls around, groaning in pain on the pavement, the Dealer returns to the launderette.

INT. LAUNDERETTE - EVENING

The Dealer finds the semi-conscious Patron staring at him.

DEALER

Didn't pay his dry cleaning bill.

Satisfied with this explanation the Patron goes back to watching the cycle.

EXT. LAUNDERETTE - EVENING

Dumont picks himself up, wipes himself off, and looks around in despair. His attention lingers on the closed toy shop next door.

INT. LOCK-UP GARAGE - EVENING

NEWMAN

Turner, babysit.

Turner positions himself behind Faye. Sophie watches him reach into a pocket and slowly extract the HANDLE OF A SWITCHBLADE.

SOPHIE

You touch a hair on her head...

Turner thumbs the button. A COMB springs from inside the handle. He starts coming Faye's hair.

TURNER

You want pigtails? Braids? A ponytail?

NEWMAN

Think.

SOPHIE

I don't know where he is.

(CONTINUED)

NEWMAN

Think harder.

He puts his finger where he shot Sophie in her chest...and pushes.

Sophie screams.

Faye jumps out of her seat but Turner kicks her seat away and pulls her back against himself. He continues to comb her hair.

SOPHIE

(Through pain and sweat)

Faye?

FAYE

Yeah.

SOPHIE

Think of Mom.

FAYE

I don't want to.

SOPHIE

Think what Mom would do.

FAYE

Get drunk?

SOPHIE

Nope.

Newman continues to slowly insert the tip of his finger further into the stitched bullet wound through the fabric of Sophie's vest. Blood pools around the wound

FAYE

Throw up?

SOPHIE

Not that.

Sophie is turning pale.

FAYE

Put on weight?

SOPHIE

JESUS CHRIST, FAYE I AINT' GONNA
DO YOUR THINKING FOR YA!

A KNOCK on the metal door silences them.

Newman withdraws his finger from Sophie's bullet hole and she exhales.

(CONTINUED)

Turner draws his gun.

NEWMAN
Turner, the cartoons.

Turner lowers the volume on the TV using the remote.

NEWMAN
Yeah?

FEMALE (O.S)
(Sultry)
Knock knock.

TURNER
Who's there?

FEMALE (O.S)
Anita.

TURNER
Anita who?

FEMALE (O.S)
Anita dick inside me.

The door goes up, revealing a pair of long, slender legs wrapped in fishnet stockings, followed by some curved hips, accentuated by a shiny black miniskirt, a bare midriff, and two voluptuous breasts donning a bright pink boob tube.

A mane of blond hair frames Betty Boo eyes, a button nose, and glistening red lips.

Dumont steps out from behind the HOOKER and levels a GUN at Newman. In his other hand he carries a bag of considerable weight. The money.

DUMONT
And there's an abundance of dicks
in here.

SOPHIE
Joe?

NEWMAN
Needledick?

TURNER
Needledick?

DUMONT
I have your money. Well, legally speaking you have no claim to this money, but for the sake of argument, and for the sake of these young women, we'll call it your money.

(CONTINUED)

Without taking his eyes - or the gun - off Newman, Dumont pulls a bill from somewhere and gives it to the Hooker.

DUMONT
Consider early retirement.

She kisses him on the cheek and walks away, stiletto heels clicking on concrete.

DUMONT
Sophie, is that "you" you or the other you.

SOPHIE
It's "me" me.

TURNER
What are you two talking about?

SOPHIE
It's a long story, with lots of big words, you wouldn't understand.

TURNER
Has this got something to do with Phil?

NEWMAN
Phil's dead. And you're all about to join him.

Turner aims his weapon at Dumont.

Dumont keeps his gun pointed at Newman.

DUMONT
I believe they call this a standoff?

NEWMAN
Ain't no standoff with you concerned. You won't do it.

FAYE
I got it! What Mom would do!
She'd stomp her feet!

Faye stomps her foot - slamming her heel down onto Turner's toes.

He screams and fires his gun - wide - the round hits concrete.

Sophie dives from her wheelchair, spreading her arms and wrapping them around Faye...

Newman flattens himself against the wall...

Turner backs up, shooting blind...

Sophie grabs Faye and the two hit the ground, but not before a bullet hits Sophie in the left of her lower back. She's unconscious before she hits the ground.

Turner ducks behind the Sofa...

Newman presses himself against an opposing wall, and everyone takes a breather.

Newman, unarmed, asses the situation. He has a view of Turner, armed, behind the sofa, and Dumont, tucked against an opposing wall, partially around a corner.

Faye crouches over her unconscious and bleeding sister.

FAYE

Sophie? Sophie, wake up?

A small but blinding dot of light appears above Sophie. The others present show no reaction to this development. They do not see it.

The circle of light expands and widens. Sophie, in spirit form, rises from her body, looks down at herself, at Faye, and around the room.

When she looks up into the light a cloud of gray smoke greets her. She chokes. God wafts away the smoke and steps forward, cigarette dangling from her lips.

GOD

Ah, shit.

SOPHIE

You smell like an ashtray.

GOD

I make no apologies. I need to calm my nerves. You coming?

SOPHIE

Is it really my time?

GOD

Your name wasn't on today's list, but I can bump a couple of others that I was never too keen on anyway. Good save, by the way.

Sophie looks back at Faye. The twelve-year-old sobs at her sister's side, pleading with her to live.

GOD

C'mon, I'll show you around.

SOPHIE

I don't want to.

GOD

I can't tempt you?

Behind God, floating on clouds of gold are kittens, puppies, assorted pink and blue vibrators, and a handsome MAN in a suit with an FBI badge pinned to the lapel that bares an uncanny resemblance to Fox Mulder.

Sophie regards her heaven with awe and wonder.

GOD

I told ya, I'm God, I know all.

SOPHIE

Then you know that I'm not done here.

GOD

Fuck. I was hoping you'd stay. I'm bored here and you seem cool. We could have had fun.

SOPHIE

One day. So I can go back?

GOD

Yeah. Was only a flesh wound anyway.

SOPHIE

You mean you made me believe I was really -

GOD

Gotta go, Bob in Arkansas needs my help finding his lost dog. Brace yourself, this is gonna hurt.

SOPHIE

What's gonna hur -

She wakes up in pain. Faye can't hide her relief and hugs her sister.

NEWMAN

Shoot him.

TURNER

I've only got one round left in this thing. I don't see him.

Turner's position does not permit a clear view of Dumont. Newman attempts to point him out, directing Turner's aim.

NEWMAN

He's there.

TURNER

Where?

NEWMAN

Right there.

TURNER

The fucking ceiling?

NEWMAN

Look where I'm pointing.

TURNER

No wonder you got Phil killed.

NEWMAN

Shut up and shoot.

TURNER

Ok, man.

Turner shoots. A small cloud of dust blooms about ten feet away from Dumont. Turner pulls the trigger but the gun clicks empty. He throws the weapon down.

Seizing the opportunity, Dumont steps clear of the wall and uses the business end of his own gun to direct Turner and Newman towards each other.

TURNER

Who taught you to shoot?

NEWMAN

Who taught you to point?

Dumont uses his free hand to take his phone from his pocket. He dials 911.

DUMONT

I require the assistance of the
LAPD, please.

(To Sophie)

You ok?

SOPHIE

Yeah. Just a flesh
wound...apparently.

Dumont looks to the bags of money.

DUMONT

The cops are on their way. Do you
want to get out of here?

(CONTINUED)

Sophie pulls the LOCKER KEY from her pocket and turns it over in her hand, contemplating.

SOPHIE
I need to be some place.

INT. BUS STATION - NIGHT

Sophie twirls the locker key between her fingers as she makes her way to the rows of lockers and heads for her own.

HOMELESS DUDE
You sure 'bout this?

Sophie drops the key into his grubby palm.

SOPHIE
You better hurry.

She smiles as she watches him open the locker, take the bag out and appraise the bus ticket inside.

Sophie retrieves the torn photograph of herself and Faye.

HOMELESS DUDE
Thank you, miss.

Sophie nods and watches him leave.

EXT. LOCK-UP GARAGE - NIGHT

The COPS escort Newman and Turner to two waiting black and whites with their lights turning.

A Cop approaches Dumont as he greets Newman's scowl with a smile.

COP
Sir, I'm going to need you to
surrender your weapon.

Dumont squeezes the trigger and squirts water in the air.

DUMONT
Keep it.

FADE TO BLACK:

CARD: "SIX WEEKS LATER".

FADE IN:

EXT. COUNTY COURTHOUSE - DAY

Joe Dumont, dressed in a freshly-pressed suit, climbs the stairs to the entrance of the building.

INT. COUNTY COURTHOUSE, HALLWAY - DAY

Sophie wears an orange jumpsuit with DOC on the back in large black print. A set of handcuffs complete the outfit. Greetings and conversation from down the hall steals her attention.

In the distance, Dumont is welcomed by his daughter, Summer, with a warm embrace. Megan, his ex-wife, nods formally and shakes his hand.

Spotting Sophie, Dumont excuses himself and closes the distance between himself and her.

SOPHIE

Joe.

DUMONT

Sophie.

SOPHIE

That your daughter?

DUMONT

(Smiles)

I was granted a second court date. The armed robbery I endured classifies as extenuating circumstances. Plus, it seems Judges look kindly upon those who foil kidnap plots.

SOPHIE

You did good.

DUMONT

How about you?

SOPHIE

Healing. I'm here for sentencing. My public defender's a good guy. Thinks I'll get three years, out in two. You know, first offense, turned myself in. Your testimony helped too. Thanks for that. And for the other thing.

DUMONT

I filed the adoption papers this morning. You sure about this?

(CONTINUED)

SOPHIE

It's not up to me.

Sophie turns her head, directing Dumont's attention to the other end of the hall, where Faye is seen approaching with a cup of water.

SOPHIE

But she could do a lot worse than
Joeseeph Dumont.

Dumont nods and smiles.

The double doors open and a CLREK emerges.

CLERK

Miss Sophie Shepherd.

DUMONT

(Turning away)

I'd better go.

(Turning back)

I never asked, why did you save
me?

SOPHIE

Felt right at the time.

DUMONT

Good luck.

SOPHIE

I'm making my own luck. Turns out
I can study for my diploma whilst
on the inside.

DUMONT

Thank God.

SOPHIE

(Hesitant, doubtful)

Igh.

Sophie gets up, her chains rattling, and catches sight of Phil, unseen by those around him, smiling from a distance. She returns his smile and steps inside the court.

FADE TO BLACK:

THE END.