

REFLECTIONS OF A PRIVATE EYE

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001 EXT. THE CITY - NIGHT 001

Old buildings in the rain: dereliction, decadence, decay.

NICELY (VO)

My favourite stories were always the ones where the hero dies at the end.

002 EXT. NICELY'S CAR - ON THE CITY STREETS - NIGHT 002

The car pushes through rain and traffic: DICK NICELY (42) at the wheel.

NICELY (VO)

Would've been nice to think I'd have a decent funeral. Even a wake.

003 INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - LOBBY 003

Neon light pulses outside, casts a shadow: Nicely framed in the doorway.

NICELY (VO)

With a wife or a friend, or an enemy to mourn my passing.

Nicely crosses the lobby. Rain drips from his fedora. He carries a BRIEFCASE up the stairs.

NICELY (VO)

But when they found me three days gone, the only person to shed a tear was that crazy old lady, lived upstairs.

004 INT. NICELY'S APARTMENT - HALLWAY - NIGHT 004

Nicely opens his front door, sets the briefcase down. A plain brown ENVELOPE lies on the doormat.

NICELY (VO)

Well. Not crazy exactly. I guess seven or eight decades of this place would do that to anyone.

Nicely lifts the envelope, tears it open, draws out a sheet of paper filled with handwriting.

Smiles, starts to read.

005 INT. NICELY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUED

005

Nicely steps into the living room, crumples the paper and envelope, dumps them on the sideboard.

Lifts a bottle of WHISKY and a GLASS. Crosses to the window, pulls the cork from the bottle.

Neon light PULSES outside. Rain weeps on the glass. Shadow rain weeps on Nicely's face.

Nicely re-corks the bottle. Sets the bottle and glass on the coffee table. Turns, sees:

SOMEBODY ELSE in the room. Indistinct. A gloved hand extends from the shadows, grips a silenced semi-automatic HANDGUN.

Nicely stares.

The gun SNAPS.

Nicely reels into the coffee table, knocks the bottle to the floor with a wet CRUNCH. Falls after it, lands in a mess of broken glass and spirits.

The smouldering cartridge rolls across the floor, comes to rest by the assassin's boot. A gloved thumb and forefinger retrieve the shell.

Nicely crumples up, listens: footsteps/floorboards/front door. A wedge of stairwell LIGHT spears the room. Nicely looks into the glare.

The assassin lifts the briefcase, walks out, pulls the door shut.

Nicely lies still amidst the room's long, angular shadows.

NICELY (VO)

The week began on a Monday. Always does
if you're a pessimist.

TITLE OVER BLACK: REFLECTIONS OF A PRIVATE EYE

006 INT. NICELY'S OFFICE - DAY

006

Sunlight bleeds through grimy windows. Nicely sits at his desk, cigarette dangling from his lips, glass of whisky under his nose.

006 CONTINUED

006

NICELY (VO)

I was drinking off a hangover. Little project I'd been working on for a couple years now.

On his desk, gathering dust: telephone, typewriter, some stationery, an ashtray.

NICELY (VO)

Scotch, neat, for breakfast. Nicely done.

Nicely puts his head down, closes his eyes. Turned away from him, a FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH: Nicely aged 30, clean-cut, suit unruffled, smiling.

NICELY (VO)

That's me: Dick Nicely. Alcoholic. Registered voter. Private investigator.

A delicate KNOCK at the door. Nicely opens his eyes, sits up:

One high-heeled foot steps in, followed by another: BRIGID (35) peers into the office.

BRIGID

Good morning. Um... are you Mr Nicely?

NICELY

Last time I checked the door.

BRIGID

Thank goodness. Well... I don't quite know where to begin.

Nicely stands, trots around the desk, offers a chair:

NICELY

Well, why don't you take the weight off those high heels and tell me your name, sweetheart?

Brigid sits. Nicely perches on the edge of the desk, grabs a pencil, roots around for a notebook.

BRIGID

Thank you. It's Brigid Levin. Well... Brigid Astor.

006 CONTINUED

006

NICELY

The lady doesn't know her name.

BRIGID

Levin is my husband's name.

Nicely flips open his notebook:

NICELY

Uh-huh.

Brigid starts to sob, dabs her face with a handkerchief.

BRIGID

Oh, Mr Nicely, it's awful. I think he's having an affair. An affair, do you know what that's like?

NICELY

... From which angle?

Brigid cries. Nicely puts an awkward hand on her shoulder.

NICELY

There, there... there... there, now...

Brigid wipes away her tears, frets her handkerchief.

BRIGID

I apologise, Mr Nicely, for my lack of composure.

NICELY

Oh, I think you're composed just fine.

Nicely returns to his chair, puts the desk between them.

Brigid looks around, turns the framed photograph towards her.

BRIGID

What are your rates?

NICELY

You'll get a day's work for a C-note, plus a bonus if I attract any violence.

BRIGID

Oh, my husband's not dangerous.

Nicely hunches over his desk, notebook open:

006 CONTINUED

006

NICELY

It's an unpredictable world, Mrs...
 Brigid. And men become dangerous when
 it comes to beautiful women. Now: let's
 begin at the beginning.

Brigid smiles a thin smile, starts to tell her story. We
 pull back and DISSOLVE TO:

007 EXT. NICELY'S CAR - ON THE CITY STREETS - DAY

007

Nicely drives through the city.

NICELY (VO)

The dame spun a sordid tale. The kind
 they have in those housewives'
 magazines. She had a husband. A man.

008 EXT. COMMERCIAL STREET - DAY

008

JOE LEVIN (38) carries the BRIEFCASE along the street and
 into an office building.

NICELY (VO)

To untrained eyes, a regular working
 Joe. Started coming home late, spending
 a lotta cash, eating a lotta salad.

Nicely stands in a doorway across the street, watches over
 the top of a newspaper. He folds the paper, dumps it in a
 trash can:

A glimpse of the headline: SON OF MOB BOSS STILL MISSING.

009 EXT. ALLEYWAY - BETWEEN OFFICE BUILDINGS - DAY

009

Nicely climbs on a fire escape, looks across the alleyway:

A window on Levin's office: he sits alone at an untidy
 desk, scribbles in a ledger.

NICELY (VO)

I watched him cook a pile of books and
 waited for the heat to make him
 thirsty. I was already there.

Nicely takes a swig from his hip flask.

010 INT. WINE BAR - EVENING

010

Nicely sits in a nook, nurses a whisky. Surveys the dark corners, brushed metal and hushed conversation.

Levin sits with a beer and a newspaper. Checks his pocket watch.

NICELY (VO)

Some private eyes choose this line of work for the danger. Others for the loose women. I didn't. I liked to watch ordinary people do ordinary things.

A YOUNG WOMAN enters the bar, sashays past Levin's table. Levin doesn't look up.

NICELY (VO)

Loose women were just an occupational hazard.

MILLER (28), dressed in a sharp suit, moves casually past Levin, drops a thick envelope in his lap.

NICELY (VO)

Loose women and danger.

Nicely turns away, sips his drink.

011 EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHT

011

Levin fumbles with the door of his apartment building.

Nicely sits in his car across the street. Reflected in the windscreen: Levin carries the briefcase inside. RAIN starts to fall. Nicely starts the car and drives away.

012 EXT. ALLEYWAY - INDUSTRIAL AREA - NIGHT

012

A flashbulb POPS. KEN MUSGROVE (40) steps back from a small gathering of POLICE and flashlights, changes the bulb.

Nicely pulls his car up at the mouth of the alleyway, rolls down the window. Musgrove ambles over.

MUSGROVE

Evenin' Nicely. New car?

NICELY

Old car. New corpse?

012 CONTINUED

012

MUSGROVE

It's not who you think it is.

NICELY

Who do I think it is?

MUSGROVE

You think it's Ricky Russo Junior. Well it ain't. Just another one of Carter's henchmen. It's gonna be back and forth like this until they find the kid.

NICELY

Probably shacked up with some dame.

MUSGROVE

While daddy tears the whole city apart.

NICELY

... You still at the Post, Ken?

MUSGROVE

Yeah. You know, they put the crime desk up against the showbiz desk. Some city.

Nicely nods. The men look at the crime scene.

013 INT. NICELY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

013

Nicely walks in, habitually lifts the bottle of whisky and a glass from the sideboard, takes them to the window. Pops the cork. Pours.

014 INT. DINER - DAY

014

PHOTOGRAPHS: Levin leaves home with the briefcase; Levin goes to work; Levin meets CARTER (35) a hard-faced man in a suit.

Brigid leafs through the pictures, holds up the last one:

Levin and Carter: crazy hair, beards and eye patches inked over their faces.

BRIGID

I don't understand, Mr Nicely.

Nicely sits back from the table, puts down his coffee:

014 CONTINUED

014

NICELY

There's no mistress. No bimbo. No cheap broad on the side. There's no affair.

BRIGID

I recognise the other man.

NICELY

Yeah, Boss Carter. What exactly do you know about your husband's work?

BRIGID

Joe doesn't talk about it. Lately he's been carrying around a... a briefcase. When I asked about it, he told me to mind my own business. Some husband.

A WAITRESS drops some plates. Reflex: Nicely checks over his shoulder, moves around the table, sits next to Brigid.

NICELY

You know who Russo is, though.

BRIGID

... Yes, of course.

NICELY

Russo Junior's disappeared. Two weeks now. The smart money says: if they had a body to fingerprint, Carter's fingerprints are the ones they'd find.

BRIGID

You don't think Joe's mixed up in all that?

NICELY

... Joe?

BRIGID

My husband.

NICELY

Oh, yeah. I don't know. Where'd you go last night?

BRIGID

I wrote him a note and booked a suite at the Bryson. I'd already given up on the marriage. It was built on a lie, Mr Nicely.

014 CONTINUED

014

NICELY

Dick.

BRIGID

... Dick. I couldn't stand it any longer, so I did something about it.

NICELY

You did something about it after all this time.

Brigid's hand trembles on the table. Nicely puts his hand on top.

BRIGID

Once I decide what I want, there's no compromise.

015 INT. NICELY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - EVENING

015

A record player spins slow JAZZ. Nicely taps a cigarette in the ashtray on his bedside table, lies back in bed, smokes. Brigid lies beside him.

BRIGID

I never imagined it could be like that, Dick.

NICELY

You should see me with twins.

BRIGID

I think I know what's in the briefcase.

NICELY

I was wondering when you'd get to that.

BRIGID

What do you mean?

NICELY

I mean it's been waiting at the back of my mind, right where you left it.

Nicely kisses her. Brigid continues:

BRIGID

I think it's cash money inside. Enough to start over.

015 CONTINUED

015

NICELY

Read that page again for me, sweetheart.

BRIGID

Think about it. A case full of money. You and I. Some island or a small town, where we don't have to pretend anything to anybody...

NICELY

Sounds tempting.

BRIGID

You don't trust me.

NICELY

You're champagne for the eyes, my dear. But I don't trust anyone.

Brigid takes the cigarette from Nicely, takes a drag.

BRIGID

Trust can be overrated.

NICELY

So can a case full of money. I hadn't finished with that.

Nicely takes the cigarette back. Brigid slips out of bed, gathers her things.

BRIGID

Fine. Fine, if inertia's what makes you happy.

Nicely lifts the whisky from the table, watches her.

BRIGID

But I think I could make you happier, Dick. And it ain't my place to say, but you sure could use the money, too.

Brigid opens the door, looks back at him:

BRIGID

I'm used to a certain standard of things.

Leaves, slams the door behind her. Nicely sips whisky.

015 CONTINUED

015

NICELY (VO)

Yeah, I knew this game, sure as I knew
the aces.

016A EXT. RIVERSIDE - UNDER RAILWAY BRIDGE - DAY

016A

Nicely looks down at the river, smokes.

NICELY (VO)

The broad knew how to make a deal.
Husband has a case full of money. Fella
gutsy enough to rob him gets the cash
and the wife.

016B EXT. CITY STREET - OUTSIDE LUCY'S BAR - NIGHT

016B

Nicely crosses the road to Lucy's Bar:

NICELY (VO)

Gets freedom, far as he can run. And
running is something I've wanted to do
for a very long time.

017 INT. LUCY'S BAR - NIGHT

017

Nicely enters the bar, looks around the BUSTLING interior:

Levin sits at a table with Carter and Miller, briefcase on
the floor at his feet. Lively JAZZ drowns out their chat.

Nicely reaches the bar and is braced by LUCY (26):

LUCY

Didn't I bar you from this dump,
Nicely?

NICELY

We just ended up on the wrong foot is
all.

LUCY

Maybe you're lookin' for trouble.

NICELY

Maybe I'm lookin' for whisky, neat.

Lucy pours him a drink. Nicely watches the mirror behind
the bar:

017 CONTINUED

017

Levin puts the case on the table, opens it: angled so that only Carter can see. Miller glances around the bar.

Lucy sets Nicely's drink down on the bar.

NICELY

Know anything about that guy?

LUCY

No.

NICELY

... Oh, yeah? Which one?

LUCY

All of 'em.

NICELY

Regulars?

LUCY

Occasionals. Never together.

NICELY

What does that mean?

Lucy puts a whisky down on the bar.

LUCY

It means it's time to move along, Nicely.

NICELY

My tab still good around here?

LUCY

Don't make me chuckle.

Nicely pays, sips his drink.

NICELY

Shame. This was getting to be just like old times.

LUCY

If you're feeling morose about it, cry into your Scotch.

NICELY

It's watered down enough, don't you think?

017 CONTINUED

017

Lucy goes to serve someone else. Nicely carries his drink to a corner.

018 INT. LUCY'S BAR - RESTROOM - NIGHT

018

Nicely stands over the sink, WHISTLES, writes "NICELY DOES IT!!!" on the mirror in lipstick.

Movement by the door. Nicely turns, sees Levin, Carter and Miller. Miller holds a gun.

NICELY

Hi, fellas. Did you want the soap?

MILLER

Show us your hands, Nicely.

NICELY

They're just like everyone else's.

The men step forward. Nicely raises his hands. Carter PUNCHES Nicely into BLACKNESS.

019 INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

019

SPLASH: a bucket of water rouses Nicely rudely. Tied to a wooden chair. Beside him, a desk lamp on a table: the only source of light.

Standing over Nicely: Levin and Carter. Behind them, barely visible, Miller stands with the briefcase at his feet.

CARTER

In the mood for egg and toast, Nicely?

Nicely blinks himself into full cognition:

NICELY

No, but I'll take a small brandy and a cigarette if you got one.

Carter looks at Levin. Levin PUNCHES Nicely in the face.

CARTER

That was just to soften you up, Nicely.
Don't choke on your teeth.

Levin looks down at his hand, opens and closes his fist.

019 CONTINUED

019

NICELY

I'm sure you fellas are aware this kind of business is frowned upon.

CARTER

What do you know about our business?

NICELY

I know it's caught somebody's interest.

LEVIN

Who?

NICELY

Oh, female, seductress, habitual liar. Likes jazz... maybe.

Levin looks uncertain.

CARTER

Well, we'd like to talk to her.

NICELY

Let me go, I'll set you up.

CARTER

Oh, sure. We'll just let you go right now, huh?

Carter laughs. Miller laughs accordingly.

NICELY

Well, I can't set you up with her from here, so it looks like we've reached an impasse.

CARTER

You know all the smart words, don'tcha? Maybe y'oughta open a bookshop.

NICELY

Speaking of which... Joe, you do the books for Carter here, or for Mr Russo?

Levin shoots Carter an urgent look:

CARTER

Keep askin' questions, Nicely, and we'll put that rope around your neck.

019 CONTINUED

019

NICELY

Maybe I could give you a hand with the knots. See, Daddy was a sailor and mommy could bend her fingers backward.

Carter's eyes widen as he understands:

Nicely kicks away the chair. His arms trail rope. He grabs the LAMP, swings at Levin: CRUNCH.

Carter advances. Nicely swings the lamp, keeps him at bay.

Miller drops the case, runs over, hand in his jacket --

Carter swings the chair. Nicely parries with the lamp, trips over Levin's unconscious body --

The lamp clatters to the floor -- light arcs back and forth over the walls --

Nicely's shadow gets up -- Nicely looks --

Light sweeps over Miller as he draws a gun. Carter barrels into him from behind. Miller's SHOT goes wide.

Nicely grabs the lamp, looks over his shoulder -- Carter's shadow trips over the cord -

Nicely turns off the lamp -- TOTAL DARKNESS -- the lamp FLASHES on the concrete floor -- GUNSHOTS, MUZZLE FLARE --

The lamp flashes on the briefcase -- Nicely scoops it up -- a bullet SHATTERS the bulb --

020 EXT. ALLEYWAY - OUTSIDE WAREHOUSE - CONTINUED

020

Nicely emerges from a side door at the top of a narrow fire escape. Tucks the briefcase under his arm, scrambles down the metal stairs.

Above and behind him, Miller bursts through the door --

Nicely follows the fire escape down the side of the building -- Miller's footsteps CLANG above him --

Nicely reaches the alleyway, ducks behind the stairs, looks up through the metalwork:

Miller clatters down, builds momentum. Grabs the railing, swings into the alleyway --

020 CONTINUED

020

Nicely holds out the briefcase. Miller swings straight into it - CLUMP -- Miller falls to the ground unconscious.

Nicely turns, does a DOUBLE-TAKE:

Brigid stands at the mouth of the alleyway. Smiles.

021 INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

021

Brigid pours a glass of whisky at the sideboard. Reflected in the mirror: Nicely sits on the bed, holds a bag of ice to his forehead.

BRIGID

We have the case, Dick. What's turning that smile of yours upside-down?

NICELY

Your husband. Russo's bookkeeper, not Carter's. Makes me curious.

BRIGID

Curiosity killed the cat.

NICELY

And the tortoise beat the hare, but I don't buy that one either. Take a drink, then you should go.

Brigid takes a drink, passes the glass to Nicely.

BRIGID

Go where?

NICELY

Back to Joe. For a couple days, anyway.

BRIGID

But we have the case...

Nicely stands, grabs Brigid's arms:

NICELY

Yeah, we have the case. And they know I took it. We can't both disappear at the same time.

BRIGID

How do I know you won't just run away with the money?

021 CONTINUED

021

Nicely kisses her. Brigid doesn't resist.

NICELY
... Who would I spend it on?

Nicely turns away, sips whisky:

NICELY
Anyway. I got everything I need for a while.

Brigid collects her bag:

BRIGID
That's the second time you've let me walk out on you, Nicely.

NICELY
I got a lot of bad habits.

Brigid takes a single cube from the bag of ice.

BRIGID
You know what happens to creatures with shells, don't you? Other creatures turn 'em over to watch 'em squirm.

Drops the cube in Nicely's glass. Leaves, closes the door.

Nicely rubs his chin. Goes to take a drink, stops himself.

NICELY (VO)
At that moment it came together like a twelve year-old malt.

022 INT. HOTEL - STAIRWELL/ELEVATOR - CONTINUED

022

Brigid closes the cage elevator door behind her, looks out through the bars.

Nicely storms along the corridor from his door.

NICELY (VO)
Levin had a mean left hook for a numbers man, and no diamond ring to break the skin.

Nicely reaches the elevator, stares through the bars.

Brigid stares back with a sad smile.

022 CONTINUED

022

NICELY (VO)
 Didn't know what was waiting for me
 then. I do now.
 (beat)
 Hell of a perspective from up here.

The elevator carries Brigid down and out of sight.

TITLE OVER BLACK: REFLECTIONS OF A FEMME FATALE

023 INT. BURLESQUE CLUB - BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

023

A wave of applause carries Brigid past a curtain and along the corridor. STAGEHANDS and SHOWGIRLS bustle. BURLESQUE music steps in over the applause.

Brigid approaches one of the dressing rooms, the door ajar:

RICKY (OS)
 ...just the prettiest.

SKYLAR (OS)
 Stop.

RICKY (OS)
 Sure, just the prettiest girl out there tonight.

SKYLAR (OS)
 Ricky...

024 INT. BURLESQUE CLUB - DRESSING ROOM - CONTINUED

024

Brigid steps inside. RICKY RUSSO (19) paws showgirl SKYLAR JONES (22). Pulls her into an improvised waltz.

BRIGID
 Looks like you're on the wrong side of this door, mister.

RICKY
 Oh, ah... I was just congratulating...

SKYLAR
 Skylar.

RICKY
 ... Yeah. On the show.

024 CONTINUED

024

SKYLAR

This is Ricky Russo.

BRIGID

Junior, I take it.

RICKY

Enchanté.

Ricky steps towards Brigid, extends his hand. She ignores the gesture, crowds him to the door.

BRIGID

Did you send her flowers?

RICKY

Flowers?

BRIGID

A congratulatory note: Skylar, care of the box office. First, get out of my club.

RICKY

What if I wanna send you flowers?

BRIGID

The name's Brigid. Same address.

RICKY

What if they go to the wrong Brigid?

BRIGID

I am the wrong Brigid.

Brigid closes the door in Ricky's face, turns to Skylar.

SKYLAR

You can't talk to him like that. Don't you know who that is?

BRIGID

I know who he had his hands on.

Brigid moves closer, kisses Skylar. Skylar kisses her back.

Skylar sees their reflection in the mirror. Brigid follows her gaze, smiles. Skylar slinks away to a rack of clothes.

BRIGID (VO)

Let's begin at the beginning.

025 INT. JAZZ CLUB - NIGHT

025

JAZZ plays over the after-show party. GANGSTERS mingle with MUSICIANS, SINGERS, SHOWGIRLS and PRESS. Skylar sits at a crowded table, distracted.

BRIGID (VO)

When you know your nature is considered immoral by polite society, you learn how to embrace society at arm's length.

Brigid stands at the bar, looks across the room at Skylar.

BRIGID (VO)

Skylar could hide from anybody in a crowd. But one-on-one, it was all she could do to hold herself together. She needed a safe place. She needed me.

Flashbulbs POP. People DANCE. Brigid looks around:

Skylar's gone.

Brigid pushes through the party to the window, looks out:

Ricky has his arm around Skylar, leads her away along the street. Skylar glances through the window --

A FLASH spins Brigid around -- the NOISE of the room floods in over the music --

Ken Musgrove smiles, fits a new bulb to his camera:

MUSGROVE

Thanks. How about your best side now?

Brigid smiles like a pro. Musgrove takes another picture.

026 INT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - FIRST FLOOR - NIGHT

026

Brigid hurries quietly up the stairs, finds Skylar sitting outside a half-open apartment door, catatonic. Looks right and left, pulls Skylar to her feet and hustles her inside:

027 INT. BACHELOR PAD - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

027

Skylar gulps whisky from the bottle. Brigid joins her at the window, twists the venetian blinds shut.

BRIGID

Did you call anyone else?

027 CONTINUED

027

SKYLAR

No.

BRIGID

Anyone see you out there?

SKYLAR

No.

BRIGID

Unless they looked through their peep-hole.

Skylar lifts the bottle to drink. Brigid stops her:

BRIGID

Whose place is this?

SKYLAR

It's his pied-à-terre.

BRIGID

He didn't borrow somebody else's keys for the night?

SKYLAR

If he did, he brought his own mail and photographs for dressing.

Skylar wrenches the bottle free, drinks. Brigid looks down:

Ricky lies on the floor, dead, hair matted with blood.

BRIGID

How did it happen?

SKYLAR

He brought me up for a drink and then he got fresh.

BRIGID

... And?

SKYLAR

And then he got fresh.

Brigid SLAPS her:

BRIGID

Then you let him get fresh. Don't you know who that is?

027 CONTINUED

027

SKYLAR

I told you who that is.

BRIGID

Then don't come up to his place for a drink, thinking he wants a drink. And don't drink.

Brigid grabs the bottle. Skylar turns away, starts to sob.

028 INT. BACHELOR PAD - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

028

In the kitchenette, Brigid rinses the glass in the sink.

BRIGID (VO)

When people talk about the perfect murder, they mean the perfect getaway. That's the hard part for a man to get right.

Brigid and Skylar roll Ricky into a shower curtain.

BRIGID (VO)

But any housewife could tell you how to do it. She may even have a plan ready and waiting for the right opportunity.

Brigid sees a spare pair of Ricky's SHOES, picks them up.

029 EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

029

Brigid walks through wet grass in Ricky's shoes.

Skylar, caked in soil, steps back from a freshly-dug hole and lowers the shovel. Brigid takes a look.

BRIGID

Deeper.

030A EXT. BRIGID'S CAR - ON A CITY STREET - DAWN

030A

Brigid and Skylar sit in the car. Brigid passes Skylar a hip flask. Skylar takes a drink.

BRIGID

Don't disappear. Don't do anything different. But forget about me for a few weeks.

030A CONTINUED

030A

SKYLAR

Forget about you?

BRIGID

My husband works for his father. Forget about me. Just don't forget to remember me again.

Brigid leans in. Skylar kisses her.

030B INT. BRIGID'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - MORNING

030B

Brigid washes her hands, splashes her face. Hums a song. Sees herself in the mirror. Her face hardens.

[031 MOVED

031]

032 EXT. RIVERSIDE WALK/BRIDGE - EVENING

032

Levin and Brigid stroll hand-in-hand along the footpath.

BRIGID (VO)

Skylar kept her distance. I played the supportive wife.

They pass beneath a road bridge. Levin pauses, gives Brigid a kiss. They continue.

A MAN IN A SUIT approaches from the opposite direction.

BRIGID (VO)

When Ricky didn't come home, Russo thought Carter had had him killed. He killed two of Carter's men. Carter retaliated. The war began.

The man looks at Brigid, at Levin -- nods as he passes --

Brigid's pace falters slightly. Levin looks at the man, looks at Brigid. Shrugs. They stroll.

GUNFIRE rattles behind them --

Levin pushes Brigid to the ground -- Brigid stares --

The man in the suit falls to the ground. TWO OTHER MEN IN SUITS flee into the trees.

033 INT. BRIGID'S APARTMENT - HALLWAY/KITCHEN - EVENING

032

The phone rings. Brigid quick-steps out from the living room, grabs the receiver:

BRIGID

Hello?

SKYLAR (off)

Brigid, are you all right? Did you hear the news?

Brigid looks into the kitchen -- sees Levin's shadow --

BRIGID

I'm sorry, I think you have the wrong number.

SKYLAR (off)

Brigid, please...

Brigid hangs up. Gathers herself. Steps into the kitchen:

Levin stands over the counter, removes a handgun from a lock-box, places it ceremonially on the counter.

LEVIN

Coffee if you want some.

BRIGID

What are you doing, Joe? Did Russo tell you to --

LEVIN

Just self-defence. This will go on and on, baby. They will kill each other until somebody gets to me.

BRIGID

They won't stop at you, sweetheart.

LEVIN

Thank you. The point is to draw a line under it before it goes that far.

Levin takes a clip from the lock-box, slides it into the gun.

034 INT. BACHELOR PAD - MAIN ROOM - DAY

033

Levin looks around Ricky's apartment. His gaze falls on the sideboard:

034 CONTINUED

034

Mail. Opened and unopened.

BRIGID (VO)

The chump started his own investigation. Used that accountant's brain of his. Would've been easier if he'd just gone out and shot somebody.

Levin opens envelopes. Finds VIP tickets for the burlesque club.

035 INT. BURLESQUE CLUB - BACKSTAGE - DAY

035

Brigid waits in the wings, looks along the corridor:

Levin speaks with Skylar, nods his head, their Q&A drowned out by MUSIC from the stage. Two DANCERS approach: Levin turns away, braces them with questions. Skylar moves off, looks along the corridor at Brigid.

Brigid turns into the dressing room.

031 [MOVED] EXT. ALLEYWAY - OUTSIDE BURLESQUE CLUB - NIGHT

031

Brigid stands by the stage door, smokes with a trembling hand. Distant GUNFIRE. Brigid looks up the alleyway:

A GANGSTER runs across the mouth of the alleyway, tries the metal gate, moves on. GUNSHOTS chase him.

Brigid moves into the shadows. Inside the club, the CROWD goes wild.

036 EXT. CANAL - UNDER ROAD BRIDGE - DAY

036

Brigid paces right and left across the path. Skylar smokes, watches the water.

SKYLAR

I've been over that night a hundred times. I'm tired. I'm tired and I miss you.

BRIGID

You didn't take a taxi together. You didn't buy a pack of smokes. You didn't make a phone call. Nobody saw you.

036 CONTINUED

036

SKYLAR

You were the only one who saw us.

Brigid turns away. Skylar flicks her cigarette into the canal.

SKYLAR

I miss you, Brigid. Why haven't you fixed this?

Brigid hurries away. Skylar stares after her.

037 INT. NEWSPAPER OFFICE - BULLPEN - DAY

037

Musgrove holds a strip of negatives up to the light from the window.

Around him, the BUSY OFFICE: typewriters, telephones, urgent buzz. Brigid walks in, looks at the mess of papers and pictures spread over the nearby desks.

Musgrove turns, smiles:

MUSGROVE

Picture tells a thousand words.

BRIGID

And a song paints a picture. They don't have you on the crime beat anymore, Ken?

MUSGROVE

Sure. Crime and showbiz got merged. I guess they figured I'd be talking to a lot of the same people.

DOBBS (off)

Musgrove!

They turn: HARRY DOBBS (35) storms in, red-faced:

DOBBS

Your coverage of this tit-for-tat murder spree is a shambolic squandering of ink and parchment!

Musgrove takes off his glasses, tries to shrink behind a filing cabinet.

Brigid looks down at the photographs.

DOBBS

Ten days into a shameless, apocalyptic blood feud and you're still trying to get away with more commas than content, boy. It's a mockery of our readers' patience, and of the industrial revolution that made nationwide print journalism economically viable.

(to a nearby JOURNALIST)

Don't you try and look me in the eye!

Brigid rummages, finds NEGATIVES from the after-show party.

Oblivious, Musgrove pinches the bridge of his nose.

DOBBS

I want you out on the beat where the cops don't dare, and I don't want you back here filing copy until you've got spent bullet casings in the soles of your shoes!

Unobserved, Brigid slips the negatives into her bag.

DOBBS

Now, there's a boy out there. Dead in a ditch or eloped with some harlot -- wherever he is, that's your story. Hitch a ride with the hoodlums, reload their Tommy guns for all I care. You just find that boy! Don't just stand there listening to me talk. Get on with it!

Dobbs turns on his heel and storms out.

Musgrove recovers, shares a look with Brigid. Puts his glasses back on, looks down at the photographs on the desk.

MUSGROVE

Your husband picked 'em up. Said you needed them for publicity... I wasn't gonna say no to him.

BRIGID

Oh. Good.

Brigid heads for the door. Musgrove turns to the window:

MUSGROVE

You sure looked beautiful...

038 INT. BRIGID'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - EVENING

038

Brigid enters, hovers in the doorway:

Levin stands over the counter, snaps the BRIEFCASE shut.

LEVIN

Hi, honey.

BRIGID

Thought you hated that old thing. Makes you look like an accountant, you said.

Levin puts the briefcase away in a corner.

BRIGID

You always take your ring off when you go out to do business.

LEVIN

I have a high opinion of you.

BRIGID

And so you should.

Brigid draws back, looks towards the case:

BRIGID

What d'you carry around in that anyway? A sandwich and a dirty magazine?

Levin leans on the counter, gives Brigid a look:

LEVIN

Honey. Did you ever meet Ricky Russo?

BRIGID

... Did I ever meet him?

LEVIN

Did you ever see him in person.

BRIGID

I don't think so.

LEVIN

He spent a lot of time at the club.

BRIGID

Probably. I wouldn't know.

Levin glances back at the case, steps closer.

038 CONTINUED

038

LEVIN

I found something. Put an end to this violence. It wasn't Carter who killed the kid.

BRIGID

Joe. If Russo knew you were running around, looking into --

LEVIN

He won't know. I cannot tell him I dug this up. Somebody on Carter's side has to show him.

BRIGID

If it comes from Carter, Russo won't believe it...

LEVIN

Baby, I got the whole thing. Who Ricky went home with. Statements, people at the club who know the girl, saw her acting funny this last week. Russo puts her under the lights, she'll talk. He just needs a good enough reason to grab her.

Levin pulls Brigid into an embrace:

LEVIN

I'm looking out for us. I have to look out for us, don't I?

Brigid stares over his shoulder.

BRIGID

Course you do, honey. Of course you do.

039 EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAY

039

Skylar stands opposite Brigid's building. Brigid throws a coat over her shoulders, hurries across the street to meet her:

BRIGID

You'd better be selling something.

SKYLAR

Don't talk to me like that. You slipped up.

039 CONTINUED

039

BRIGID

You slipped up first, remember?

Brigid hustles Skylar across the street to a set of steps:

SKYLAR

How did Ken miss us in the photograph?

BRIGID

I got in the way. Didn't have the same effect on my husband.

SKYLAR

Well you'd better get in the way again.

They stop. Brigid faces Skylar:

BRIGID

Skylar, you oughta run. You oughta see what this old town looks like from the hills.

SKYLAR

I'll run if you run with me.

BRIGID

I'll come find you when it's safe.

Skylar adjusts Brigid's coat:

SKYLAR

You're the running type. Not me. I could never get anywhere without you. You were there for me when it counted. You were there. Remember?

Skylar walks off down the steps. Brigid stares after her.

BRIGID (VO)

That's when I found you in the phone book.

040A INT. HOTEL - ELEVATOR - NIGHT

040A

Brigid rides the elevator.

BRIGID (VO)

The rest you already know, or can extrapolate.

040B INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

040B

Nicely fiddles with the lock of the briefcase, pries it open with a knife.

BRIGID (VO)

I'm sure by now you've opened the case.
Maybe you forgave us. Maybe you'd have
let us get away with it.

041A EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - COURTYARD - NIGHT

041A

Brigid checks over her shoulder, opens the courtyard gate with a gloved hand.

041B INT. HOTEL - STAIRWELL/ELEVATOR - NIGHT

041B

Nicely carries the case to the elevator.

BRIGID (VO)

But we still need a fall guy. We need
to tie it off.

042A EXT. NICELY'S CAR - ON THE CITY STREETS - NIGHT

042A

Nicely drives through the rain and traffic.

042B INT. NICELY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

042B

Brigid stands in shadows in the corner, waits.

BRIGID (VO)

The police will find my husband's gun.
Carter will blame Russo Senior. Poor
Joe will blame them both.

043 INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - STAIRWELL - NIGHT

043

Nicely reads the letter. Rain drips from his fedora, wets the ink.

BRIGID (VO)

Skylar and I will be free.

044 INT. NICELY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

044

Nicely stands by the window. Shadow rain on his face.

044 CONTINUED

044

BRIGID (VO)

My favourite stories were always the ones where the woman outsmarts the men. There aren't many. This is one.

Re-corks the bottle. Sets the bottle and glass down on the coffee table. Turns:

Brigid steps out of the shadows. Raises a silenced handgun, aims steadily. Neon light PULSES. Brigid pulls the trigger.

SNAP. Nicely reels into the coffee table, knocks the whisky bottle to the floor and falls after it. CRUNCH.

Brigid lowers the gun, retrieves the spent cartridge.

Steps around Nicely as he settles. Collects the paper and envelope from the sideboard. Lifts the BRIEFCASE. Slips out the front door.

Nicely lies dead.

045 EXT. SIXTY STEPS - NIGHT

045

Brigid approaches the top of the steps, looks around: she's alone on the street. Brigid takes the gun from her pocket and drops it on the sidewalk.

Turns down the stone steps: they curve between a high wall and an apartment building to the street below. A railing runs down the centre.

A figure emerges from the shadows, climbs the steps, other side of the railing.

Brigid keeps going, slows down -- stares --

Levin steps into the light, looks up at her. He's bruised and bleeding and angry.

Brigid steps backwards, up a few steps --

Levin advances, picks up his pace --

Brigid turns, loses her footing, grabs the railing --

Levin runs up the steps towards her, scrambles over the railing -- Brigid swings the briefcase, HITS Levin as he lands on her side --

045 CONTINUED

045

Levin wrenches the case from her grip.

LEVIN

Was it you and the broad?

BRIGID

Get away from me, Joe...

LEVIN

Was it you and the broad?

Levin raises the case -- Brigid kicks him in the shin -- he falls against the high wall, YELPS, grabs his leg --

Brigid crawls up a few steps, gets to her feet, looks up:

The gun lies on the sidewalk, glints in the streetlight.

Brigid scuttles up towards the gun.

Levin recovers, runs after her.

Brigid trips, sprawls across the steps near the top. Looks up --

The gun lies just out of reach --

Levin gets on top of her, gets his hands around her throat.

Brigid STRUGGLES against his grip, CHOKES for air.

Skylar appears at the top of the steps, scoops up the gun, aims with a trembling hand --

Past a startled Brigid --

SHOOTS --

Levin takes the round in the chest, SLUMPS down on top of Brigid. Brigid looks at Levin, looks up at Skylar.

Skylar lowers the gun, stares at Brigid.

Brigid shrugs Levin's body onto the steps. Picks herself up.

Grabs the BRIEFCASE.

Hurries up the steps. Skylar drops the gun. Brigid drops the case. Skylar collapses in Brigid's arms.

046 EXT. BRIGID'S CAR - ON A COUNTRY ROAD - MORNING 046

Skylar drives. Brigid stares out at the countryside.

NICELY (VO)

I didn't exactly endorse the dame's plan. But as long as I was outta the picture, I didn't mind seeing her free and clear. Somewhere far away from here.

047 INT. JAZZ BAR - EVENING 047

A stage in the corner of a crowded bar. A microphone stand.

NICELY (VO)

Singing, maybe.

Brigid steps up to the microphone, looks out over the crowd:

NICELY (VO)

Where we were going, they had all the best tunes.

Brigid sings a sad, jazzy song as the CREDITS ROLL.