

WAYS TO BE WICKED

by

Glenn Gers

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Valuable Illusions, Inc.

writingforscreens@gmail.com

BEFORE IT BEGINS:

ZAJA (O.S.)

Wyatt?

(beat)

Wakey-wakey.

(beat)

Up and at 'em. Rise and shine.

WYATT'S P.O.V.:

A two-barrel derringer pistol pointing directly at us.

The muzzles are small -- a .22 -- but this close, they look like cannons.

Behind them:

ZAJA. That's the whole name, like Shakira or Rihanna. Mid-twenties. Edgy-and-stylish. A rock-pop diva, sort of a Stefani/P!nk/Gaga mashup.

With a touch of Phil Spector.

ZAJA

Happy anniversary, honey.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Zaja is straddling her husband, **WYATT CHANDLER**, on their luxurious bed, in expensive lingerie.

Holding the gun in both hands, inches from his face.

ZAJA

Can you believe it? What this year has been like?

Wyatt is also in his mid-20s, good-looking. Boxers, a plain t-shirt. The Midwest in his voice.

WYATT

It's definitely...unreal.

She looks at him over the pistol with real love. He, on the other hand, is a trifle distracted.

WYATT

Sweetie?

ZAJA

Yeah?

WYATT

What's with the gun?

She grins and rolls off him. Lying on her back, examining the weapon:

ZAJA

Isn't it great? Look: that's
"chased silver scrimshaw." And
this is mother-of-pearl.

Wyatt watches her squint into the twin barrels.

WYATT

Zaj...

ZAJA

It only holds two bullets.

She flips the catch and the dual-barrels flip down like a shotgun. Empty.

ZAJA

"Twenty-two caliber long-rifle."
Apparently that's not much
stopping power.

Meditative, she tries out beats with the phrase, aiming the gun at the ceiling in both hands:

ZAJA

*Bomp-bomp -- "stopping power" --
ch-ch-chhh: "stopping pow-er..."*

Thoughtful silence.

ZAJA

Nah.

She rolls over to get a box from the night-table drawer:

ZAJA

But I did some research, and in
the eye or the roof of the mouth?
It can kill.

Opens it: bullets, neatly arranged in rows.

WYATT

Where'd you get it?

ZAJA

On line.

As she loads two into the gun:

ZAJA

They only sell bullets in boxes of
fifty. Did you know that? What

(MORE)

ZAJA (CONT'D)

the hell does anybody need fifty
bullets for?

She snaps the barrels shut.

ZAJA

We only need two.

(beat)

One for you, then one for me.

(beat)

If I ever find out that you're
cheating.

Beat. Wyatt staring in the eyes of his gorgeous,
glamorous, dangerous wife. Who means this:

ZAJA

That is how much I love you.

Zaja sets the gun on the night-table, then rolls back to
him, blissful.

ZAJA

Didja get me anything?

WYATT

What am I gonna do: take your
money out of the bank and buy you
something?

ZAJA

It's our money now.

WYATT

You make it. It's yours.

He gets out of bed and opens the doors to their walk-in
closet. Many apartments are smaller and not as well-lit.

WYATT

Anyway: what do you get for the
girl who has everything?

ZAJA

You forgot, didn't you?

He finds a folded sheet of paper in the pocket of a beat-
up leather jacket. Holds it out.

WYATT

I wrote you a poem.

ZAJA

Awwwww!

Truly touched and excited, she grabs it and sits back to
read. Watching her:

WYATT

It's really bad.

ZAJA

It is really bad.

(looks up)

And I love it.

(reading it aloud:)

"He was a mechanic -- "

WYATT

Oh, don't -- that's just mean --

ZAJA

*-- "And she was a star
And the places they lived
Were very very far
But they met through net
And he'll never forget
How she turned his life over --"*

WYATT

Okay, stop there --

ZAJA

*"And became his best -- low-
ver..."*

WYATT

(wincing)

See, that's where I ran into --

ZAJA

(trying again)

*" -- lover...
And then everything changed
'Cause even though she's deranged
Her crazy love is crazy true
So crazy love, I love you."*

She looks up at him.

WYATT

It's like Dr. Seuss went to high school. And flunked out.

ZAJA

This is the sweetest, greatest, most wonderful gift anyone has ever given me. C'mere --

She drags him back into the bed and kisses him.

He kisses back. They are good together. She's pulling down his boxer shorts, he's reaching under her silky shirt --

-- then suddenly she pulls away. Staring at him.

ZAJA
God. What is wrong with me?

WYATT
What?

ZAJA
I am just way too trusting.

She grabs the gun off the night-table, holds it up:

ZAJA
I don't even know if it works.

WYATT
Zaja...

He watches her open the french doors.

EXT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - POOL - CONTINUOUS

She aims at an inflatable lounge chair adrift in the swimming pool --

-- two-handed, one eye shut, a little scared: squeezes.

BANG! A plume of water sprays up near the chair.

She grimaces and tries again --

BANG! The chair takes a hit, starts to deflate.

ZAJA
Yesss!

She does a little victory shuffle and goes back in --

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

-- jumping back into the bed.

WYATT
You are insane, you know that?

ZAJA
Notoriously.

She tosses the gun, climbs hungrily and lovingly back on to her husband.

As they start to make love again --

-- Wyatt glances uneasily at the little pistol and the box of bullets on the bedside table.

INT. ARIANA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Posters of Zaja and pages torn from magazines all over an upscale teen's bedroom walls: Zaja in concert, fashion layouts, paparazzi shots.

ARIANA WEINBLUTH, 17, pretty and highly-polished, is getting ready for school and talking on her cell:

ARIANA

No -- they sold out in like, four hours!

ARIANA'S MOM (O.S.)

Ariana, you're gonna be late.

Ariana makes a horrific gargoyle-like tongue-out face at the open doorway, then calmly goes back to talking:

ARIANA

I couldn't. E-grounded. All night. I know: medieval.

Grabbing her backpack and heading out:

ARIANA

I have to get tickets. I have to get tickets. I have to get tickets.

INT. ARIANA'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

An airy open-plan with glorious appliances. It could be in a commercial for -- anything. ARIANA'S MOM and DAD are eating breakfast and reading on devices.

Ariana comes through, still on the phone:

ARIANA

Did she actually say that? Oh, and you know what else? I have to get tickets. Hang on.

She checks out the light, well-balanced breakfast at her place:

ARIANA

Are you kidding with this? Why not just put a beach ball in my belly and inflate it?

ARIANA'S MOM

We talked about this, young lady.

ARIANA

I'm reporting you to Child Protective Services.

ARIANA'S MOM

Good. I'll give you their number.

ARIANA

You are actively trying to make me vulnerable to cyber-bullying.

ARIANA'S MOM

I want Parent Protective Services.

Ariana's already on her way out.

EXT. ARIANA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

As she walks to her car, into her phone:

ARIANA

Sorry: had to take a session of emotional water-boarding. Wait:

Checks an incoming text -- stops dead:

ARIANA

Holy shit. Holy shit. I've been texting with this guy? He has tickets.

Unlocking the car and tossing her backpack in:

ARIANA

Where is Fox Hills? Is that skeevy? Come with me.

(listens)

Huh: let's check the How-Much-I-Care meter: "History test"...whoa! Zero percent. Ditch, bitch! Come on! I hate you.

She gets into her car.

VERY CLOSE ON -- A SCALE-MODEL CONCERT STAGE

A model stage-set: foam-core platforms and cardboard lighting trusses.

Heaps of stuff, ten (scale) feet high -- furniture, broken toys, cracked-open electronics, crushed cans -- all splashed in brightly-colored paint, graffiti-tagged.

Downstage center: a faceless four-inch-tall hand-made model Zaja, in a sparkly costume.

Zaja's actual face -- relatively enormous -- lowers into view, coming eye-level to the little figure.

She stares at it.

INT. ZAJA'S DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The model is on a long formal dining table.

All around, big drawing pads, markers, art pencils. Bold but unprofessional costume sketches propped on empty chairs, taped to the walls.

But she just keeps staring at the model.

This is a Zaja we have not yet seen: dead serious.

ZAJA

I'm freaking out here, Wyatt.

WYATT

I see that.

ZAJA

I made this big thing about how I was producing the next album. I was designing the sets and costumes and everything for the tour.

Intense. Wound very tight. Eyes on the little figure.

ZAJA

They had to start building this, like -- two weeks ago.

She straightens up, looking at him. He doesn't want to say it. But she just waits. So:

WYATT

It looks like a big pile of junk.

ZAJA

It is a big pile of junk. That's what it's about. It's about everybody's big pile of junk.

WYATT

Then it's great. I totally got it, you're good to go.

Shaking her head, looking back at the model.

ZAJA

No.

He watches her studying it from different angles.

WYATT

More junk.

ZAJA

No.

WYATT

Less junk.

ZAJA

No.

WYATT

Different junk.

Zaja shakes her head again. Eyes on the model. Fighting off an edge of very real panic.

ZAJA

Something is -- missing.

WYATT

Hey. You know what?

He comes over to gently turn her away from it -- wraps his arms around her. She lets him.

WYATT

If any of us could tell you how to do what you do -- then no one would really give a shit that you can do it.

Zaja nods, head against his chest.

ZAJA

You have no idea how lonely that is.

They let this hang over them.

ZAJA

What would I do without you?

Luckily, she can't see his face.

And the door opens. **QUINCEY** looks in: Zaja's assistant, 30ish, no sense of style but plenty of common sense.

QUINCEY

Zaja? I'm sorry. Hey, Wyatt.

Wyatt waves, still holding Zaja, who doesn't turn.

QUINCEY

Roland is here, with the Tour
Team? About the...

Quincey gestures uneasily toward the sketches and model.
Zaja winces. But she lets go of Wyatt. As she gives him
a quick parting kiss --

QUINCEY

Also: the neighbors called?
There's a guy in a car, down past
the paparazzi. Been there two
days, non-stop. You want me to --

ZAJA

Armed Response.

WYATT

Nah, I got it.

Zaja grins, watching Wyatt head out past Quincey:

ZAJA

You just want to get away from the
crazy lady.

WYATT

Hey -- finally got something I can
do around here.

He's gone. Zaja takes a last look at the model, then
with deep breath, burying her panic:

ZAJA

Okay -- hit me.

QUINCEY

(reading from tablet)
Linda Morris?

ZAJA

Tell her yes, but after Japan.

QUINCEY

Bob Nellinger? The shampoo guy.

ZAJA

Tell him to fuck off.

QUINCEY

Nicely?

ZAJA

Whatever.

INT. PARKED CAR - OUTSIDE ZAJA'S - SOON AFTER

NED BURDEN is scribbling in a worn spiral notebook: dense pages of neatly printed text, diagrams.

He is middle-aged. Wearing a shabby suit. Pale, could use a shave and a haircut. His car is a mess of take-out food containers, old clothes.

And a sea of annotated tabloid Zaja stories, gossip-site print-outs, torn-out magazine pages -- like a homeless version of the classic stalker pad.

Through the windshield, down the road: a cluster of PAPARAZZI SUVs parked across from Zaja's gates.

Burden opens the glove compartment, fishing among prescription pill-bottles -- shaking out a pill and finding an unfinished coffee to wash it down --

-- so he doesn't notice the gates opening.

EXT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - FRONT GATES - CONTINUOUS

As Wyatt comes out, PAPARAZZI grab up cameras and start snapping:

PAPARAZZI
Wyatt! Wyatt! Over here!

Like he may not have noticed them. Wyatt waves comfortably as he passes, but doesn't stop.

INT. BURDEN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Burden looks up and sees Wyatt coming --

-- hastily starts his engine.

EXT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - FRONT GATES - SOON AFTER

Wyatt slows, watching Burden abruptly back his car up -- knocking over a stop sign.

Burden shifts and skids into clumsy U-turn.

Wyatt nods and raises a friendly palm, watching Burden drive away.

WYATT
Have a nice life.
(beat)
Get yourself some kind of a life,
and then have it be nice.

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The Tour Team waits -- a DOZEN PEOPLE who all look up from their laptops and devices, hearing:

ZAJA (O.S.)
...so let's just have a policy,
okay? I want the entire floor
covered, I don't care if they're
just replacing a light-bulb.

She stalks in -- in full diva-tantrum mode, Quincey following, typing notes into her phone:

ZAJA
Heavy-duty plastic sheeting, wall
to wall -- 'cause they're getting
crap on the floors, and then I
have to get the floor guys back
in, and pretty soon we could have
eradicated some disease with what
I'm paying everybody to mess up
each other's work.

She stops, taking in the Tour Team. A couple of suits, but mostly they're in funky, artsy attire.

ZAJA
And I want hat pegs.

This throws Quincey. She looks up from her phone:

QUINCEY
Hat pegs.

Zaja nods, turning and leading her into the adjacent --

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - FOYER - CONTINUOUS

-- Grand Foyer. Stops by the front doors:

ZAJA
Pegs. For hats. Everybody who
comes into this house is wearing a
little hipster hat.

She points at the Tour Team. Many are, indeed, wearing hats. Gesturing at the foyer walls:

ZAJA
I need pegs on the walls. All
over. For like -- fifty hats.

QUINCEY
(typing, uncertain)
Fifty. In sort of a -- random
pattern?

ZAJA
No. I hate "random." Random is
code for out of control.

QUINCEY
I just mean --

ZAJA
I know what you mean, and it
pisses me off.

The front doors open and Wyatt steps in -- stopping as:

ZAJA
Saying "random" is like saying, "I
am an irresponsible fucking
loser." People make choices, shit
doesn't just happen. I don't ever
want to hear the word "random"
ever again in this house. Ever.

Silence. Wyatt holds up a palm: *not my department*.
Backs out, quietly shutting the door.

Which leaves everyone looking at Quincey. Beat.

QUINCEY
What about..."free-form"?

Zaja smiles at her, unexpectedly sympathetic.

ZAJA
There ya go.

She heads into the living room, squeezing the back of her
neck and rolling her shoulders:

ZAJA
God. Can we get Jane up here?
Like, ASAP?

Quincey makes the call as Zaja sits with the Tour Team:

ZAJA
I know: you need to me to sign-off
on the set design. I know -- I
know -- I know -- I know. But I
can't.

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - GARAGE - SOON AFTER

A mechanic's dream. A row of classic cars -- some beautifully-restored, some waiting for work -- show what Wyatt can do with all these high-end tools.

He walks in, lost in thought.

Gets his phone out of his pocket. Starts to dial.

Changes his mind -- disconnects, puts it away.

Stares at the cars. Not really seeing them.

Takes the phone back out of his pocket, dials. Waits.

WYATT

Hey.

(beat)

Guess I'm going to hell.

(beat)

You want to meet me there?

He listens.

WYATT

Yeah. After that?

Listens more. Disconnects.

Takes a deep breath, putting the phone away.

Checks his watch.

Picks up a respirator mask, switches on ventilator fans.

TIME CUT:

Wearing the mask, safety goggles and heavy gloves, Wyatt uses an internal-mix resin-spraygun --

-- patching a rebuilt section of a 1940 Ford Deluxe's hood with fiberglass.

Slowly, steadily applying layers of fine spray-plastic.

Intent, careful. He's good at this.

ZAJA (V.O.)

Oh God. Mmm. Yesss.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Zaja is naked, lying face-down on a massage table. She is slick with oil. Deeply relaxed:

ZAJA
This is sooo great.

JANE
Good.

JANE COOLIDGE is working on Zaja's back. Her fingertips slither on the well-kept skin, press firmly into the well-toned muscles.

Jane is nearing 30, simple and calm. Worn jeans, white tank-top, hair short or pulled-back.

ZAJA
You have to come on tour with me.

Jane smiles, keeps working, steady.

JANE
I don't think so.

ZAJA
How am I supposed to survive without you? Come on. Have you ever been to Tokyo? Or Stockholm?

JANE
Never have.

ZAJA
First class, around the world.

JANE
It seems like kind of...an artificial existence.

ZAJA
It is. It's a big fake bubble full of too much energy.
(beat)
But it's a nice bubble, Jane.

There's a polite knock and Wyatt steps in --

WYATT
Hey Za -- oh! Sorry -- um...

He stays in the doorway as Jane works her way up Zaja's thighs.

JANE
Hey, Wyatt.

ZAJA
Wyatt! Jane doesn't want to come on tour with us. She has some kind of a life or something.

WYATT

Oh. Yeah -- well: I wouldn't really know about those.

ZAJA

Help me seduce her.

Jane looks into Wyatt's eyes as she massages his oiled-up wife -- sympathetic, amused.

WYATT

Ah-huh. So -- I would...but -- right now I gotta to go over to Bud's and take a look at a car.

(beat)

Sorry, Jane.

JANE

I'm good.

ZAJA

Wyatt, you gotta let her do you sometime. This is a religious experience.

(to Jane)

Tell him.

Jane keeps working on Zaja, but looks at Wyatt:

JANE

Just like there's a core to the planet? There is a core of your being.

ZAJA

You are so in my core.

Wyatt meets Jane's steady gaze as she makes Zaja purr. Shrugs apologetically, trying to look unruffled:

WYATT

There's a 1970 Barracuda fastback waiting for me in Culver City.

Jane smiles slightly and nods -- as Wyatt backs out.

JANE

Be good.

After the door has shut behind him:

ZAJA

He's from Indiana. They don't touch the core there.

JANE

A lot of people confuse sensuality
with sexuality.

ZAJA

That's how I make my living.

Thoughtful silence.

ZAJA

I think he felt tempted.

Jane's hands slither on Zaja. Without judgement:

JANE

But who was tempting him? Me? Or
you?

ZAJA

I know -- I'm crazy. It's like a
sore spot you can't stop touching.
I test him. Check on him.

JANE

Do you think he's been unfaithful?

ZAJA

All the time!

JANE

Then why are you still with him?

ZAJA

No, I don't think he's doing it
all the time. I think it all the
time.

JANE

Ahh.

ZAJA

You ever get like that?

Jane shrugs, her oiled fingers sliding on Zaja's naked
body.

JANE

I think we all try to control too
much.

Zaja thinks about that. As Jane massages:

ZAJA

I remember the exact moment when I
stopped having casual sex.

JANE

Really.

ZAJA

I was in Minneapolis. This guy -- kept saying, "This is so weird! God this is weird! You have no idea how weird it is to be inside Zaja!"

JANE

What did you say?

ZAJA

I said, "Yes I do."

Jane keeps working on Zaja.

ZAJA

It was almost a year, after that, until I met Wyatt.

EXT. FOX HILLS - STREET - DAY

A bland row of stucco houses with struggling lawns.

Ariana stands by her car, double-checking a house number on her phone.

Reluctantly, she walks to front door and reaches out to press the doorbell --

-- but the door opens, revealing **COOPER**, a dorky-type guy, around 16.

His two dorky pals, **TEVIN** and **KYLE**, crowd up behind him in the doorway, eager to look at Ariana.

Not being a big fan of *Superbad*, she is not impressed.

COOPER

Hey.

ARIANA

Hey.

COOPER

You Ariana?

ARIANA

You Mixman420?

COOPER

Cooper, in reality. Come on in.

He steps back politely -- bumping into the other two.

ARIANA

Yeah, well: since I forgot to take my Stupid Moron Pills this morning, I'm not gonna do that.

COOPER

Well...I don't think you want to -- "do business" out here.

ARIANA

Let me see the tickets and I'll come in.

Silence.

KYLE

Show us your tits.

Tevin and Kyle crack up, shoving each other:

TEVIN

Shut up!

KYLE

What!?

COOPER

Sorry, just ignore them.

TEVIN

You said you'd give us blow jobs for Zaja tickets!

KYLE

Topless!

ARIANA

So let me see the tickets.

More silence.

COOPER

Okay, here's the deal...

ARIANA

You don't have tickets.

COOPER

We know somebody who can get tickets.

ARIANA

So you don't have the tickets.

COOPER

Not as such.

Ariana sighs and walks away, heading for her car.

KYLE

You could still show us your tits!

TEVIN

You wanna play some Halo?

COOPER

We have weed!

She holds up a middle finger without looking back.

COOPER

Zaja sucks anyway!

EXT. BUD'S USED MUSCLE & PARTS - DAY

An auto-body shop. Damaged cars, a cinderblock garage bay, razor-wire, stacked tires, a gas pump.

Grizzled 50ish proprietor **BUD** is drinking beer and playing cards with **FRESNO**, a part-time mechanic. Both in oil-smearred work clothes.

FRESNO

Whoa.

Bud looks: a beautifully-restored 1967 Dodge Charger is pulling in from the street.

As Wyatt gets out, Bud goes to fist-bump. Different generations, from different universes -- but the work is common.

WYATT

How's it goin'?

BUD

Can't complain. How 'bout you?

WYATT

It's all good. You know, everything is beautiful.

Behind him, a **HOMELESS GUY** rolls a baby-stroller full of junk along the sidewalk, stopping to ask:

HOMELESS

Fellas wanna help me out a little?

Fresno finishes his beer and tosses the empty can.

BUD

Don't do that.

FRESNO

Why? It's worth money.

The Homeless Guy sensibly zeroes in on Wyatt:

HOMELESS

What do you say, mister -- want to
help me out?

Wyatt reaches into his pocket, but Bud stops him. To the
Homeless Guy:

BUD

How about this: there's a broom
and dustpan over there.
(gestures around)
Ten bucks an hour.

HOMELESS

Aw, for real?

BUD

What do you think, you just get
money in this world and you don't
have to work?

Wyatt winces slightly, and Bud realizes.

BUD

Sorry.

Wyatt shrugs, kind of amused -- so Bud turns back to the
Homeless Guy, indicates the broom: *take it or leave it.*

The Homeless Guy sighs, goes to work. Bud nods his
approval and turns back to Wyatt:

BUD

The Nova. Keys are in it.

Wyatt hands Bud his phone and gets into a beat-up Chevy:

WYATT

Put it on my tab?

BUD

Yep.

Fresno comes to stand by Bud and watch Wyatt drive away.
Looking at the phone in Bud's hand:

FRESNO

The hell was that about?

BUD

Nice guy. Bought a coupla cars.
Overpaid like you wouldn't
believe. He's married to that
singer: Sasha? Zaba?

FRESNO

Zaja?!

BUD

Crazy-jealous.

(re: phone)

Tracks him. And calls the police, reports his car stolen so they'll turn on the Lojack and she can find out if he's with some other girl.

FRESNO

Jesus.

BUD

Guy has everything you can imagine. You know what he wants?

Fresno -- and the Homeless Guy, who has been eavesdropping -- consider this a moment.

FRESNO

Pussy.

Bud shakes his head.

BUD

Space.

Beat.

HOMELESS

The final frontier.

More thoughtful silence.

FRESNO

Nah. I'm sorry: the final frontier is pussy.

INT. DANCE SPACE - DAY

Zaja and her **BACKUP DANCERS** rehearse with the **CHOREOGRAPHER**. They dance to loud playback, all in sloppy, sexy dance clothes.

We watch them dance a while. Get a taste of why Zaja is rich and famous.

They hit a snag, and stop. The Dancers watch Zaja and the Choreographer examine the problem.

They try that part again, and make it work.

Everyone applauds each other and themselves.

CHOREOGRAPHER

Okay, that's great, that's perfect.

Zaja grins and accepts water and a towel from Quincey -- while everyone else gets their own. No one minds.

ZAJA

Perfect for you. I have to sing while I'm doing it.

CHOREOGRAPHER

It'll give you that breathless, orgasmic sound.

ZAJA

Right, like I need more of that.

Zaja's smile fades as she sees some of The Tour Team across the room, with pleading expressions.

She offers an apologetic palm and turns to Quincey:

ZAJA

Okay -- we gotta go, now.
(heading for a door)
Hey, can we Lojack Wyatt?

QUINCEY

And what do we say when TMZ picks up on the police report, like last time?

Zaja sighs. She's nuts, but not insane. As they meet the two beefy, polite **SECURITY GUYS** by the doors:

ZAJA

Security Sam?

SECURITY

Yes ma'am?

ZAJA

Change o' plan. We're gonna swing by --

She looks at Quincey, who sighs, checking her watch:

QUINCEY

Bud's Used Muscle And Parts.

ZAJA

On the way to the radio station, okay?

SECURITY

You're the boss.

Zaja looks at Quincey as they head out:

ZAJA

Three little words. "You're the boss." Is that so hard?

QUINCEY

Two little words: "media frenzy."

Zaja grins and wraps her arm around Quincey's as they go out, followed by a cluster of people.

ZAJA

Bitch.

QUINCEY

Gotta be. I work for one.

EXT. DOWNTOWN L.A. - SOON AFTER

Down by the overused-yet-eternally-ominous L.A. River. Sand-colored concrete archways, trash, graffiti.

Wyatt's borrowed Nova drives through the weeds and parks.

INT. WYATT'S NOVA - CONTINUOUS

He sits looking at the desolation.

A beat-up car pulls up alongside. Someone gets out.

Wyatt's passenger-door opens and Jane gets in beside him, without a word.

They sit in silence. Then:

WYATT

I think I'm losing my mind.

JANE

I can't tell you what to do.

WYATT

I know.

Silence. Carefully:

JANE

I can tell you that people who don't follow their inner light... start to die inside.

WYATT

Right now I'm more worried about dying on the outside.

JANE

A little dramatic, don't you think?

WYATT

She bought a gun. And two bullets.

JANE

Jeez.

WYATT

Hey. She's very in-touch with her passions. That's what everybody loves about her.

(beat)

Of course, they don't have to live with her.

Silence.

JANE

Do you want to come home with me?

WYATT

Yeah.

(beat)

No.

(beat)

Not yet.

Silence.

JANE

What if you don't leave her?

WYATT

What do you mean?

JANE

Why do you have to leave her to make love with me?

WYATT

So, what -- just -- cheat?

JANE

Maybe it's not "cheating." When you stop making judgments, you open up to possibilities.

Silence. He studies her.

WYATT

You'd be okay with that?

JANE

I don't think about it. I think about now. I think about us.

(beat)

I'm here. What does that tell you?

They are looking in each others eyes.

Wyatt kisses her. Their eyes close. Their lips open.

Gently -- caressing the sides of each other's faces.

Then more passionately, pulling at clothes, awkward but hot in the crummy old car.

JANE

Wyatt? Wyatt!

He pulls away. Looking at her. Both breathless.

WYATT

What?

JANE

I've been more than Zen about all this, right?

WYATT

Yeah. For sure.

JANE

I'm drawing the line.

WYATT

All right.

(beat)

What line?

JANE

Next time: my place. Seriously. We have to start doing this in a bed.

He nods. She puts her seat all the way back.

EXT. DOWNTOWN L.A. - CONTINUOUS

Parked some distance away:

Ned Burden's car.

INT. BURDEN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Burden has his window open, resting the long lens of a professional camera on the sill.

Through Burden's lens: Wyatt and Jane in the parked Nova.

They freeze for fractions of a second, snapped in a burst.

Dirty pictures.

INT. ARIANA'S CAR - DAY

Ariana is multitasking behind the wheel: slugging an energy drink, talking hands-free, working the GPS, listening to the radio.

ARIANA

-- I don't know, some hell-hole neighborhood. Culver City.

DJ

(on the radio)

-- Zaja tickets for two very special KZOO listeners, get ready to text -- the giveaway is happening right now!

ARIANA

Ohmigod, gotta go --

She frantically grabs up her cell --

DJ

(on the radio)

Two front-row tickets to Zaja at the Staples Center -- the winner hand-picked by Zaja herself. She's gonna come down to the station in about an hour and select one name from the first one hundred and three texts we receive -- starting right now: text "Zaja" to 38750. That's Z-A-J-A to 38750 --

Ariana starts texting, steering with her elbows.

EXT. BUD'S BODY SHOP - CONTINUOUS

The Homeless Man looks up from sweeping.

HOMELESS

Oh, fuck.

Bud and Fresno look up from their card game --

-- to see Ariana's car crossing the double yellow line,
veering all over -- at high speed.

Coming right at them.

BUD

Oh, fuck.

INT. ARIANA'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Ariana looks up from her phone --

ARIANA

Oh, fuck.

EXT. BUD'S BODY SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Bud, Fresno and the Homeless Guy leap out of the way --

-- as she car smashes into the yard -- clipping Wyatt's
restored Charger, spinning it --

-- but passing the guys by completely --

-- vanishing into the cinderblock garage bay --

-- crumpling into the rear wall, demolishing itself.

The guys stare at it for a second, stunned --

-- until the fireball explodes out of the garage bay --

-- consuming them all.

And the building.

INT. ZAJA'S SUV - SOON AFTER

Hushed and luxurious, behind tinted windows. Security
Sam and his partner in front, wearing sunglasses.

Zaja and Quincey in the back, each absorbed in their own
phone.

Zaja looks up, noticing the S.U.V. has stopped.

ZAJA

What's up?

SECURITY SAM

I don't know.

Police cars parked up ahead, barricading the street.

QUINCEY

We're like two blocks away.

ZAJA

Can we go around?

Sam shakes his head, studying the traffic jamming up in the rear-view.

SECURITY SAM

No, we're blocked.

ZAJA

Can we tell them I'm a celebrity?

Fire trucks scream past on the wrong side of the street, horns blaring.

QUINCEY

That's a lot of smoke.

Zaja frowns at the clouds of black smoke rolling into the streets beyond the barricade.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - CONTINUOUS

As Wyatt comes in and goes to the beer fridge -- he hears:

CHOPPER REPORTER (V.O.)

-- they've cordoned off several blocks around Jefferson and Potomac Boulevards.

He frowns, turning to look at the "breaking news" on a TV behind the CASHIER's counter:

On the TV: Helicopter views circling a column of smoke from the wreckage of Bud's Used Muscle & Parts.

CHOPPER REPORTER (V.O.)

It's a really intense fire -- a lot of thick black smoke consistent with an oil fire -- there may have been an underground gas tank.

As Wyatt slowly walks closer, stunned --

On the TV: the news cuts back to the studio, leaving the live helicopter feed in a box:

NEWS ANCHOR

*That's what we're getting from
fire officials, too, Rob.*

(reading)

*At least four people are believed
to be dead after a car went out of
control on Jefferson Boulevard and
crashed into an auto body shop.*

Our own Ray DeLeo is on the scene:

Wyatt stares, in shock.

On the TV: a live report from the police barricades.

REPORTER

*Sue, some of the experienced
firefighters on the scene here are
saying that with a fire of this
intensity, it's possible they may
never be able to positively
identify all of the victims.*

CASHIER

You want that?

Wyatt looks at the Cashier. Paralyzed.

WYATT

Huh?

The Cashier indicates a beer in Wyatt's hand.

WYATT

(distracted)

Oh...no.

Wyatt sets the beer down and starts out -- reaching into
his pocket.

Stops, realizing.

Goes back toward the counter.

WYATT

Excuse me. Could I -- borrow your
phone?

CASHIER

You don't have a phone?

Wyatt stares at him. Thinking. The news blathers on.

WYATT

Never mind.

Wyatt backs away -- heads out to the darkening street.

CLOSE UP -- A TELEVISION SCREEN

Wyatt and Zaja, a year ago, being interviewed by an **ENTERTAINMENT REPORTER**. They trade lines, telling the story, enjoying themselves:

WYATT

Well, I was in a chat room. It was a music chat room. And she was there --

ZAJA

-- I was lurking! I admit it!

WYATT

-- under the name "Shymonster."

ZAJA

Look I don't want to be like oh-poor-me about fame or anything -- but it is actually difficult to interact with people in a normal way. It just doesn't work. So sometimes I go online just to be normal.

WYATT

(with air-quotes)
"Normal."

ZAJA

(laughing)
Normal for me! Okay? Anyway, nobody's normal.

WYATT

So we were texting and chatting and e-mailing every day for like seven months.

ENTERTAINMENT REPORTER

And all that time you still thought she was just...

ZAJA

A human being. Can you imagine?

ENTERTAINMENT REPORTER

Were you upset? When you found out that she lied to you?

ZAJA

Oh: ow! "Lied"?

WYATT

Yeah. No. Kinda. It was -- um -- confusing.

ZAJA

He didn't believe me.

WYATT

Well, not at first! I mean, you're involved with someone, and you think you know who they are --

ZAJA

Hey: it's not like I claimed to be something that I wasn't. I just didn't tell him something I was. Right away.

WYATT

What am I gonna say: I wish she wasn't a world-famous zillionaire? Come on.

ZAJA

It was the icing on the cake.

WYATT

She's the cake.

ZAJA

I'm the cake.

They steal a kiss -- then make a show of getting back to business as:

ENTERTAINMENT REPORTER

Okay, I need to ask: seven months and you never asked her for a picture?

WYATT

She sent me pictures. But they were -- just parts.

ENTERTAINMENT REPORTER

"Parts"?!

ZAJA

Good parts.

WYATT

Let's just say: once I found out, if I wanted to -- I could have made some serious dough.

ZAJA

It's all about trust. And that's what we have.

ENTERTAINMENT REPORTER

Wow. You two are really in love.
I mean, I do this a lot, and --

WYATT

We are.

And they are. You can see it.

REVEAL:

INT. DOWNTOWN BAR - EVENING

The TV is above the bar in a seedy joint.

Wyatt sits in the darkest corner. He has bought a baseball cap, which he wears pulled-down-low. Sips bourbon, eyes on the TV. Torn.

ZAJA (O.S.)

Wyatt fell in love with the real
me. And now he's like my --
grounding wire. My (bleeped-out)
detector.

CLOSE UP -- TELEVISION SCREEN

FILE FOOTAGE: Wyatt, uncomfortable and out-of-place at
the celebrity-studded wedding:

ENTERTAINMENT ANCHOR

Since their fairytale wedding, one
year ago today, the "Cinderella
Guy" from Indiana handled the
spotlight -- and his volatile
bride -- with surprising ease.

FILE FOOTAGE: Zaja before Wyatt -- dumping a plate of
food over someone's head at an awards-show after-party --

-- Zaja mug shots -- Zaja leaving a courthouse --

ENTERTAINMENT ANCHOR

And the notoriously temperamental
rock diva seemed to have found a
new kind of calm in the eye of the
storm with her down-to-earth
husband.

FILE FOOTAGE: Outside a bar, Wyatt steps between Zaja and
the paparazzi as she's flipping-out -- making peace --

ENTERTAINMENT ANCHOR

But today, he couldn't be there
for her.

Zaja, behind the barricades at the crash site -- caught from a distance by news cameras. Screaming, crying.

ENTERTAINMENT ANCHOR

In a tragic ending to last year's top love story: Wyatt Chandler, 24-year-old auto mechanic from Winona Lake, Indiana, is now believed to have been inside Bud's Body Shop during today's fatal accident.

Quincey and the Security Guys hold Zaja back as she tries to run into the fire. Even though it's bigger-than-life and very public, you can see her pain is very, very real.

INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS

Wyatt looks down into his glass. And at his left hand, next to it.

The wedding band.

He slowly takes it off. Hunched over. Guilty.

Unnoticed in the shadows across the bar...

...Ned Burden sips a club soda with lime.

And watches Wyatt.

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - FOYER

The foyer floor is covered with plaster-dusty, spackle-spattered plastic sheeting --

-- beneath a dozen brushed-metal hat pegs, in a random (sorry...) pattern all over the walls. "X"s mark where more pegs were to be installed tomorrow.

Hung on the brand-new pegs are a few little hipster hats.

The heads they came in on, and twenty more, are --

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

-- in the living room, talking quietly.

Zaja on a sofa. In shock. People around her -- comforting, or trying to.

Silence slowly falls.

Zaja looks over:

The Weinbluths (Ariana's Mom and Dad) are in the doorway, speaking quietly to Quincey. Red-eyed wrecks.

Quincey comes to murmur in Zaja's ear. Zaja's eyes on the Weinbluths.

She nods, standing.

No one moves, no one speaks...as they cross the crowded room to her.

Ariana's Mom takes one of Zaja's hands in both of hers.

ARIANA'S MOM

She loved you so much.

Zaja nods again, uncertain what to say.

ZAJA

I'm -- sorry for your loss.

ARIANA'S MOM

It doesn't make any sense.

ZAJA

We're -- all -- trying to deal with it.

ARIANA'S DAD

Senseless. Senseless tragedy.

ARIANA'S MOM

No one can make sense of it.

ARIANA'S DAD

Random...madness.

Zaja is struggling not to yell at them now. Quincey and the Tour Team can see it, behind her calm quiet -- ready to step in if she flips out. But:

ZAJA

Well. Thank you for coming.

ARIANA'S MOM

She loved school. And life. And you -- so much. We're going to build her school a new library in Ariana's name.

ZAJA

That's great.

Ariana's Mom smiles, tearful.

ARIANA'S MOM

Would you like to contribute to
the building fund?

Beat. Zaja makes a superhuman effort.

ZAJA

Why don't we talk about that
another time?

Ariana's Mom squeezes Zaja's hands, making a mental note
to call soon, and they turn away.

Zaja and everyone watch them head out.

But then Ariana's Dad is turning back, rummaging through
his pockets. Coming out with a pen and paper:

ARIANA'S DAD

Could we get an autograph?

Zaja is still a moment. Forcing a smile, taking the pen:

ZAJA

Sure.

EXT. JANE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

A desolate downtown street.

Wyatt steps out of shadows, looking up at the lit windows
of a loft building.

He jaywalks to the doorway.

Finds a name on the intercom and presses. Waits.

JANE

(on intercom)
Yeah?

Wyatt holds up a tentative palm for the little lens.

JANE

(on intercom)
Holy shit.

INT. JANE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

A raw loft space. Cheap furnishings, a big threadbare
rug. Unmade queen-size futon. A folded-up portable
massage table, a handful of spiritual-themed self-help
paperbacks and candles.

The TV news is on, muted: *coverage of Wyatt's death.*

Jane is trying to clean up. There's a knock on the door.
She takes a last look around -- goes to open it.
Wyatt, in the hallway, shrugs.

WYATT
I'm going with the flow.

She steps aside. He nods gratefully and comes past.

JANE
You're on the news.

He nods, looking around: he has never been here.

WYATT
There was a homeless guy.
Sweeping up.
(shrugs)
His body...my stuff...
(frowns, distracted)
You smoke?

JANE
No.

She follows his gaze to a pack of cigarettes on the coffee table.

JANE
Yeah. Sometimes.
(putting them away)
What are you doing here, Wyatt?

Beat. He shrugs again.

WYATT
I messed up. Made mistakes. With
my life. And I couldn't see how
to get out.
(beat)
Now I can.

JANE
What about -- Zaja?

WYATT
What's worse: your husband died,
or your husband left you?
(beat)
Crazy, huh? Nobody gets hurt.

JANE
But how would you -- even -- do
it?

WYATT

I don't know. Walk away. No driver's license, no social security. People do it. Immigrants do it every day.

He sees her confusion and doubt, and struggles to put his dazed new hope into words:

WYATT

It's just: stuff you've been saying -- suddenly became clear. Not making judgments, and accepting the whole -- you know -- moment. The river.

JANE

(uneasy)
Yeah -- Wyatt...

WYATT

I get it now. I feel -- lighter. Cleansed. And life is precious. If it doesn't happen to be the same life I started with -- fine. Whatever. As long as it's real.
(beat)
How does that sound to you?

JANE

...nice?

WYATT

I'm asking if you want to come with.

Jane finally gets it.

JANE

Oh. Wow. Huh.

WYATT

I know this is sudden.

JANE

Kinda.

WYATT

And we don't really -- I mean: I've never even been here. But we always talked about how much we both hated the whole L.A. thing...
(beat)
We could start fresh. Anywhere. South America. Tahiti.

JANE

Tahiti?

WYATT

I don't know. I'm just saying.
We're free. Alive. We can live.
A regular life.

She walks away, shaking her head -- upset.

JANE

I already do that. I don't even --
this is -- Jesus, Wyatt.

WYATT

I know, I'm sorry. It just...
happened. Stuff just comes at
you, sometimes. Out of nowhe--

The bathroom door slams open --

-- and **ADAM SCHRODER** storms out: 30, good-looking, works
a little too hard to seem low-life.

ADAM

Okay, that's it! We got enough!
This is over -- now!

As Jane hastily steps between Adam and Wyatt:

WYATT

What the hell?!

JANE

What are you doing?!

ADAM

I'm sorry, how long was I supposed
to stay in there listening to this
bullshit?!

Beat.

WYATT

Jane? You want to introduce me to
your friend?

Adam lunges, fists clenched -- Jane's trying to hold him
off, Wyatt's backing away -- all shouting at once:

ADAM

Just gimme a reason, pussy! Come
on!

WYATT

Whoa -- whoa!

JANE

Adam -- wait!

ADAM

Let's go, let's do it!

WYATT

What is your problem?!

ADAM

You have no idea how much I've
been waiting to do this!

JANE

WOULD YOU STOP?!

Adam reluctantly holds back, glaring past her at Wyatt --
who is trying to catch up. Hard-breathing silence.

WYATT

I'm sorry. Really -- stupid
coming here like this, I'm out.

Wyatt heads for the door -- but Adam intercepts, grabbing
him --

ADAM

Oh no, we're not done, asshole --

-- Wyatt shoves Adam away --

-- but Adam attacks, punching furiously. Wyatt fights
back. It's a bar brawl -- clumsy punches and low blows
and scuffling clinches --

JANE

Adam, don't! Wyatt! Stop!

-- two guys blindly trying to beat the crap out of each
other, wrecking the place.

Jane runs into the kitchen, searches frantically under
the sink.

Wyatt gets Adam in a headlock under one arm.

They reel around the room, Adam trying to free himself by
bashing Wyatt into a wall --

WYATT

Look, man, I'm sorry! I didn't
know about you two! She didn't
tell me!

Jane comes out of the kitchen --

-- and sprays Wyatt in the face with oven cleaner.

WYATT

Aaagh!

ADAM

Yeah, baby!

Wyatt lets go and staggers away, clutching his eyes and choking and spitting.

Adam grabs a lamp and smashes it across the back of Wyatt's head.

As Wyatt falls face-down on the floor --

-- Adam yanks out the cord out of the lamp-base and uses it to swiftly hog-tie Wyatt's wrists to his ankles.

JANE

What are you, crazy?! We were this close!

ADAM

We got him! All right?! Enough bullshit: he said it -- we got it -
- game over!

JANE

What?!

ADAM

Criminal fraud! He just said he's gonna fake his own death.

Taking a camcorder from its hiding place on a shelf and waving it triumphantly at Wyatt:

ADAM

Caught! On! Tape!

Wyatt, baffled, stares from the floor.

Adam turns to Jane, holding up the camcorder, pleased with himself. She's not.

JANE

So what?

ADAM

So we take it to her! And we make her pay!

JANE

Why would she pay for that?!

Adam stands, breathing heavily. Wrestles with this.

ADAM

All right. Fine. He'll pay.

Bending over Wyatt, waving the camcorder at him:

ADAM

Right?! Huh?! Cause if we take this to the cops, he's busted!

JANE

He doesn't have any money, you moron.

Beat.

ADAM

What are you talking about?

JANE

He's faking his death! He can't go to the bank. He can't use a credit card. We have more money than he does!

ADAM

Yeah -- but...

JANE

Eight months working this up -- and you blow it now?!

Wyatt, squinting up from the floor, watches them argue. Trying to catch up.

ADAM

Well what the hell was I supposed to do -- let you two go to Tahiti, so he could fuck you there, too?! He'll fuck you in his garage, he'll fuck you in his car -- every place except here! He played. He's gotta pay!

JANE

You think I like having to fuck him over and over?!

ADAM

Well you keep doing it!

Wyatt grimaces. Not thrilled with any of this.

JANE

Because that was the plan! You told me to fuck him!

ADAM

HERE! I told you to fuck him HERE, so we could tape it --

JANE

I was trying to! If you hadn't
busted out in the middle --

ADAM

He wasn't going to fuck you
tonight!

JANE

How do you know?!

ADAM

He was -- getting reborn! People
don't fuck when they're getting
reborn!

JANE

I coulda gotten him to!

Adam bends down to Wyatt.

ADAM

Were you gonna fuck her?!

JANE

He was going to fuck me!

Wyatt, hog-tied on the floor, just stares at them,
appalled.

ADAM

There's no way you were gonna fuck
her tonight, am I right?

She bends down, too:

JANE

When have I not gotten you to fuck
me?!

(to Adam)

He always fucks me! Now I fucked
him four times for nothing! They
were like: hook-fucks -- and you
just -- cut the line!

ADAM

Okay -- forget it, whatever!
Water over the bridge! What are
we gonna do now?!

JANE

I don't know. Lemme think.

She paces. The two men watch her.

ADAM

We could get ransom. She'll pay ransom.

JANE

No. Let me think.

ADAM

Ransom is a good idea!

JANE

Ransom is a stupid idea! He'll tell! When we let him go.

ADAM

So...we don't let him go.

Wyatt stares -- from Jane to Adam to Jane, alarmed by this development.

They're looking down at him.

JANE

Yeah. Okay, that's good.

Wyatt watches them -- speechless --

-- but then he frowns, because:

A space alien is outside the big dirty loft windows, behind Jane and Adam.

No, it's not a space alien.

It's Ned Burden, on the fire escape -- wearing a disposable hazmat jumpsuit with shoe-booties -- a plastic shower cap -- big safety goggles and surgical gloves --

-- using some small tool on the window latch.

Adam and Jane are focused on Wyatt, thinking about what they have just committed to.

ADAM

You up for this?

JANE

Yeah. I'm good.

Burden silently opens the window and comes in --

-- carrying an aluminum baseball bat.

ADAM

Once we start, no going back.

JANE
I know. I'm down.

Jane sees Wyatt's confused expression and starts to turn.
Burden advances quickly, bat held like he's waiting for a pitch --

ADAM
What the fu...?

-- Burden swings, connects with Jane's head -- a sickening hollow-aluminum clank --

-- and she goes down without a word.

Wyatt lets out a wide-eyed, horrified yell -- struggling against the wire --

ADAM
JAAAANE!

-- as Adam hurls himself at Burden.

It's no contest. Burden expertly dodges Adam's reckless head-on attack --

-- pivoting and swinging the bat, breaking Adam's right forearm.

Adam screams -- lunging clumsily at Burden again --

-- who whirls, wielding the bat like a samurai sword, going low, striking at Adam's knee.

It cracks and Adam howls, falling to the floor.

Wyatt, bound, meets Adam's stunned gaze at floor-level.

Burden stands over Adam -- who writhes in pain, trying to get up:

ADAM
You fucking motherfucker! I'll
rip your motherfucking heart out!

Burden nods. Sets the bat aside and kneels.

BURDEN
See -- here's the problem with
trying to rip somebody's heart
out.

Adam flails with his good arm and leg, but Burden easily pins the working wrist to the floor.

BURDEN

There's two pipes in the throat.

He puts his other hand in Adam's mouth, forcing it in.

BURDEN

You've got the bronchea, leading
to the lungs...

Burden shoves further into Adam's mouth, hand vanishing
all the way to the wrist. (*How much we actually see is,
of course, adjustable...*)

Adam struggles like a fish on a dock, gagging mightily,
but Burden has him pinned.

BURDEN

...and the esophagus, leading down
to the stomach.

Burden's shoves harder -- in to the middle of his
forearm. Adam's shrill scream stops, his throat blocked.

BURDEN

They're separated by a little flap
of skin called the epiglottis.

Adam's mouth is stretched around Burden's arm, as Burden
forces his hand further down.

BURDEN

It's really hard to tell which one
you're in.

Burden's arm is in Adam's mouth all the way up to the
elbow now. Adam kicks spastically. He looks like some
kind of grotesque upside-down hand-puppet.

BURDEN

You think you're gonna rip a heart
out -- but you end up pulling out
the spleen or the pancreas.

The young tough-guy's flailing is now useless and
uncontrolled -- his feet bicycling, fingers clawing the
floor.

BURDEN

See, I did it wrong. I'm in the
stomach.

Adam is just convulsing now. Weak little motions.

And then no more.

BURDEN

Yeah, the heart is a muscle.
Whatever I got my hands on here is
squishy.

Shaking his head, Burden pulls the arm out, dripping
blood and goo. He grimaces and wipes it on Adam's shirt-
front.

Adam is dead.

BURDEN

Life is full of shit that's not as
easy to do as you think.

He pulls a sheet from the unmade bed and wipes his arm
with it.

Wyatt stares. Hog-tied on the floor across the room.

Turning to Wyatt, taking off his goggles:

BURDEN

Ned Burden. Your wife hired me.

WYATT

To...kill them?

BURDEN

Nah. She doesn't know about them.

Wyatt watches Burden start to walk around the loft in his
hazmat suit, analyzing the crime scene.

WYATT

To kill...me?

Burden smiles, shakes his head.

BURDEN

That woman loves you. I think I
got two hundred voice-mails this
afternoon. She's going crazy.
Must think we're both dead.

He picks up the camcorder and plays-back, watching the
little LCD screen, during:

BURDEN

She wanted to know if you were
cheating.

(beat)

I've been on you 24-7 for weeks.
Pictures, phone calls. I was just
trying to figure out how to play
it.

He looks over at Jane and Adam.

BURDEN
Then this happened.

Burden sighs, sets the camcorder down and goes to sit on the edge of the futon. Studying Wyatt.

WYATT
I'm...still tied up.

BURDEN
Yeah.

Thoughtful silence.

BURDEN
Wyatt? We need to talk.
(beat)
See: I just did you a big favor.
Which could buy me a lethal
injection. So I need some kind
of...assurance. On where we
stand.

WYATT
You just saved my life. I'll tell
the police that. There's no way
they're gonna...it's like -- self-
defense.

Silence.

BURDEN
The police.

Wyatt stares into Burden's eyes.

WYATT
Or...not.

Burden nods.

BURDEN
Think about it, now. Be sure.

WYATT
No. It's -- fine.
(beat)
I was -- already...over that line,
anyway.

BURDEN
Good point.

As he kneels and unties Wyatt:

BURDEN

All right. We're gonna take a few minutes to ERASE.

WYATT

Erase what?

BURDEN

It's a mnemonic system I devised.
E for Evidence. R --
Relationship. A -- Alibi. S --
See. E -- Evidence.

WYATT

You had evidence twice.

BURDEN

Well, it's important.

Wyatt is free, rubbing his wrists and ankles. Burden stands and paces -- holds up a thumb:

BURDEN

Evidence.
(re: his outfit)
I wore my kill-suit. Zero
transfer of trace evidence.

He holds out his forefinger, along with the thumb:

BURDEN

R - Relationship: violent crimes
are mostly perpetrated by people
with prior involvement to the
victim.

Looks at Wyatt: a question.

WYATT

No one knows. About us.

BURDEN

He did.

Indicates Adam -- as he kneels by the body to collect Adam's wallet, keys, rings:

BURDEN

And I did. But: nobody knows
about me. Your missus was worried
about tabloid leaks. Paid in
cash. By herself. She found me
on line.

Beat.

WYATT

Me too.

Burden sets Adam's possessions by the camcorder, holds up a third finger as he locates Jane's purse:

BURDEN

A - Alibi. You're dead. Well done.

(fourth finger)

S - See. Anybody see you come in here?

WYATT

No.

BURDEN

Anybody see this happen?

Wyatt shakes his head. Burden sets Jane's possessions with Adam's.

BURDEN

Wrong.

Holds up the camcorder. Points into the kitchenette:

BURDEN

Get me some plastic bags. Ideally freezer-weight, with a zipper-top.

As Wyatt goes to search the cabinets:

WYATT

You've got this all down to a science.

BURDEN

I wrote the book. Literally. It's not done yet, but I've got about two hundred pages.

WYATT

About how to clean up after...?

BURDEN

How to follow people.
(points at window)
How to enter undetected.
(points at bodies)
How to survive close combat.

As Wyatt approaches with a box of plastic freezer bags:

BURDEN

How to disappear. Change your identity.

Burden winks, hands him the camcorder:

BURDEN
Take out the memory card. That
button there.

As Wyatt does, Burden takes a freezer bag from the box,
holds it open for Wyatt to drop the camcorder in.
Sealing it:

BURDEN
Card.

Wyatt gives it to him, Burden pockets it.

BURDEN
Put their wallets and stuff in
another bag -- and throw yours in,
too.

WYATT
Mine?

BURDEN
You want to be dead, or not?

Wyatt follows instructions, as Burden surveys the room,
counting up on his fingers again to five:

BURDEN
Evidence -- Relationship -- Alibi -
- See -- Evidence.
(beat)
Know what *habeas corpus* means?

Wyatt shakes his head. Burden makes air-quotes:

BURDEN
"Got bodies?"

EXT. JANE'S APARTMENT - SOON AFTER

Burden (no longer in his kill-suit) and Wyatt carry
Jane's rolled-up rug out of her building.

It's lumpy, absurdly thick and sagging in the middle.

They manage to get it across the sidewalk and on to the
trunk of Burden's car before it starts to unroll --
letting Jane's hand flop out.

Wyatt hastily pushes the hand back in and rolls the rug
up --

-- as Burden surveys the street. Empty.

They slide the rug off the trunk so Burden can open it --
Wyatt trying to stand the rug on end --

-- but it flops over in the middle, unrolling again --

-- revealing Jane's lifeless legs. They've got her
upside down.

Wyatt grimaces, trying to wrangle the body -- it topples
with a thud into the gutter --

-- as Burden opens the trunk.

BURDEN

Best body disposal system? Mother
nature.

Adam is already in the trunk, wrapped in the bed-sheet,
blood seeping through in patches.

BURDEN

Fish. Bugs. Water.

With more glances around, they lift the rug full of Jane
and lay it in with Adam.

BURDEN

Animals, bacteria.

Wyatt stares at the bodies with deep regret, but Burden
closes the trunk lid.

He frowns: the trunk won't latch shut. Pushes down.

BURDEN

Given time, all the flesh is
washed and eaten and decayed away.

No good. Pushes harder, leaning on it. Nope.

BURDEN

Immaculate. Like a sterilizer.

Wyatt stays back, watches Burden try sitting on the trunk
and bouncing.

BURDEN

Drive these two out to a national
forest, drag 'em deep into the
woods. Eco-friendly solution.

He hops off, annoyed.

BURDEN

Son of a bitch. Okay: keep an eye
out.

Wyatt turns around as ordered, scans the street for witnesses. We don't see what Burden is shoving and folding and cramming. Grunting a bit:

BURDEN

I don't favor SUV's, they're conspicuous and hard to park -- but you can't beat the cargo space.

Wyatt winces at the sound of something cracking.

BURDEN

There we go.

Burden slams the trunk shut. It latches.

BURDEN

Let's roll.

He goes to get behind the wheel.

Wyatt hesitates, but then takes the shotgun seat.

The back seat is piled with what used to be in the trunk: plastic tote-a-file boxes, luggage, laundry, books, electronic gear, survivalist stuff.

Burden drives them off into the night.

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Zaja is gone, but everyone else is still talking in clusters.

Quincey makes her way through with a Japanese ceramic teapot and cup on a tray.

MARK, a young suit, comes to walk alongside her:

MARK

I think maybe we should get some food. Just buffet-style, or at least some people circulating with finger foods.

QUINCEY

Yeah, you do that, Mark.

MARK

That was sarcasm, wasn't it?

QUINCEY

See if you can get an open bar, too.

As Mark lets her go, we follow Quincey out to:

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - POOL - CONTINUOUS

Zaja is alone. Looking at the sprawl of lights.

Overlooking the city: a lit-up pool, a scattering of chaises and tables and those outdoor propane heaters that look like lamp-posts with metal coolie-hats on.

Quincey brings out the tea tray, but keeps a respectful distance.

QUINCEY

Here's some tea.

ZAJA

I don't want it.

QUINCEY

It's herbal.

ZAJA

Plus what -- herbal Valium?

QUINCEY

Ordinary Xanax. The doctor thinks it might really help.

ZAJA

Help me..."feel better"?

Beat. She heads into the house. The diva rising.

INT. ZAJA'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The guests turn as Zaja appears in the doorway.

ZAJA

Everybody get out.

No one moves. Confused.

MARK

Zaja, we just want to help y--

ZAJA

ALL OF YOU! OUT! GET THE FUCK
OUTTA MY HOUSE! NOW!

As everyone hastily makes a big show of getting the others out -- emptying the room --

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

-- Zaja walks away. To find Quincey waiting, behind her.

ZAJA

Everyone.

QUINCEY

I know. I just want to make sure
you're not gonna do anything dumb.

Zaja smiles, nods. Sad. Affectionate.

ZAJA

I'm quitting music. I'm quitting
everything. I'm gonna be a monk.

QUINCEY

Okay.

ZAJA

Don't just say yes to everything!

QUINCEY

I'm not! I mean it.

(beat)

It's your life. If you want to do
that -- do it.

Zaja studies Quincey. Realizing:

ZAJA

You're really good to me.

QUINCEY

Thank you.

ZAJA

And I've treated you like shit.

QUINCEY

No.

ZAJA

Yes.

QUINCEY

Sometimes.

(beat)

I don't take it personally.

Zaja studies Quincey.

ZAJA

Why not?

QUINCEY

Because you're giving me and my kids a great life.

ZAJA

You have kids?

QUINCEY

I have two kids, Zaja. Henry and Lauren.

ZAJA

Do you have pictures?

Quincey shows her, on her phone. Zaja looks. Nods.

ZAJA

Okay. Go away now. Go home.

Beat.

QUINCEY

Call if you need me.

Quincey leaves.

Zaja stays. Alone.

INT. BURDEN'S APARTMENT - LATER

Pages from spiral notebooks, organized into "chapter" piles, laid out on a cheap dining table. Neatly hand-written, with careful hand-drawn diagrams:

How To Make A Smoke-Bomb

How To Make And Wear Disguises

How To Disconnect An Alarm System

Wyatt stands over it, looking but not touching.

WYATT

This is your book?

Burden is at his desk, uploading the camcorder memory card into his computer.

BURDEN

So far.

Around them: drab furniture, infomercial exercise equipment hung with discarded clothing, file boxes, shelves crammed with electronic equipment.

Burdens sifts through a drawer of prescription bottles, shakes pills into his palm and swallows them dry.

WYATT

What are those?

BURDEN

Drugs.

WYATT

Ah.

BURDEN

I want you to look at something.

Wyatt comes over -- Burden plays a video clip on the computer: *Wyatt fighting with Adam.*

Burden freezes it on: *Wyatt holding Adam in a headlock.*

It glitches-out to snow before Jane sprays Wyatt with the oven cleaner.

BURDEN

You murdered two people tonight,
Wyatt.

(beat)

You lost control. Made a mess of
it. Left fingerprints all over.

(beat)

Here's the motive:

Runs a slide-show: *his surveillance photos -- Wyatt and Jane having sex in the beat-up Chevy by the river.*

Burden sets the plastic bag full of wallets and valuables on the desk.

BURDEN

Looks real bad.

Wyatt stares at Burden -- trying to get his mind around the fact that his world is turning upside down yet again on this insanely wrong night.

WYATT

Oh, wow.

BURDEN

"Oh, wow"? You really are from
Asswipe, Indiana, aren't you?

WYATT

Winona Lake.

BURDEN

"Golly-gee, I'm being blackmailed,
gosh darn it!" You're gonna need
to grow some nuts tonight,
Cinderella Boy.

(beat)

I can make it all go away.

(beat)

I wrote the book, remember? I can
make it look like they drove down
to Mexico and got themselves lost.

WYATT

What do you want?

BURDEN

World peace.

WYATT

I don't have any money.

BURDEN

Sure you do.

He picks up a yellow pages and swats Wyatt on the head,
hard. As Wyatt stumbles away, clutching his head:

BURDEN

You had a head injury.

WYATT

No shit! Ow.

BURDEN

At the crash site. You were
thrown clear, and you wandered
away. In shock. Don't say
amnesia, that's straight outta
daytime drama. Shock is real.

WYATT

I know!

BURDEN

Go back to your wife. Settle in.
Let the ruckus die down. And then
you start sending me money every
month. You won't even feel it.
Like paying the phone bill.

WYATT

It won't work.

BURDEN

Why not?

WYATT

Because I don't pay the phone bill! I don't even have my own bank account. I can't start asking for serious cash every month.

Burden takes this in. Wyatt is right.

The detective paces. Working through it.

BURDEN

All right. Okay. Even better:

(beat)

You go home. And take her out of the picture.

(beat)

Make it look like a suicide. She thinks you're dead. Kills herself. You come back and find her. Classic tragedy.

(beat)

You inherit everything. And you split it with me.

Terrible silence.

WYATT

Are you -- serious?

BURDEN

Serious as cancer. But not as slow.

WYATT

No.

BURDEN

No?

WYATT

No, look -- I won't. Do what you want to me -- I'm not...no.

Burden nods.

BURDEN

Then I will.

(beat)

Make it look like you did it.

Wyatt runs for the door, tries to open it. The deadbolt requires a key on either side.

BURDEN

And even if somehow you get out of this apartment alive? Mess up my

(MORE)

BURDEN (CONT'D)

plan?

(beat)

I vanish. Into the wind. I know how.

(beat)

And then one day soon Zaja and her SUV with her two bouncers blows up in a record studio parking lot.

(beat)

She's dead no matter what, Wyatt.

(beat)

You just need to decide if you want to be a live rich Romeo -- or a dead cheating triple-murderer.

Wyatt stares.

BURDEN

Take your time.

Wyatt does. Walking away. Thinking. Cornered.

Very slowly:

WYATT

I don't...know how.

Burden smiles.

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - VARIOUS - CONTINUOUS

The sprawling luxurious house is dark and silent.

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - MUSIC ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Zaja sits at the piano. Lit only by a few candles.

Tries out intervals, phrases...exploring sounds of loss.

It is very beautiful.

She stops. Staring into the tiny wavering flames.

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - SOON AFTER

Zaja comes in.

Sits on the edge of the bed, by the night-table with her little gun and box of bullets.

Picks up the gun, turns it in her hands, studying it.

Points it at herself.

Looking into the twin black abysses.

INT. BURDEN'S CAR - LATER

Burden driving, Wyatt shotgun. Ordinary life rolling by in the dark. Wyatt watches it, trapped.

BURDEN
She could overdose.

WYATT
She doesn't do drugs. She's holistic.

BURDEN
You know what hole they mean when people say "hole-istic"?
(sighs)
All right. Whatever. Keep a gun in the house?

Wyatt hesitates, but Burden doesn't notice.

WYATT
No.

Steering one-handed, Burden turns and gropes around the junk piled in the back seat:

BURDEN
That's fine. She can hang herself. Trick with that is people fight back. So you gotta use pillows.

He finds a pillow and shoves it against Wyatt's face -- banging him against the window.

WYATT
Ow! What the --?!

Wyatt tries to fight, Burden uses the pillow to keep him pinned.

BURDEN
See? Do it on the bed. Soft surface: no bruising.

Burden hands him the pillow. Wyatt rubs his face, annoyed.

BURDEN
Then you get the ligature on her neck.

WYATT
What's a ligature?

BURDEN
Duck down.

Wyatt follows Burden's gaze: they're nearing Zaja's gate.

He slides down in the seat as Burden drives them past the vans and work-lights. News Crews and Paparazzi just beyond the smudgy glass, in another universe.

BURDEN
A ligature is the strangler:
necktie, belt, extension cord.
You just have to remember to pull
up, okay? That's important.
(grips his own neck)
Like that. Hard. 'Til she goes
out.

Scrunched-down, Wyatt nods as if Burden's not insane:

WYATT
Uh-huh.

BURDEN
Then hang her up quick. Don't let
the blood settle.

WYATT
No. Of course.

BURDEN
Closet door, ceiling fan, like
that.

EXT. BEL AIR STREET - SOON AFTER

A narrow road winding behind walled-and-gated properties.

Burden's car parks by Zaja's back wall. As they get out,
Burden is working an app on his phone:

WYATT
We have alarms.

BURDEN
I'm turning 'em off. And she's
alone.

Pocketing the phone, Burden goes to the wall and laces
his fingers.

BURDEN
You need a boost?

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - FOYER - SOON AFTER

The front door unlocks. Wyatt lets himself in. Looks at:

Plastic sheeting taped all over the floor. A random pattern of empty hat pegs and X-marks on the walls.

This morning seems like a lifetime ago.

He listens to the silent house.

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE

Empty. Dark. Still. Wyatt walks through.

WYATT

Zaja?

He walks in further.

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Wyatt stops by an open door, looking in at the music room, all the candles burning.

WYATT

Zaj?

He turns -- as Zaja appears, down the hall.

They both stand there, frozen.

She stares.

He gives a slight shrug --

-- and she runs to him.

Hugs, tight, feeling him, smelling him.

He holds her equally tight.

They stand in the darkened hall. Treasuring the simple reality of each other. Suddenly, intensely aware of what they have learned today.

Then she steps back, taking him in.

Slaps him, hard.

ZAJA

You asshole!

WYATT

I'm so sorry.

She punches his chest with her fist.

ZAJA

Where have you been?!

WYATT

I was -- trying to figure it all out.

(beat)

I wasn't there. When it happened.

He watches her trying to understand.

WYATT

Zaj -- I'm sorry.

(beat)

I was with somebody else.

ZAJA

What do you mean?

He can't say the words.

WYATT

I was -- with someone. Else. When it happened.

ZAJA

"With" someone?

He nods. Watching Zaja get it.

ZAJA

Who?

WYATT

Jane.

ZAJA

Jane -- like...Jane?

He nods again. She's processing.

WYATT

And the thing is, she was --

ZAJA

Wait. Just: gimme a second here.

(beat)

You weren't in the fire because you were fucking Jane?

WYATT

Yeah -- and I feel bad about it --
but there's something else th--

ZAJA

Don't! No! I can't! Just --

She walks out --

WYATT

There's something else that --

ZAJA

You cheated on me!?

WYATT

Zaj -- wait --

She's gone. He sighs, feeling like shit. Wishing he could just walk away, in shame.

But he can't. Goes after her.

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

She storms in, furious -- goes to the night table.

ZAJA

On our anniversary!?

WYATT (O.S.)

Look, I know and I'm sorry! But --

Wyatt comes in as she gets the derringer and turns --

WYATT

Whoa!

-- BOOM! BOOM! --

-- flinching and covering up and throwing himself back out as the bullets shatter a picture frame and take a chunk out of the wall.

Zaja is already sitting on the edge of the bed, flipping the gun open and taking two more bullets from the box:

ZAJA

Okay, so now the fifty-pack makes sense.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - HALL OUTSIDE BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Wyatt shouts in, keeping away from the door:

WYATT

Zaja -- we need to talk!

ZAJA

What did I tell you I would do?!

WYATT

I know, but --

She closes the gun and gets up -- goes to the doorway --

ZAJA

This morning -- what did I TELL
you?!

Wyatt turns and runs -- BOOM! BOOM! bullets slam into the
hallway wall behind him --

-- as he dashes around a corner.

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - OTHER HALL - CONTINUOUS

WYATT

Would you just WAIT a second?!

She's already reloading.

ZAJA

Did you wait?! Before you stuck
your dick in Jane?!

She picks up her phone, taps something --

WYATT

Just -- please -- listen! I need
to tell y--

Music comes on the house-wide sound system -- cranked all
the way up. It's pulverizing. Like a boom-car that
makes a whole street shudder -- except this is the size
of a mansion.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE ZAJA'S - CONTINUOUS

The handful of PRESS and PAPARAZZI drinking coffee and
schmoozing in the work-light around their vehicles turn
and stare at the dark, thudding house.

EXT. BURDEN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Burden frowns, parked by the back wall. Rolls down his window.

Muffled, pounding music.

He dials his phone.

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The sculpted sand of a table-top Japanese-meditation-garden vibrates into smoothness.

Tropical fish in a big decorative tank float to the rhythmically-rippling surface...belly-up.

The phone begins to ring, lost in the din.

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - HALL OUTSIDE BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Wincing, Wyatt edges toward the bedroom door, yelling:

WYATT

ZAJA! WE'VE GOT TO TALK ABOUT --

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

She finishes reloading --

ZAJA

YOU CHEATED! WHAT WERE YOU
THINKING?!

WYATT

THAT...MY WIFE WAS A PSYCHO?!

He hastily ducks back as two more bullets splinter the door-frame by his face.

ZAJA

YOU CHEATED!

WYATT

AND I'M SORRY!

Exasperated, Wyatt steels himself and rushes the room --

-- as Zaja snaps open the barrels and reaches for more bullets.

Wyatt grabs for the gun --

-- Zaja trying to stand and shoulder him away, the box knocked out of her hands --

-- bullets clattering off the walls, falling behind furniture, rolling under the bed --

-- Wyatt holding her wrists, firm.

WYATT

ZAJA.

She looks up at him, startled.

Their eyes on each other for a moment. Remembering they are married. Realizing they have stuff to work out.

She kicks him really hard in the balls.

WYATT

Whoff!

Wyatt goes down, letting her go.

As he curls up on the carpet and tries to breathe --

-- Zaja gets down there as well, picking up two more rounds, loading them into the gun.

WYATT

JUST -- HANG ON A SEC--

The music is pounding and she's not interested.

Wyatt grimaces and scrambles for the door, on the floor.

By the time Zaja shuts the gun --

-- he's gone.

She collects bullets, stuffing them in her pockets.

INT. BURDEN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Burden disconnects. Thoughtful.

Puts the phone away and turns, pulls a battered suitcase from the disorganized pile in the back seat.

Sets it on the passenger seat and opens it. Inside:

Waterproof-paper jumpsuits. Plastic shower caps. Paper booties. Goggles. Rubber gloves.

His kill-kit.

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The music thunders. Wyatt rushes to the table and grabs up one of Zaja's big drawing pads, markers -- starts to scribble a note.

Zaja appears in the doorway, raises the gun two-handed.

He flings himself away as she blows a hole in his note --
-- the second shot catches the stage set model, spinning it down the long polished table.

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Zaja stalks Wyatt through the big house amid the seismic music.

He's shouting but she can't hear.

Now and then she shoots at him.

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Wyatt is running for the front doors -- then stops.

Thinking.

Zaja appears down the hall, reloading.

Wyatt turns and walks toward her.

She gets the two bullets in -- closes the gun, raises it.

He is waiting. Right in front of her.

For the first time she can't miss.

She hesitates. He knew she would.

WYATT

JANE IS DEAD!

Zaja stares, uncertain, over the gun.

He meets her eyes and nods.

She studies him.

Then warily goes to a wall-mounted panel and shuts off the music.

The silence is immense.

WYATT

Jane is dead.
(beat)
And her boyfriend.

Silence.

ZAJA

You're bisexual?

WYATT

What?! No. No -- they were
trying to blackmail me.

(beat)

Burden killed them. Your
detective.

(beat)

He killed them both, right in
front of me. And made it look
like I did it. So he could
blackmail me.

ZAJA

That doesn't...make any sense.

WYATT

You hired a detective through the
internet?

ZAJA

Yeah -- but...not to do that.

WYATT

You hired a detective through the
internet?!

ZAJA

It was -- a secure transaction!

Wyatt just stares, not bothering to say more. And Zaja
doesn't need him to. After a small painful silence:

ZAJA

He killed them?

Wyatt nods.

WYATT

And he wants me to kill you. For
your money.

Silence.

ZAJA

Nobody was...supposed to get hurt.

Wyatt pointedly looks at the gun in her hand. She sighs.

ZAJA
I mean...you know.

WYATT
(gently)
I know.

Silence.

ZAJA
I'm sorry.

WYATT
No -- I am.

Silence. She goes to the phone, picks it up.

WYATT
What are you doing?

She stops, confused.

ZAJA
What do you think?

WYATT
We were having an affair, Zaja.
He has pictures. Video. He's got
my fingerprints on their stuff, at
the crime scene.

ZAJA
So what? I'm rich -- we'll get
lawyers! Even if you did it, they
could probably get you off.

Awkward beat.

WYATT
Right.

Zaja smiles -- and Wyatt does too. They stand there,
truly appreciating each other.

ZAJA
We really screwed up, didn't we?
Both of us.

WYATT
Well...you said you wanted to do
everything together.

Zaja smiles. Turns back to the phone, begins to dial --

BURDEN (O.S.)
You two are really sweet.

Zaja freezes, without turning. But Wyatt can see:
Burden, in the hallway. Wearing his kill-suit.
Carrying a pillow in each hand.

WYATT

Zaj? Might be a good time to tell
this guy he's fired.

Zara turns, pissed -- then frowns at the outfit.

ZAJA

What is there, radiation?

Burden smiles, creepy --

-- and there's a tiny moment of standoff, a duel in the
sun: Zaja and Burden taking each other's measure across
the big room.

Wyatt, too far from Zaja to hold her back, warns:

WYATT

Don't. He's got pillows.

ZAJA

Ooh, pillows, I'm scared --

Zara starts toward Burden --

-- Wyatt rushing to grab the poker from a set of
fireplace tools --

-- as Zaja and Burden charge each other, murder in their
eyes.

Burden is by far the more menacing and relentless --

-- until Zaja stops and raises her little gun and fires
at his face.

They're only about six feet apart. Blood sprays from
Burden's forehead as his head snaps back --

BURDEN

Augh!

-- and he staggers, dropping the pillows and falling
backwards.

Zaja and Wyatt stand frozen, watching him.

Lying on the floor, Burden puts his hands to his bloody
forehead.

BURDEN

OW! Fuck. What was that -- a
twenty-two?!

Beat. Uncertain:

ZAJA

They said it was a rifle shell.

Burden sits up, feeling it with his fingertips. The
bullet is visible, lodged in his skull, flat end sticking
out slightly. It's bleeding a lot, as face wounds do.

BURDEN

It is a rifle shell. Who the fuck
cares -- it's coming out of a
twenty-two. You might as well be
throwing rifle shells at me.
Ow. Hurts, though.

He starts to get up, one hand still on his bleeding
forehead.

Zaja fires again, into his chest. He winces, grabs that
wound and kneads it.

BURDEN

Would you stop?! I'm not a
fucking rabbit.

Zaja goes to the phone and picks it up.

Burden watches calmly, as Zaja pushes the button a few
times: no dial tone.

BURDEN

I am also not a fucking amateur.
Unlike you two.

Zaja looks at Wyatt.

ZAJA

Don't let him get away.

She runs out of the room. Burden looks at Wyatt.

BURDEN

Why does she think I'm trying to
get away?

WYATT

I don't really know.
(beat)
Anything. Any more.

Burden sighs and starts after her --

WYATT

Stop.

Burden doesn't even turn around to say:

BURDEN

Grow up.

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Burden stalks through the big rooms, tracking Zaja.

Wyatt comes running up behind him with the fireplace poker raised --

-- swinging it at the back of Burden's head --

-- except Burden twists and dodges, without slowing --

-- slamming his elbow into Wyatt's belly -- Wyatt grunting and doubling over, going sprawling -- the poker flying across the room.

Burden turns to kick Wyatt in the ribs --

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Zaja runs in and kneels down on the floor.

ZAJA

Come on -- I know I didn't shoot all fifty --

She pulls aside the dust ruffle and looks under the bed.

Bullets.

But she can't reach them.

Tries to push the bed. The frame is architectural, built into the wall.

She scrambles around to the other side.

INT. ZAJA'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Burden, one hand still pressed to his bloody forehead, is trying to kick Wyatt --

-- but Wyatt has grabbed Burden's kicking-foot and is clinging to it with both arms, hugging it, curled-up on the floor.

Burden tries to shake Wyatt off his foot --

BURDEN

Fucking pansy!

-- when Wyatt suddenly grabs the ankle of Burden's non-kicking foot and yanks.

Burden goes down.

Wyatt leaps on him.

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Zaja's lying face-down, one arm all the way under the bed.

Her fingertips are half-an-inch from a bullet.

She makes a painful effort, squirming her shoulder further under the bed --

-- and gets it. Pulls it out, looks at it in her palm.

One bullet.

Zaja thinks.

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Wyatt is on his back with Burden on top of him, strangling.

Wyatt's fingers claw and grapple at Burden's hands on his throat. Burden's grip is iron.

Wyatt's feet kick frantically.

He stares up at Burden.

Above Burden's sadistic eyes, the flat base of the bullet is poking out of the bloody wound in his forehead.

Wyatt whacks the bullet with his palm.

BURDEN

OW!

Wyatt slaps the bullet in Burden's forehead again -- and then again -- like some kind of horrifying Three Stooges routine.

Burden angrily lets go of Wyatt's throat with one hand to try and grab his wrist --

-- Wyatt trying to shove Burden off him -- but Burden's still too strong, too good at this --

-- until suddenly Zaja's foot kicks Burden in the face --
-- knocking him off Wyatt.

Wyatt scrambles away -- eyes on Burden --

-- who is already starting to get up -- angrily trying to
shake his much-assaulted head back into focus --

-- eyes on Zaja.

Who turns and runs out of the room.

Burden scrambles after her.

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - VARIOUS - CONTINUOUS

Zaja runs through rooms, full-tilt.

Burden chases her, like a bull in a china shop.

They fly through doorways, around furniture.

Wyatt comes after them.

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Zaja races through. Burden chases her.

Wyatt follows --

-- but suddenly skids to a stop and goes back --

-- to grab a wicked-looking 8-inch carving knife from the
block on the counter.

EXT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - CONTINUOUS

Zaja keeps away from Burden, dodging around the pool.

Burden, slightly winded, is not amused.

She's quick and agile, with immense stamina and quick
moves -- a professional dancer.

Burden is clumsy in his paper suit and paper booties.
Increasingly angry.

Wyatt comes out from the kitchen, breathless -- holding
the carving knife.

ZAJA

Wyatt -- stay back! I got this.

BURDEN

Oh, you don't got it yet, honey.
But you're gonna get it.

Wyatt does stay back, but yells at Burden:

WYATT

Would you just give it up!? It's
OVER! How the hell is this gonna
look like a suicide?!

ZAJA

You're trying to reason with him?!

Burden ignores Wyatt. Cornering Zaja.

Wyatt grimaces and gets up his nerve and runs at Burden --
-- plunging the carving knife deep into his back.

Wyatt hastily backs away, scared --

-- as Burden howls, twisting and arching, trying to get
to the knife handle sticking out between his shoulder
blades. He yells in frustration.

Zaja and Wyatt stay back, wide-eyed.

ZAJA

Great. Now you just made him mad.

WYATT

You have a better idea?!

Zaja nods, stepping in toward Burden --

-- who is walking in a circle, grunting like a wounded
bear, groping clumsily at the knife.

He notices Zaja, stumbles toward her.

Zaja dances back, drawing him.

Then she stops -- raises the tiny pistol, two-handed.

Burden stops too, glaring, breathing heavily. Leans on a
nearby heater-lamp-post, gathering strength. With his
free hand, he gestures: *bring it on* --

BURDEN

Come on, cutie. Do your worst.

ZAJA

I am.

She lowers the muzzle -- aiming at the heater's big
propane tank -- and fires her last bullet.

BOOM!

It explodes into a fireball, setting Burden on fire.

He runs across the deck, knocking aside chairs and tables -- a screaming torch.

Right into the deep end of the swimming pool.

There's a whoosh of smoke and steam as the flames go out.

Wyatt and Zaja stare at the blackened body slowly rising up to the surface --

-- floating face-down in the beautiful lit-up pool. The knife still sticking out of his back.

They watch. Uncertain.

All of a sudden Burden flails his face up out of the water, with a great loud gasp --

-- and starts thrashing in a clumsy butterfly stroke toward the steps at the shallow end.

WYATT

Aw, man...

ZAJA

What is he, a fucking zombie?!

WYATT

He's on drugs.

ZAJA

All right: see? Drugs are bad.

They run.

Burden, blackened and blistered, a bullet sticking out of his forehead and a knife sticking out of his back --

-- emerges from the water, lumbering up the pool steps like a roasted swamp-monster.

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Wyatt and Zaja run through the living room --

-- across the plastic-sheeted foyer, to the front door.

They yank it open.

Burden is outside, burned and dripping.

She tries to close it --

-- but he slams in, flinging the door open hard, throwing them backward.

Zaja goes sprawling --

-- as Burden staggers in, slamming the door behind him.

Wyatt and Burden circle each other warily --

-- as Zaja struggles, dazed, to her hands and knees.

Wyatt lunges, shoving Burden backward --

-- so that he falls over Zaja, landing flat on his back.

Zaja and Wyatt scramble away, shocked --

-- as Burden, coughing blood, looks down at his chest. An inch of knife blade now sticking out of it.

Wyatt winces, Zaja grimaces.

Burden stares at them, malevolent. Rolling over, trying to get up.

WYATT

Zaja, go -- get out!

ZAJA

I'm not leaving you!

WYATT

There's fifty reporters outside!
Get HELP!

Zaja blinks: *duh*. But as she starts for the doors --

-- Burden grabs the plastic sheeting with both hands and yanks --

-- pulling it out from under Wyatt's feet. Wyatt falls back on his ass.

Burden gets up and staggers toward Wyatt.

Zaja turns back and runs up behind Burden -- shoving him away from Wyatt as hard as she can --

-- Burden slams face-first into the wall.

He slumps, going slack.

Zaja backs away, confused.

Burden stays there, limp, face pressed to the wall.

Zaja and Wyatt watch him.

Burden doesn't move. Hanging on the wall by his face.

WYATT

Oh, jeez.

Blood starts to drip down the wall below Burden's face.

Wyatt reluctantly moves closer to be certain that...

...a hat-peg went through the eye-socket and into his brain.

Wyatt steps back, appalled.

Burden just hangs there.

Wyatt looks at Zaja.

WYATT

Okay.

(beat)

I'm sorry, but: that seems
...random.

Beat.

ZAJA

Yeah.

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Three o'clock in the morning. Wyatt and Zaja sit at one end of the long formal table, by the shot-up model of her stage set.

Silent. Beat-up and bloody. Sipping bourbon, straight, by candle-light.

It has been a long day.

WYATT

Call the lawyers before you call
the police.

Zaja thinks about this a long time.

ZAJA

I'm not calling anybody.

WYATT

Zaja. People are dead.

ZAJA

People who did fucked-up stuff.

(admitting)

Now...so did we.

(MORE)

ZAJA (CONT'D)

(beat)
But we won.

Wyatt is staring at her. Zaja doesn't back down.

ZAJA

If I call the police -- for the rest of my life: no matter what else I do, no matter how good it might be...everything will be always be about this.

(beat)
Well, that's not fair.

(beat)
I'm sorry they're dead.

(beat)
But they shouldn't have fucked with us.

Long silence. Eyes on each other.

Then Wyatt nods.

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - FOYER

Wyatt and Zaja roll Burden up in the plastic sheeting.

They look around, impressed. No blood on the floor.

The wall is another matter.

ZAJA

Now what?

Wyatt holds up a thumb:

WYATT

Evidence.
(adds a finger)
Then...something that starts with an "R".

Zaja frowns, mystified. Wyatt smiles sadly.

WYATT

I got this part.

She studies him -- slowly realizing:

ZAJA

This is a...goodbye present, isn't it?

Painful beat. Wyatt nods. Shrugs.

WYATT

What do you give the girl who has everything?

They look at each other with great tenderness.

Over the rolled-up corpse.

A Zaja song begins...the one they were rehearsing to at the dance rehearsal...

...it continues over a montage:

EXT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - BACK FENCE - LATER (MONTAGE)

Dark. The service gate opens. Wyatt looks out.

No paparazzi.

He walks to where Burden's car is parked.

Gets behind the wheel and starts it up. Drives it into the property. The gates close behind him.

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT (MONTAGE)

Wearing rubber gloves, hair in a kerchief, Zaja spritzes household cleanser on the bloody hat-peg and wall.

Dips a sponge in a bucket of soapy water and begins to scrub.

Just an ordinary housewife.

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - GARAGE - NIGHT (MONTAGE)

Burden's car is parked in Wyatt's garage.

The dead detective is rolled-up in plastic sheeting, on the concrete floor beside it.

In his respirator-mask, safety goggles and gloves -- Wyatt goes to open Burden's trunk.

Drags out the rolled-up rug that Jane is in, sets it beside the plastic mummy.

Then the rolled-up sheet that Adam is in, lines it up beside the others.

Wyatt looks down at them, sober.

QUICK CUTS:

Wyatt opens the two front doors and one of the rear doors of Burden's car.

Unrolls the bodies and drags them, pulls them into sitting positions:

Burden behind the wheel, Jane shotgun, Adam in the back.

Wyatt cable-ties Burden's hands to the wheel at ten-and-two. Slides sunglasses onto Burden's face to conceal the missing eye.

Wyatt shuts the three car doors.

Starts up the ventilator fans.

Switches on the air-compressor.

Gives the mixer-gun trigger a couple of quick squeezes to prime the nozzles.

Starts spraying fiberglass.

EXT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - FRONT GATES - DAWN (MONTAGE)

The sun is just coming up.

Wyatt lets himself out the back gate, a backpack slung over his shoulder.

He steps over the low guard-rail on the service road and starts scrambling down into the dusty, brush-choked canyon. Vanishing from view.

INT. ZAJA'S HOUSE - FOYER - DAY (MONTAGE)

Morning light flooding in the windows.

Zaja comes through the living room, in a cutting-edge-but-tragic all-black outfit.

Quincey waits by the front doors, also in black.

Zaja suddenly veers off -- bending to pick something up off the floor under an end table.

In her black-gloved palm: a spent .22 shell casing.

She quietly puts it into her little black clutch bag, and then heads out the front doors --

-- to the waiting SUV, where Security Sam respectfully holds the car door open for her.

News vans and paparazzi wait down the driveway and outside the gates, to cover the "event" of Zaja's SUV driving out.

But we stay behind. Looking at the very clean hat pegs.

INT. BURDEN'S APARTMENT - DAY (MONTAGE)

Wyatt lets himself in, wearing surgical gloves.

He collects the plastic bags with all the evidence, puts them in his backpack.

Wipes down everything he touched with a cloth.

Goes to the dining table, where the chapters of Burden's manuscript are laid out.

CLOSE ON the neatly-handwritten, carefully-illustrated pages...as Wyatt finds:

How To Create A New Identity

Wyatt takes them with him, as he leaves.

...the Zaja song continues through into:

INT. ARENA VENUE - STAGE - DAY

...the dance she was working-out in rehearsal -- now on stage with full costumes and lights, full band, backup singers.

And the model set design is now large-as-life: a sprawling pop-art landfill, giant heaps of furniture, mannequins, kitchen sinks, doors, sporting goods -- all splashed and sprayed with brightly-colored paint, bristling with blinking lights and video screens.

Perched on the top, huge lit-up marquee letters: **TRASH TOUR.**

Zaja struts and twirls among it with her Dancers, into a big climax complete with smoke and fireworks.

The number ends, triumphant and breathless.

It's met with an odd hollow silence. Then scattered applause from a handful of people --

-- the Tour Team and Crew, tiny in a vast ocean of empty seats -- which we now see as work lights come on.

Dress rehearsal.

Zaja and her Dancers walk off the stage --

INT. STAPLES CENTER - FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

-- into a swirl of collaborators and employees all talking to her at once -- Quincey helping her into a big plush robe.

Zaja listens and nods and replies, polite and professional but distracted --

-- keeps moving through them, and Quincey protects her:

QUINCEY

Come on -- let's go, guys -- give her a little time to herself, we can do this in the dressing room, okay?

The Team, sympathetic and respectful, hastily gathers their stuff and heads backstage to wait.

Glancing back --

-- at Zaja wandering out into the big empty arena.

INT. STAPLES CENTER - SEATS - CONTINUOUS

She walks for a while and then just stops.

A solitary figure amid the rows and rows of seats.

Alone. Lost in thought. For a long time.

Until her phone vibrates.

Zaja smiles a tiny smile as she takes it from the pocket of her robe, answering a video-chat --

-- and we see on her phone screen:

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. INTERNET CAFE - CONTINUOUS

Wyatt has cut and dyed his hair, grown a scruffy beard. He sits at workstation in a dim cafe --

-- looking at Zaja in his video-chat window:

ZAJA

Hey, you.

She's in the vast empty auditorium. He's in the dim cramped cafe.

WYATT

You okay?

She nods.

ZAJA

You?

He nods. Then:

WYATT

So -- can I open this now?

He holds up a small express-delivery box.

Zaja nods.

Wyatt pulls the zip-strip, opens the flaps. Unfolds some bubble-wrap.

Revealing the little two-barrel pistol.

He looks at her. Uncertain.

ZAJA

I wanted you to have something to remember me by.

He can't help but smile a little.

WYATT

Yeah. In case I forget.

Wyatt frowns, noticing something. Opens the barrels --
-- and pulls a rolled-up slip of paper out of one.

ZAJA

I tried to write you a poem.

He unrolls it: a few letters and two dozen numbers.

She shrugs at her failure.

ZAJA

All I came up with was a Swiss bank account.

Wyatt considers it. Looks at Zaja.

WYATT

You know, I never once asked y--

ZAJA

I know.

Beat.

WYATT

You sure about this?
(holds up the gun)
You might get married again.

She smiles.

ZAJA

Maybe. But I think I'll only ever
want to shoot you.

He smiles too. Nods. Pockets the gun -- and the slip of
paper.

Then they just look at each other. Very far apart.

ZAJA

Do you think there's such a thing
as a good mistake?

WYATT

Yeah, I do.
(beat)
And I'm glad I made it with you.

She nods.

ZAJA

I love you, Wyatt.

WYATT

I love you, too, Zaja.

Eyes locked on each other. Sad. Sweet.

She presses **END CALL**.

INT. INTERNET CAFE - THE SAME TIME

Wyatt moves the mouse-arrow on to a button: **END SESSION**.

With unexpected regret -- Wyatt clicks it.

INT. STAPLES CENTER - BY THE STAGE

Zaja walks past the stage into the dark tunnel to the
dressing rooms.

We let her go.

CREW MEMBERS are tinkering with the moving platforms,
climbing the lighting trusses.

We move closer.

Half-buried in the huge piles of junk in the stage set,
among the painted sporting goods and broken furniture --
we find:

Ned Burden's beat-up old car.

With Burden in the driver's seat. Hands on the wheel.
Wearing sunglasses.

Jane beside him, Adam in the back seat. Along for the
ride.

All three frozen forever, encased in fiberglass.
Splashed with color, spray-painted.

The Crew walks past them, works around them.

No one pays the least bit of attention.

EXT. INTERNET CAFE - CONTINUOUS

Hard to tell what city this street is in. It might be in
a foreign land.

Wyatt comes out of the Internet Cafe, backpack slung over
one shoulder. Wearing a little hipster hat and
sunglasses, jacket collar turned up.

He could be anyone.

He walks off into the night.

Passing a big lit-up bus stop poster of Zaja.

-- THE END --