

THE LAST ACTION HERO

by

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The spirit that I have seen
May be the devil, and the devil hath power
T'assume a pleasing shape; yea, and perhaps,
Out of my weakness and melancholy,
Abuses me to damn me.

--- Hamlet

EXT. THE BEVERLY CENTER -- DAY

An Establishing Shot of this giant cement crap, plopped down in the heart of L.A.

CLIF ED:

INT. THE BEVERLY CENTER --

Saturday: The Mall is glutted with L.A. shoppers; sleek, aerodynamic women, smiley men in flower ties.

On all four floors: A swirling eddy of sun-glasses, Day-Glo, surfwear and sushi.

THREE QUICK SHOTS

of THREE ARYAN MERCENARIES, dressed 'inconspicuously' in sunglasses and dark grey business suits, doing their best to look like average shoppers:

MERC 1 scans the Hot Hit C.D.'s at Sam Goody.

MERC 2 tests out the zippers on garment bags at La Valise.

MERC 3 stares down a fuzzy, little puppy in the pet shop window.

THEN, simultaneously, all three of their stop watches sound off. They drop what they're doing, walk out of the stores, and in steady, controlled strides converge at the ELEVATOR BANK.

These are some well-trained, bad-ass, tougher-than-hell hit men.

GLASS ELEVATORS --

DING, and the elevator doors swoosh open. The MERCS file in, and line up across the back. They are the only ones in the elevator other than the LIFT OPERATOR, who announces the floors.

OPERATOR

Fourth floor...Bullocks, Sporting Goods, Designer Fashions...

As the elevator ascends, the MERCS prepare: One loads his gun, another twists on a silencer, the third checks his watch, right on schedule.

The OPERATOR looks nervous, but tries to get on with his job.

OPERATOR
Fifth Floor...Cineplex, food court,
rest rooms...

The MERCS straighten their ties and prepare to step off.

OPERATOR
Sixth Floor...

The elevator doors slide open and...Holy Shit, your pancreas dances, because who's standing right in the middle of the doorway but...

ARNO SLATER, the toughest, strongest, hardest-to-kill, Action Hero you've ever seen.

OPERATOR
...Last stop...

ARNO
Everybody out!

Before the MERCS can so much as blink, ARNO'S massive assault rifle BLASTS them in one glass shattering boom through the back of the elevator.

They PLUMMET, head over heels, two-hundred feet through the air, racking up in the shallow fountain below.

THEN --

From all corners of the mall, THE BACK-UP TEAM, fifteen more MERCS in identical dark grey suits, put down their newspapers, get up from their benches, and rapidly converge on Arno's position.

These MERCS just saw their friends swan dive 200 feet into the wishing pool, and they look plenty pissed. They come together, forming an impassable line, and sweep forward, violently pushing all shoppers out of their way.

As they get closer to Target-Point-Arno, right in the middle of the crowd, they open fire. All hell breaks loose in the mall, and the pulse pounding SOUND TRACK kicks into overdrive.

Arno barrels through the mall-ways towards the escalators on the other side. Here, the oblivious crowd shuffles on undisturbed.

He takes a breath, and checks his gun. It's a beauty: A blue steel, state-of-the-art hand cannon, with one of those high-

tech laser sights clamped to the underslug.

THE ESCALATORS --

Two escalators, One UP, one DOWN, run right alongside each other. Men closing in fast behind him, ARNO hops on to the UP escalator.

On the floor above, one mean looking MERC heading right for him, and the only thing in between them...

A weary MOTHER pushing her CHILD in a stroller towards the Down escalator. And...Uh, oh...The child's safety strap hangs unbuckled...

Arno flips on his laser sighting, just as the MERC comes bounding forward, and THWACK... By accident, crashes into the stroller, pitching the smiling child into space.

The mother screams, the MERC aims, the child falls and the MERC fires at ARNO...

WHO ducks the bullet, then pivots, and with his giant right HAND reaches out and CATCHES the child, while his left raises his gun, laser sights his quarry and blows him away.

Arno then rides up the escalator and gently hands the child off to the weeping, grateful mother as she passes going DOWN.

ARNO

(dead-pan)

Shopping can be hell.

Arno gets off the escalator, but his work isn't over yet.

Charging down the FOOD COURT in front of him are a band of FOUR more MERCS in matching grey suits.

They've seen him. Moving back into the crowd, Arno spots a clothing store, VICTORIA'S SECRET

CUT TO:

INT. VICTORIA'S SECRET --

An army of beach beauties flows back and forth draped in silk negligees, examining their perfect construction before the wall length mirrors.

All activity ceases, however, when ARNO strides into the center of the store.

A disturbed SALESWOMAN decides to deal with him.

SALESWOMAN
Can I help you, sir?

ARNO
No, I'm just looking.

SALESWOMAN
I see.

Out of the corner of his eye, Arno spots the MERCS coming his way.

ARNO
Is there a back door here?

SALESWOMAN
Well, it's through the changing room,
but I'm afraid that's for customers
only...

Arno grabs a giant RED BRA off the rack.

ARNO
This is nice, I'll be right back.

SALESWOMAN
Hey!

CHANGING ROOM --

Arno bursts into a dressing room filled with half-naked women trying on silky panties.

A BUXOM BLONDE with huge jugs screams at the top of her lungs.

Arno tosses her the BRA.

ARNO
Here, try this.

Arno charges down a hall to a large steel door marked, 'EMERGENCY EXIT ONLY' Without a thought, he crashes it open and finds himself right in...

The most unbelievably mammoth PARKING LOT you've ever seen.

INT. PARKING LOT --

Cars sprawl out for miles in every direction: Mercedes, Beemers, Ferraris...

A sign right in front of the staircase reads...

"UNVALIDATED TICKET PAYS MAXIMUM PENALTY"

SFX - FOOTSTEPS

An unfortunate MERC pops through the doorway. In an instant, the red laser dot from ARNO's Beretta stops right in the middle of his forehead.

ARNO

You forgot your validation...

He blows him away.

ARNO takes off down the center aisle of the parking lot. Then he stops.

ARNO'S P.O.V. --

About FIFTEEN of the MERCS have followed him in, and are coming down the exit ramp, straight towards him.

Using the cars as cover, Arno makes his way to the edge of the parking structure and peers over the side...

It's about a hundred foot drop. Into traffic.

And it's rush hour.

Arno realizes he must stand and fight, when SUDDENLY, a hail of bullets come flying past him.

He ducks behind a Mercedes, and clicks on his LASER SCOPE. The thin, piercing beam of the laser sight streams out and bounces off the car window.

An electronic VOICE blares out:

CAR ALARM VOICE

You are standing too close to this car! You have ten seconds to move away...

The Laser Dot accidentally triggered the car alarm, and it's scared ARNO out of his shorts.

NOW, the MERCS know where he is, and they're coming fast.

ARNO checks the cartridge on his pistol....Uh oh, no more bullets. He frowns and searches his flak jacket desperately. He feels something hard in one pocket and pulls it out.

It's a pack of gum.

Arno's sweating. The Mercs are fanning out in all directions. All he can see is an infinite sea of cars, and, somewhere, a million miles away, a tiny glowing exit sign.

And then it hits him. The cars, all of them. After all, this is L.A....

ARNO smiles.

He shoves the two pieces of gum in his mouth and starts moving from car to car.

He plucks the wad of gum out of his mouth and separates it into two small balls. He jams them in his ears.

ARNO lifts the gun up, the LASER flickering past his face, and then, in a series of sweeping motions...

FANS THE LASER BEAM BACK AND FORTH ACROSS THE PARKING LOT --

The red laserlight dances all over the immense lot, bouncing off car windows and mirrors, an intricate latticework shifting and tilting with his hand.

THE MERCS are confused, some of them scared by the light passing over them.

There's a dazzling sea of little red blips, followed by an incredibly tense moment of silence, you could almost hear a pin drop when...

BLAMMO!

SFX -- The most unbelievable, ear-shattering, Earth-ending cacophony of CAR ALARMS and warning systems blasts out all over the lot.

It's sonic-boom time, and ARNO'S ready for it, dashing through the lot as fast as he can, a big shit-eating grin on his face.

THE MERCS look like they've just spent a week in an Iraqi Bunker. They clutch their ears, falling to the floor in clumps.

EXT. PARKING STRUCTURE EXIT --

Arno Slater has beaten the odds once again. He runs straight through the exit door and down the ramp.

A BROWN SEDAN pulls right up next to him -- an amazingly hot BABE behind the wheel.

ARNO gives her his sexy, sly smile, and she glances down at his sweaty pumping muscles.

He hops in next to her; she revs the engine, and...

HE TURNS TO THE AUDIENCE. And winks.

As they roar off down the ramp, two huge, metallic words slide across the screen and smash together:

EXTREMELY VIOLENT

OVERDUB

"Don't forget to get your ticket validated! This weekend. Theaters Every -- "

SUDDENLY, the screen goes white, the edges of the frame pull in, and we realize that we are...

INT. ASMODEUN THEATER - NIGHT

...in the middle of an enormous movie theater. The scene we've just witnessed isn't real at all, but a trailer.

DANNY

(O.S.)

What'd you stop it for?

Sitting in the middle of the theater is DANNY. He's a fifteen year old kid, 5'4", sandy brown hair, a little bit scruffy.

DANNY

Hey, Les...

The theater is almost empty. A few homeless people sleep in seats near the back.

SUDDENLY, the back doors to the theater fling open and the lights blaze on. Through the doors at the end of the long aisle strides LESTER, THE PROJECTIONIST.

He is a tall man with a cruelly handsome face, hidden behind a dark beard. A pin on his shirt bears the insignia of the theater... "THE ASMODEUN".

DANNY

Les, why'd you stop it?

The Projectionist taps Danny on the shoulder.

PROJECTIONIST

Walk with me.

Danny follows him down the aisle to the edge of the seats. In the BACKGROUND, the homeless men have been awakened by the lights.

The Projectionist starts walking back and forth, parallel to the screen.

PROJECTIONIST

You see?

DANNY

What...

He grips Danny by the shoulders and leads him, back and forth, staring at the screen.

DANNY'S P.O.V. --

As he passes a certain point on the screen, a beam of light shoots out, disappearing just as quickly when he passes away from it.

DANNY

What is that?

The Projectionist reaches out. His hand seems to disappear into the screen.

PROJECTIONIST

A tear. A rather large one in fact. (he inspects it closely) I'll have to cancel tonight's show.

DANNY

Shit. What about EXTREMELY VIOLENT this weekend?

THE PROJECTIONIST

Of course, Danny... How could I pass up the business, you're my only

paying customer.

DANNY

Excellent, I'll be here.

Lester watches on as Danny walks up the long aisle, heads through the lobby and out into...

CUT TO:

EXT. FORTY SECOND STREET AND EIGHTH AVENUE - MIDNIGHT

...The world of NEW YORK'S TIMES SQUARE.
It's one of those hot summer nights in the city when the wind feels like subway backdraft flying up in your face.

On these blocks the action never stops. Everyone is selling something: Smokes, chicks, chains, incense, and I.D.'s, and every gambler, creep, and junkie in the city wants a part of it.

Danny makes his way through the threatening gauntlet of crack fiend solicitors. He's not exactly at ease with the situation, but at least somewhat used to it.

He finally reaches the UPTOWN subway entrance, and descends the stairs into the dark station below.

CUT TO:

EXT. ESTABLISHING SHOT -- NIGHT

The Upper West Side of Manhattan, just North of the Yuppie District -- Not yet a bad neighborhood, but pretty close to one.

CUT TO:

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING --

Danny lives in a white brick apartment building, modern by Post-War standards, just ugly and grimy by today's.

CUT TO:

INT. DANNY'S BUILDING --

He steps off the elevator and heads down the long hallway of apartments to his own. As quietly as possible, he slips in his keys and gently pushes open the door.

INSIDE --

Light from the Kitchen spills out into the hallway. Danny's MOTHER is still awake, and she's not alone.

MAN'S VOICE

(O.S.)

...but land's always a good investment, and with the market the way it is, how can I lose?

MOTHER

(O.S.)

I think you're right. Do you take milk or sugar?

MAN'S VOICE

(O.S)

Just black. So, I'm meeting with the brokers on Monday. (beat) Thanks.

MOTHER

(O.S.)

You've got to tell me how it goes.

CLOSE ON--

Danny's face, annoyed. He slams the door shut with a BANG, and heads directly down the hall towards his room.

As he passes the kitchen a voice calls out behind him. It's his MOTHER, a tired woman in her mid-forties.

MOTHER

Daniel.

DANNY

(not even turning around)

What?

MOTHER

Where've you been? I thought we agreed you'd be home before 11?

DANNY

I was at the movies.

MOTHER

The movies? I don't believe this, Danny, you have a curfew. You can't just go to movies in the middle of the night, how do you think I feel?

Not knowing where you are?

DANNY

I don't know. Looks like you were
having a good time.

He walks toward his room.

MOTHER

What?

She walks after him and grabs him before he gets to his room.

(cont.)

What is that supposed to mean?

DANNY

Figure it out, Mom.

Danny walks into his room and shuts the door, leaving his
Mother standing alone in the hallway.

CUT TO:

EXT. 96TH AND LEX --

The next morning. It's hot as hell again. It's just after
nine, but it's already 85 degrees. DANNY meanders down 96th
street towards

HUNTER HIGH SCHOOL --

A big, ugly red brick building that looks more like an armory.

INT. HUNTER --

Danny walks down a long, sterile, hallway. He comes to a
door, pushes it open...

CLASSROOM -

Class is already well under way. In the front of the room,
a TEACHER (young, bearded, energetic) lectures on Hamlet.
Behind him is a large blackboard, and a white pull down movie
screen stretching almost to the floor.

Danny sits down at a desk in the back row.

TEACHER

...And so despite his inability to

act, Hamlet is a kind of inspiration.
He is imaginative, thoughtful,
introspective...And most of all, he
can laugh at himself

Danny yawns and mechanically takes out a pen and a notebook.

TEACHER

(noticing the bored class)
But I think you'll see this in the
clip, so why don't we just roll it...

Danny perks up. The lights go down.

(cont.)

Alright, this is Laurence Olivier's
version. Some of you might remember
him from Clash of the Titans.

The clip from HAMLET begins rolling.

ONSCREEN --

KING CLAUDIUS kneels before the altar, offering his confession
to God.

CLAUDIUS

What if this cursed hand Were thicker
than itself with brothers' blood? Is
there not rain enough in the sweet
heavens to wash it white as snow?

Suddenly, SIR LAURENCE, as HAMLET, steals into the chapel.

BACK ON DANNY --

He sits up here, paying rapt attention, waiting to see what
Hamlet will do...

ONSCREEN --

CLAUDIUS

O wretched state! O bosom black as
death! Help, angels! Make assay!

Claudius falls to his knees.

HAMLET

Now might I do it pat, now 'a is a
praying, and now I'll do it - and so
he goes to heaven, And so am I

revenged.

BACK ON DANNY --

Still somewhat interested, but growing tired of Hamlet's speech.

ONSCREEN --

HAMLET

That would be scanned. A Villain kills my father, and for that, I, his sole son, do the same villain send To Heaven. Why this is hire and salary, not revenge.

BACK ON DANNY --

Disappointed. Hamlet's not gonna do it. He's gonna talk about doing it, but he's not gonna do it.

PULL IN closer and closer on Danny's eyes as they glaze over and...

SUDDENLY --

We are back in ELSINORE. CLAUDIUS prays at the altar, as Hamlet steals up behind him.

Hamlet, however, looks a little different. He's got the black turtleneck, the gold medallion, but his back, his shoulders...

They're huge.

As the strange looking Hamlet emerges from the darkness we realize, this isn't Lord Olivier at all, but ARNO SLATER. And he looks pissed.

ARNO

Claudius, you killed my father...

The deep-voiced action V.O. from the trailer kicks in...

V.O.

SOMETHING IS ROTTEN IN THE STATE OF DENMARK!

Arno hoists Claudius into the air.

ARNO

Now, I kill you!

V.O.
AND HAMLET IS TAKING OUT THE TRASH!

Arno chucks Claudius out the window of Elsinore, into the raging waters below.

MONTAGE --

The kicking EXTREMELY VIOLENT soundtrack blasts out deafening metal chords...

Shots of Arno, naked from the waist up, in camo paint and full combat gear, running through the brooding, moody castle of Elsinore:

-- blowing away POLONIUS behind the curtain with a machine gun.

-- pretending to brood in the graveyard with YORICK'S skull, then spinning around and chucking it at an approaching guard.

-- Wiring castle Elsinore with plastique explosive, and then blowing it up...

The explosion fades out...

Danny? VOICE

Danny starts to stir awake.

Danny, wake up, TEACHER

The Teacher is tapping him. He has fallen asleep, class is over, the room is empty.

DANNY
(startled)
I'm awake, I'm awake...

TEACHER
You liked the lecture, huh?

DANNY
What?

TEACHER
Never mind.

Danny pulls himself to his feet.

TEACHER
Look, Dan, you of all people, you've
gotta start paying attention...

DANNY
Uh, yeah. I'm real sorry.
(shuffling nervously) I gotta get to
my next class.

Danny hustles out the door.

CUT TO:

INT. PLAYLAND VIDEO ARCADE -- LATER THAT DAY --

VIDEO SCREEN --

A huge gorilla of a video villain is getting his head kicked in by the hero, who's got him by the scruff of his neck and knees him repeatedly in the face till he drops to the ground and disappears.

WIDER ON DANNY

hunched over DOUBLE DRAGON 2, an extremely violent video game, using one last finger-flurry to finish off the bad guys.

ALL AROUND HIM --

coins are clanking, machines are whiz-banging into hyper-space, and the whole room is flashing with light. Mean looking teenagers toking off skinnies of curb herb mill around in their satin jackets and five-finger rings. This isn't exactly the type of place where you'd expect to find a fifteen year-old white boy with a smile on his face.

DANNY has racked up a huge tally, and the Video Screen flashes on to its Ten Second Musical Interlude Phase before climbing up to the next level.

A BIGGER KID, a couple of years older than Danny, comes over to the video machine. His eyes are only half open, and he looks pretty drugged out.

Danny stares at the blinking screen and tries to ignore him.

BIGGER KID
Hey Man, can you give me a dollar?

DANNY
No...I don't have one.

BIGGER KID
Just one dollar.

DANNY
No...

BIGGER KID
Come on.

The game starts up again, and Danny gets back into it, jamming away at the controls. The kid just stands there, right over his shoulder, staring at him for a few seconds. Then he mumbles something angrily, and saunters over to another game. Danny looks relieved, as he watches the kid walk away.

BACK ON THE VIDEO SCREEN -

The game gets harder and harder. The Villain lands a series of devastating body blows and finally Danny's guy is backed into a corner, roundhoused, and dogged. The screen starts flashing, "INSERT COIN" over and over again.

As the game ends, Danny straightens up and takes his roll of quarters off the machine. He heads for the exit.

EXT. EIGHTH AVENUE -- EVENING

It's gotten late. Danny comes out on to the street, and turns the corner for Times Square.

Behind him, THE BIGGER KID from the arcade ambles out and follows Danny down the block.

A FEW BLOCKS AWAY --

Danny waits impatiently for the traffic light to change. Then, from behind, the KID taps him on the shoulder.

BIGGER KID
Hey.

Danny tries to ignore him, taking a few steps out into the street.

BIGGER KID
Give me five dollars.

DANNY
I don't have any money.

Danny crosses the street quickly, cutting his way through the

honking traffic.

NOW --

Danny jogs East on 42nd street, his book bag flapping heavily against his back. He passes the old New York Movie Houses - The Selwyn, Cine Harris, Cine 42, and glances back nervously over his shoulder. All's clear as he slows down right outside the front entrance to the decrepit old, Asmodeun.

THEN

All of a sudden, the KID is right up in his face. Danny jumps back and tries to push him away but the Kid grabs him by the arm, and starts dragging him down the street.

DANNY

(struggling)

Get off...Get off of me.

Danny can't break free. The Kid shoves him into the alley behind The Asmodeun and slams him up against the wall.

BIGGER KID

Get out your money.

Danny's face is red, he's scared, but he's not going to cave in. He gathers his strength and LUNGES forward at the kid, trying to knock him over.

The BIGGER KID just steps back and grabs Danny again, this time taking a swing at his face. His punch glances off Danny's cheek and sends him reeling back against the wall.

BIGGER KID

I didn't want to hit you.

Danny tries to stabilize himself as the kid reaches into his pocket and fishes out his wallet. He grabs out the money, throws Danny's wallet on the ground, and beats it down the alley.

DANNY

(through angry tears)

Goddamnit!

The kid is almost out of the alley when the side door to the theater opens and THE PROJECTIONIST, leaning on a walking cane, appears before him. The kid quickens his pace and is about to slip by when,

WHACK!

The Projectionist strikes him a crushing blow to his throat with the heavy cane. The KID is coughing and shaking all over as he throws the stolen money on the ground, and hobbles out of the alley.

THE PROJECTIONIST picks up the loose money and heads towards Danny.

DANNY

Lester...How did...

THE PROJECTIONIST

I heard your screaming. Are you badly bruised?

DANNY

No, no...I'm fine.

THE PROJECTIONIST

I'm afraid the little wretch got away this time. If you ask me this whole city is going to hell.

The Projectionist hands Danny back his money.

DANNY

Thanks.

As Danny brushes himself off, the Projectionist watches him intently, as though trying to make up his mind about something.

THE PROJECTIONIST

Danny, after you get cleaned up, come to the Projection booth. I have something for you.

The Projectionist ducks back into the alley door and disappears.

INT. ASMODEUN - DAY

Danny pads down the long, red carpeted hallways to the back of the theater. He reaches the end, and climbs up a spiral staircase, hesitantly, his eyes fixed overhead on the door marked "PROJECTION BOOTH". He knocks, and the door swings open.

INT. PROJECTION BOOTH -

He steps forward into the room, and is buffeted by a wave of heat. Snippets of MOVIE REEL hang from the rafters, a lone light bulb swings from the ceiling. At one end of the room the MAMMOTH MOVIE PROJECTORS point out towards the screen. THE PROJECTIONIST sits on a stool, balancing some film on his long, bony fingers as it snakes and winds its way through the projector. He is concentrating intensely and doesn't even look up when Danny enters.

DANNY

It's hot as hell in here.

Startled, The Projectionist loses his concentration, and the film unspools out onto the floor.

PROJECTIONIST

GODDAMNIT! (fuming) Didn't you see I was working?! Never interrupt me when I'm working...

DANNY

Look, I'm sorry...

PROJECTIONIST

(calming down)

No, no I'm sorry. I was just... It's these damned ancient projectors... I snapped. (beat) Sit down.

Danny looks around for a chair and finds the only other one in the room, pushed back into one of the dark corners. He goes over and slumps down, falling deep into the saggy cushion.

The Projectionist begins reloading the film into the projector. This continues through the scene.

PROJECTIONIST

Do you read the Bible, Danny?

DANNY

No, not really...

THE PROJECTIONIST

"Recompense to no man evil for evil...as much as lyeth in you, live peaceably with all men. Vengeance is mine; I will repay, Sayeth the Lord."
(beat) Ridiculous, isn't it?

Danny just stares back at him somewhat uncomfortably.

(cont.)
God lied to us, Danny. We are the ones who must bring justice to the world.

DANNY
(smiling)
Death Wish, right?

The Projectionist does not smile.

THE PROJECTIONIST
I wouldn't laugh, Danny. What would you have done if I wasn't there today? Gone to the police? Do you think that piece of filth ever would have paid for what he did?

DANNY
(getting a little uncomfortable)
Look, I just got mugged...

THE PROJECTIONIST
Listen to me, Danny! It's not just a mugging we're talking about! (beat) You have the stomach for vengeance, but not the power...I can give you that power.

DANNY
What are you talking about?

The Projectionist disappears into the back of the room. It's so dark, Danny can't even see him, but can hear that he's pushing things around. Finally, the Projectionist emerges, carrying an old SHOE BOX.

He slowly pries the lid off, then reaches in...

PROJECTIONIST
This, Danny, is for you.

He pulls his hand out and as he brings it up into the light, we see that he's holding...

DANNY
A gun? Is that a gun.

This is no ordinary weapon. It looks like a revolver, but it's got a huge muzzle, like you could stuff an artillery shell in the barrel.

The Projectionist lays it down on a box in front of Danny.

PROJECTIONIST

I once lent this to a man named Herbert Gold. Do you recognize the name?

DANNY

(staring at the gun)

Not really...

PROJECTIONIST

Mr. Gold was the man who started The Asmodeun. He too was being pushed around, edged out of the business by forces greater than himself. For a small price, I gave him this gun.

DANNY

And now you want to give it to me?

PROJECTIONIST

I think you'll need it.

DANNY

I'm only fifteen years old, I don't have a license...

PROJECTIONIST

A technicality...

DANNY

Look at that thing. I doubt if I can even lift it...

PROJECTIONIST

Try.

Danny takes the gun out of the Projectionists' hand. As soon as he touches it, his expression shifts from fear to wonderment.

DANNY

It's so light...

PROJECTIONIST

Porcelain, actually, with a few metals of my own design. It's an excellent firearm...

DANNY

(turning it over in his hand)

It's beautiful, but I...I don't really need it...

PROJECTIONIST
You never know...

Pause.

DANNY
What do you get out of it?

The Projectionist smiles.

PROJECTIONIST
When the right moment comes, when you've been wronged, and you use it to take your revenge...I will have exactly what I want.

Danny looks at the Projectionist. He hesitates a moment, then shrugs and nods his head.

As he starts to leave...

PROJECTIONIST
Danny?

He turns around.

PROJECTIONIST
You know, I'll be running EXTREMELY VIOLENT tonight, just to mark the reel changes. (pause) I don't know if you'd be interested in an advance preview...

DANNY
Yeah, that'd be awesome.

PROJECTIONIST
Good. (he turns back to his work)
Be here at midnight.

INT. DANNY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Danny's MOTHER is busy on the phone when he returns home. He slips into the KITCHEN and goes straight for the fridge.

KITCHEN -

Danny's piled up about eight slices of bologna on to a slice of bread when his mother comes in.

MOTHER
Danny, use a plate, okay?

DANNY
It's just a sandwich...

MOTHER
...And I want you to eat it on a plate.

She reaches up to a cupboard to get him a plate when she notices the bruise developing under his eye.

MOTHER
Danny, what's that?

DANNY
What?

Then he remembers and averts his eyes.

MOTHER
Daniel look at me. What is that?

DANNY
(annoyed)
It's nothing.

MOTHER
What happened, were you in a fight?

DANNY
No. (sarcastically) I got hit by a bus.

Danny's Mother stares at him. She doesn't even know what to say. She puts the plate down on the counter.

MOTHER
I have an appointment at five, so...

DANNY
So, Bye.

She turns to go, but can't leave it at that.

MOTHER
I'm going out to the Cemetery tomorrow morning.

DANNY

So?

MOTHER
We've talked about this...

DANNY
Yeah, and the answer is still no.

MOTHER
Danny...

DANNY
What's the point? Stand around the
graveyard and stare at his tombstone?
What the hell is that gonna do?

Pause.

MOTHER
You can't stay angry the rest of your
life, Danny.

Danny grabs his sandwich and walks out of the room.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE ASMODEUN THEATER -- NIGHT

Of all the theaters on the block, THE ASMODEUN is the biggest and most run down. In crooked red letters plastered up on to the marquee, is the title "EXTREMELY VIOLENT".

It's just after Midnight and pouring rain when Danny arrives at the once grand front entrance to the theater. He yanks hard on the heavy doors, somewhat surprised when they swing right open.

INT. ASMODEUN -

Danny shakes the rain off his sopping knapsack. It's pitch black inside, and he can't find the lights. Blindly, he stumbles forward, following the glowing neon lights of the concession stand.

Edging his way along the walls, Danny reaches the theater doors and pulls them open.

INT. THEATER -

SFX - The projector clacking steadily away.

flashing up on the screen, the Academy Leader counts down from 20 to 19, 18, 17...

Danny looks surprised to see the film already running, and calls up to the Projection Booth.

DANNY

Hey, Les!

PROJECTIONIST

Right on time, Danny. I'm impressed.

Danny spins around. The Projectionist is standing right behind him.

PROJECTIONIST

Take a seat. As you can see, the theater is all yours.

DANNY

Yeah, great.

Danny heads down the aisle followed by The Projectionist and cuts into a middle row.

PROJECTIONIST

(indignant)

There, Danny?

DANNY

Yeah, sure. These are the best seats.

PROJECTIONIST

But you're so far away. Why don't you try up close...Then you can really get into the action.

DANNY

Okay, close is cool.

DISSOLVE TO -- Five Minutes Later

Danny is sitting in a seat near the front, and from his face, we can see that he is totally engrossed. The Projectionist stands right next to him, in the aisle, also watching intently.

ARNO'S VOICE

(O.S.)

Come on, Frank, you could've hit that...

ONSCREEN --

In a netted BATTING CAGE, TWO MEN practice pitching and hitting. They are ARNO SLATER and his cousin FRANK.

Arno wears an old worn, U.S.M.C. CAP, and stands behind a protector wall zinging pitches at his cousin in the batter's box.

ARNO

0 and 2, Frank...Let's see what you're made of.

FRANK

Right down the pipe.

Arno's features tighten. He rears back and hurls the ball at an unimaginable speed towards home plate...

SLOW MOTION - THE BALL

Racing forward, slicing the air, the stitches spinning wildly...

THEN, the BALL, reaching the bat, splitting the wood, SHATTERING the bat, and still going...

RIPPING through the back netting, it sails out and finally clangs into a steel wall.

ARNO

(grinning wide)

That's the ballgame.

FRANK

(looking at his demolished bat)

Does that count as a foul tip?

Arno and Frank laugh heartily as Arno affectionately takes his U.S.M.C. HAT off and sticks it on Frank's head.

ARNO

Hats off, Frank, you're getting better.

BACK TO THE REAL WORLD --

Danny is eating it up. He turns around to The Projectionist.

DANNY

See that guy, Arno's cousin, he's

gonna buy it.

PROJECTIONIST

Really?

DANNY

Yeah, then just watch, this whole thing's going get really violent.

ONSCREEN -- A FEW MINUTES LATER -- A CAR WASH --

FRANK rides up on to the moving track, and shifts his car into neutral. He rolls up his windows, smiling and whistling to himself as his car disappears into the DARK CAR WASH.

THEN, a pair of IDENTICAL TWINS, JULES and JIM, in matching white linen suits, slip into the other end of the car wash.

INSIDE THE CAR WASH --

Frank's car comes out from under a bank of rollers. His calm expression takes on a troubled wrinkle, and then a look of horror as out of the shadows come the Twins.

JULES swings back a crow bar and bashes open the sun roof just as, uh oh, JIM hits the Simonization Switch, the hot wax nozzle starts spewing out and melts Frank's face like cheese.

A few moments later, Frank's car rolls out...Frank is dead.

CUT TO:

BACK TO REALITY --

DANNY

What'd I tell you? The guy smiled too much, you knew he was gonna...

Then, Danny suddenly realizes that there's no one standing next to him. He whirls around his chair as...

SFX -- DOOR SLAMMING

The back doors to the theater slam shut.

SFX -- LOCK TURNING

And lock. Danny considers this for a second, puzzled.

DISSOLVE TO:

BACK ON SCREEN -- FRANK'S FUNERAL -

The ceremony has concluded, and ARNO is talking with DECKER, his gruff, foulmouthed Police Superintendent. Decker looks like he's seen it all before, as he polishes off a chili cheese dog over Frank's grave.

ARNO
Decker, this was no accident.

DECKER
Don't even start with me, Slater.

ARNO
Whoever did this was a professional, and I'm going to find them.

DECKER
The hell you are. I still got a six-pack of City Hall Boys crawling three feet up my hershey-hole from your last assignment.

ARNO
Frank was my cousin... and my friend.

DECKER
I don't care if he was doinkin you up the keister. You drop it, Slater, just forget it ever happened, because you're off this case. Permanently.

Decker walks away leaving Arno alone at Frank's head stone.

Arno solemnly takes the U.S. Marine Corps Cap, now spattered with melted wax, and lays it across the grave.

Another COP comes up behind him.

COP
I'm sorry, Slater.

ARNO
I'm not sorry...

Arno stands up.

(cont.)
I'm pissed.

BACK ON DANNY --

He's locking up on screen, but something's bothering him. As he moves his head back and forth, a thin shaft of white light shoots out in the middle of the screen. It looks like the TEAR has REOPENED.

He gets up from his seat and starts walking down the aisle.

BACK ONSCREEN --

ARNO is sitting in his car, parked across the street from the CAR WASH, looking out through a pair of binoculars.

ARNO'S P.O.V. -

The Twins, JULES and JIM, are in the middle of a drug buy from some local GANG MEMBERS, who have a pick-up truck filled with hundreds of kilo bags of COCAINE.

BACK ON DANNY --

He's right on stage at the end of the screen. Sure enough, the tear has reopened. He sticks his hand inside feeling around for his tape seam.

PROJECTIONIST

(O.S.)

Don't forget our bargain, Danny...

Danny turns and stares back at The Projectionist, who is standing out on the balcony, smiling a terrible smile.

SUDDENLY, Danny feels his arm being yanked and....

IN SLOW MOTION --

The world begins to warp and bend, then it ZOOMS forward at a thousand miles an hour. It stops with a jolt, and Danny finds himself standing face to face with ARNO SLATER, who is holding his arm in a vise-like grip.

ARNO

What are you doing here, kid?

DANNY is in a state of shock. He looks over his shoulder. The Theater is gone, no seats, no projection booth...

DANNY HAS BEEN SUCKED INTO THE FILM!

He is standing in the middle of a car wash, and ARNO SLATER has a gun to his head.

ARNO
Are you a criminal?

DANNY
No! NO! Wait, I'm just, you don't understand, I was just standing in the...

ARNO
You're interfering with my investigation.

ARNO grabs Danny by the collar when suddenly A HAIL OF GUNFIRE rings out all around them. THREE VILLAINS are unloading all their ammo in their direction.

ARNO
Duck!

Arno yanks Danny with him as they dive into the dark interior of the Car Wash.

INT. CAR WASH --

The inside of the car wash is a whirring, mechanical mess of brushes and hoses. Arno leads Danny along the wall.

BEHIND THEM --

are the three Mercs who just fired at them. They stand at the entrance, peering into the darkness.

IN FRONT OF THEM --

Is the DRUG TRUCK, frothing up wet cocaine, and moving slowly towards the end of the cycle.

ARNO
This way.

Arno creeps over to the truck.

DANNY
Come on, Danny, wake up, wake up now...

ARNO
Keep quiet!

Arno puts his fist through the window of the truck, then reaches in and opens the door.

ARNO
Get in, kid.

As Danny gets in the truck, Arno reloads his gun.

ARNO
How many were there?

Danny is too frightened to speak.

ARNO
Hey kid, snap out of it! How many followed us in?

DANNY
Uhhh, three guys, but...

ARNO
And six out front. Nine overall. (he cocks his pistol) No problem.

The truck has almost reached the end of the cycle.

ARNO
Now listen, I want you to lie down, and don't get up till all the shooting's stopped.

CUT TO:

INT. TRUCK CAB --

DANNY is lying on the floor of the pitch dark truck. Big, wet, soapy cloths flap against the window every few seconds.

CLOSE ON --

Danny's face: Sweaty, red...he's flipping out.

It starts getting lighter and lighter in the truck, and Danny realizes that he's about to be sent out on to the lot.

SFX - THUMP

The truck comes off the end of the track and rolls along in neutral. There is a moment of silence, then...

The sound of six machine guns firing in unison.

STAY ON DANNY --

as gunshots clang against the truck, shattering glass and sending it spraying all over him. He shields his face with his KNAPSACK.

The blasting cacophony continues for a good twenty seconds, the truck cab is being sliced apart like swiss cheese. Suddenly, it stops.

SFX -- Empty guns clicking

KEEP STAYING ON DANNY --

Holding his ears, waiting for what will come next.

ARNO
(O.S.)

You missed.

The shooting starts all over again, although this time the screams of dying Mercs echo through the Car Wash.

BACK ON DANNY'S FACE --

He takes his hands off his ears, and comes out from behind his KNAPSACK. Silence.

The broken truck door slowly swings open. Danny peers outside.

EXT. CAR WASH PARKING LOT --

What Danny sees is a testimony to the extreme violence that just occurred.

The asphalt is pockmarked, filled with bullet holes; the ground is littered with severed Merc limbs, bullet cases, and discarded firearms.

DANNY --

pulls himself out of the truck. He looks back up onto the flatbed and sees

ARNO --

standing up there, wiping off his prized laser-scope gun with a hanky and surveying the area.

DANNY
Nice shooting.

ARNO
Wrong. The Twins got away.

He hops down off the back of the flatbed, then picks up a DEAD MERC.

ARNO
(shaking him)
Who are you working for?

He bangs him against the ground.

ARNO
Where's the money? Talk, asshole!

He slams him again. Danny walks up behind Arno. Then he notices something...

IN THE DISTANCE --

A BLACK CAR, screaming down the street right towards Arno and Danny.

DANNY
Um, Arno?

Arno's searching the guy's pockets.

DANNY
(tapping him on the shoulder)
Uhh, Arno. I think we've got trouble..

He's right, cause coming up on them fast is...

THE TWINS' BLACK PEUGEOT --

The identical brothers sitting in the front seat, Jules driving, Jim loading the guns.

DANNY
Arno!

Finally, Arno looks up. The Black Peugeot is about to smash right into them.

ARNO
Move back.

In Slow-Mo, Arno whirls around, falls to his knees and aims. The laserlight dances off the car steering wheel, then on to

Jules' driving hand and...

WHAMMO

His first shot cracks the windshield, the Twins just laugh...

BLAMMO

Arno's second shot blows a hole through the windshield, hitting Jules' hand. He yelps and swerves, sending the car careening off to Arno's side.

AT THE SAME TIME --

TEN POLICE CARS, their sirens screaming, hurtle towards the car wash.

The Black Peugeot pulls around, Jules and Jim quickly switch places in the front seat. The window slides down, and Jules leans out, clutching his bleeding hand.

JULES

You are a dead man, Slater...

JIM

And your leetle friend, too!

They gun the engine and screech off towards the highway.

ARNO AND DANNY are standing in the middle of the wreckage, as cops swarm out of their cars and descend on them.

Two cops, KILLGALLON and MCMURPHY sidle up to Arno.

ARNO

Killgallon, McMurphy. Radio in an APB, two of them got away...

KILLGALLON

Forget it Slater. The Chief wants to see you. Pronto.

MCMURPHY

Decker's gonna have your ass when he sees the damage bill for this little party...

ARNO

But look, there was a big drug deal going down...

KILLGALLON

Save it for Internal Affairs.

CLT ID:
7

INT. ARNO'S CAR -

Arno stomps over to his car, swings the door open, and is about to turn the ignition when he notices...

DANNY. Sitting in the passenger seat.

ARNO

What are you doing here?

DANNY

The way I see it, this must be some kind of bologna-induced nightmare, so I might as well try to enjoy it...

ARNO

Kid...

DANNY

I mean, I'm standing in a movie theater watching you, then the next thing I know I'm getting shot at, it's gotta be a dream...

ARNO

Look, kid...

DANNY

So what's first, we head back to the precinct to get chewed out?

ARNO

No, I'm heading back to the precinct, you are going home.

DANNY

That's gonna be difficult...

ARNO

Look, you're shell shocked, you're hallucinating. I'm not a doctor. So get out of the car.

Arno reaches in and pulls Danny out of the car.

OUTSIDE --

DANNY

Wait, wait a second!

Arno lets him go.

DANNY

Look, Arno, you can't leave me here,
I have nowhere to go!

ARNO

I'm a cop, I've got a job to do...

Arno climbs back in the car. Danny's getting really nervous now.

DANNY

The Twins, Arno! You can't leave me here...

Arno turns to face him.

DANNY

Remember, they threatened to kill me?

ARNO

Hmmm.

DANNY

You know they'll do it, Arno. They killed Frank, they'll kill me too if you just leave me here...

ARNO

(wistfully)

Frank... (pause) You're right. Get in the car.

Danny smiles then hops in the passenger seat.

CUT TO:

ON THE HIGHWAY --

Arno hurtles down the streets of Los Angeles at 120 mph. Danny, in the passenger seat, clutches his shoulder strap for dear life.

Arno takes an incredible, 90 degree left turn, then a quick right and swerves into the parking lot of the Police Precinct.

INT. PRECINCT -- DAY

The standard, Hollywood-Movie police precinct:

Big, burly cops in aviator sunglasses hustle scuzzy criminals off to their holding pens. Angry citizens complain about crimes to the DESK SERGEANT. Hard boiled cops who've seen it all twice munch donuts and drink coffee at their desks.

Into this chaos strides ARNO SLATER.

DANNY, trying to stop and savor the hyped up film-world, keeps having to run to catch up with Arno's huge strides.

DANNY

So I guess Captain Decker's gonna give you a hard time now, huh?

ARNO

For what? For doing my job and getting the scum off the streets?

DANNY

Well, no, I thought he was always giving you shit...

ARNO

Decker and I go way back. He was in my platoon in Nam. I saved his life.

Suddenly, a voice rings out from the back of the precinct.

DECKER

SLATER! Goddamn it, Slater, get your greasy melons in here, right now!

Danny smiles.

ARNO

Wait here.

Arno disappears into Decker's office, leaving Danny alone in the huge precinct.

His attention drifts over to a desk, where two DETECTIVES are arguing heatedly. One of them's black, and fastidiously neat, the other white and a complete wreck.

BLACK COP

You're a menace Kochansky!

WHITE COP

And you're an uptight pencil pusher, Lincoln!

CUT TO:

DECKER'S OFFICE --

Decker is screaming at Arno, who stands impassively at the other side of the desk.

DECKER

I got the city council chewing my eggs off for the drug bust in Venice, I got the mayor taking a hike up my wazoo over that freeway incident ...and now this.

ARNO

I do my job. Criminals suffer...

DECKER

Don't hand me any of that philosophical horse pucky, Slater. I told you to stay off this case, and I meant it...

BACK IN THE MAIN ROOM --

Danny is walking down a row of DETECTIVE'S DESKS. They are ALL mismatched buddy-cop teams. One black, one white, one female, one male. There's a even a guy teamed up with a dog.

COP

Down boy, down!

DECKER'S OFFICE --

DECKER

...French Identical Twins? Come on, Slater, you can do better than that...

ARNO

They were the ones who killed Frank, I'm sure of it...

VOICE

He's right.

Danny's standing in the doorway.

DANNY

And they tried to kill us, and, if I can just add, sir, Officer Slater's handling of the situation included

some of the most kick-ass, extremely violent action heroics I've ever seen.

Decker stares at Danny like ET just waddled into his office.

DECKER

Slater?

ARNO

Innocent bystander, he was caught in the crossfire...

DANNY

Arno took care of that.

ARNO

The Twins, they threatened his life. He needs protection.

Decker leans over his desk. He puts his hand on Danny's shoulder.

DECKER

What's your name, kid?

DANNY

Daniel. Danny Goldman.

DECKER

Well, Danny, I'm sorry that you got mixed up in this. And just to show you that the LAPD genuinely cares about the citizens of this city, I'm gonna assign our best officer to protect you.

ARNO

What?

DECKER

Starting right now, Slater, your job is to protect this kid. Everywhere he goes, you go.

ARNO

Don't do this to me, Decker...

DECKER

Already done. Now haul your sandy crack out of here before I really get angry...

Arno glares down at the beaming Danny as they turn and exit.

CUT TO:

PRECINCT --

Arno and Danny march back through the precinct.

DANNY

That's so classic. Of course they'd assign you to protect me. It's totally buddy-film.

Arno does not look thrilled.

DANNY

I should have guessed it.

Arno swings the front doors open and they leave.

CUT TO:

EXT. SUNSET BOULEVARD - DAY

Swerving through the traffic at just under MACH ONE is Arno's beat up brown sedan car.

IN THE CAR -

Arno grits his teeth, his foot pressed all the way down on the accelerator. He's making impossible moves, and never once comes close to crashing.

Danny, beside him, is buckled up and enjoying every minute of it.

DANNY

Do you always drive this fast?

Arno, still aggravated by his stinky assignment, ignores him.

DANNY

Look, I know you're pissed about this assignment, but really, you don't have to worry about me. Do whatever you got to do. I mean if you want to go chase down Frank's killers, I'll just come with you.

ARNO

Where do you think we're going?

DANNY
(a little surprised)
Oh, okay, great!

The car zig zags crazily down the Sunset Strip.

Flashing by the car windows is an even more extreme version of Sunset's actual PORNO PALACES:

They pass 'Strip Joint', 'Topless Bar', 'Naked Women', 'Live Nudes', then 'Nude Nudes', and finally...

ARNO
That's the one.

Arno pulls over in front of 'TOTALLY NUDE NUDES'

DANNY
The one what?

ARNO
When you're looking for scum, go
where scum collects.

INT. TOTALLY NUDE NUDES -

The scrazziest, dingiest, dark, smokey, low-life bar you've ever seen.

Central Casting's full hoodlum population must be here on lunch break: Mean looking BIKERS, fat, tattooed RED NECKS, GANG MEMBERS, KARATE EXPERTS, PIMPS and JUNKIES all chat away at the bar.

As soon as Arno and Danny walk in...Silence. Everyone looks up from his beer.

Arno, followed by Danny, sidles up to the bar.

DANNY
What'll it be, big guy?

ARNO
Nothing for you.

DANNY
Aw, come on, Arno...

ARNO
You're underage, it's against the law. Here, have some gum.

Arno pulls out a pack of GUM and hands it to Danny, who sticks two pieces in his mouth.

ARNO

Wait here.

ARNO wanders off towards the pool tables in back to ask some questions. All eyes are on him as he goes.

Meanwhile, Danny wads up the gum and stuffs it in the ashtray. He gets the bartender's attention and calls him over.

DANNY

Barkeep, you want to get me a beer?

All the while, in the background, ARNO can be heard busting heads, breaking fingers, and turning over tables.

BARTENDER

You here with Slater?

DANNY

You know him?

BARTENDER

(nonchalantly)

Oh sure, he's a real pain in the ass. Comes in here once a month, beats the shit out of all my customers, wrecks the joint and leaves.

Danny turns around and sees Arno throwing a fat red-neck through a window, and sticking a pimp's head into a juke box.

ARNO

Now maybe you remember!

Danny turns back around to face the Bartender.

BARTENDER

I wish they'd just tell him when he asks, but no...

DANNY

Hey listen, maybe you could help...

CUT TO:

ARNO, who is still beating the crap out of a criminal on the floor.

ARNO
Where can I find them?

Arno slaps him across the face, just as Danny walks over.

DANNY
Hey Arno, ease up...

ARNO
Talk asshole!

DANNY
(interrupting)
Their names are Jules and Jim
Lumiere. They're hired guns...

Arno lets go of the guy, but gives him a warning.

ARNO
Don't move, criminal. I'll be back.

DANNY
They work out of a health club, in
Malibu.

ARNO
(surprised)
Good job, Danny.

DANNY
It was nothing, next time just ask
the bartender.

CUT TO:

EXT. MULLHOLLAND DRIVE --

Arno's car twists and turns through the Hollywood Hills. He pulls into a driveway and up to his home, a low-slung Western style ranch house.

INT. THE SLATER HOME -- DAY

Arno barrels through the front door and heads straight for the kitchen. Danny follows him in, checking the place out.

Danny walks into the living room, as Arno reemerges from the kitchen, carrying a lighter, a screwdriver, some gauze and a bedpan.

Danny walks over to the bookcases lining the walls.

CLOSE ON --

The books, as Danny checks them out. Arno has no novels in his library, no collections of essays, no coffee table art books.

What he does have, however is THE TIME LIFE GUIDE TO KILLING PEOPLE, WHO'S WHO IN AMERICAN DRUG DEALING, and BULLETS OF THE WORLD.

ARNO has been heating up the screwdriver with the Zippo. It's red hot now. He lays it down in the bed pan, then whips his shirt off.

DANNY

Oh man...When did that happen?

Arno's got a big, ugly bullet wound right in his abdomen.

ARNO

Car wash. (beat) You know, Danny, a lot of people complain about my methods. They say I'm too violent...

Arno takes the screwdriver and thrusts it into his bullet wound.

SFX -- SEARING FLESH

ARNO

But remember this: For every time a criminal breaks the law, the law must repay them.

He twists the screwdriver around, trying to dislodge the bullet.

(cont.)

I'm the law, I make them pay.

DANNY

You mean kill them...

He catches on something with the screwdriver. Danny is thoroughly revolted.

ARNO

I mean justice, Danny...an eye for an eye.

DANNY

What about the whole arresting people

part, Arno? You know, cuffing the suspects and booking them...

SFX -- A "POP" then a "CLANG"

as Arno finally dislodges the bullet then lets it plop into the bed pan.

DANNY

Jesus.

ARNO

I always get my man, Danny.

DANNY

Yeah, I'm sure you do. I was just wondering if you ever bring in any of the people you bust. I mean, can you think of even one criminal you busted who ever made it to jail alive?

Arno pauses for a moment, thinking hard.

ARNO

This guy, Jake. Two bullets to the back of the skull. I must have missed his spinal column. He walks in '97...

He continues dressing his wound.

(CONT.)

It just proves that sometimes an eye for an eye isn't even enough. Sometimes, you need to take both eyes, and the nose and ears too...

He finishes taping gauze to his side.

ARNO

For every crime, Danny, there is a criminal. For every criminal...

VOICE

(O.S.)

There is a punishment.

Danny spins around to see...

JESSICA, Arno's WIFE, an attractive blonde woman wearing a bathrobe.

ARNO
I'm sorry honey, did we wake you up?

JESSICA
That's okay, I've got to be at work
in an hour...

DANNY
You're the woman in the trailer!

Arno and Jessica stare at Danny strangely.

ARNO
Uh, Jessica, this is Danny. I've
been assigned to protect him. Danny,
my wife, Jessica...

DANNY
That's so weird, I never would've
guessed you were married.

Jessica is checking Arno's wound.

JESSICA
Oh, Arno, look at this bandage, this
is terrible...

She rips it off, causing Arno to flinch.

JESSICA
You've got an exit wound right
here...

Jessica picks up the screwdriver, and cauterizes the bullet
hole where it came out his back. She then tapes some gauze
all the way around his stomach.

JESSICA
There, that oughtta do the trick.

ARNO
Thanks, honey.

He kisses her on the cheek.

JESSICA
(heading for the kitchen, O.S.)
So how're things going with the
investigation?

ARNO
Not so good. Decker's wants me off

the case...

JESSICA
(coming back into the room with coffee)
But you're not going to back off, are you?

ARNO
Jessie, I can't! Frank was my cousin, I have to find his killers...

JESSICA
(resigned)
...And make them pay. I know.
(sighing) Well, here, give me your gun...

Arno hands her his Beretta.

JESSICA
I'll clean it for you while I do my hair. Nice meeting you, Danny.

Jessica scoots out of the room with her coffee and the gun. Arno smiles and looks after her. Suddenly, he turns to Danny.

ARNO
Let's go. We have work to do..

Arno leads Danny through the Kitchen and down the stairs to the BASEMENT. They come to a thick steel door.

DANNY
So, what's this? Storage area?

Arno smiles.

INT. BASEMENT --

Danny and Arno step inside, coming face to face with an awesome display of firepower that would put the Pentagon to shame.

DANNY
Whoa...

Arno has neatly arranged the room by handguns, rifles, rocket launchers, and explosives. Danny walks over to a large, futuristic gun and tries to pull it off the wall. It's too heavy for him to lift, however, and just as it's about to

crash to the floor. ARNO'S massive hand grabs it.

ARNO
Don't touch! (beat) Look, Danny,
these aren't toys. They're very
dangerous weapons, not for kids.

DANNY
I was just looking...

Arno hefts the enormous gun up into ready position.

DANNY
What is that thing, anyway?

ARNO
Roland Street Sweeper. Anti-riot,
anti-tank. Fires a 12 mm shell. (he
aims it) You can take out a city
block with one shot. I love this
gun.

Danny keeps moving, he walks over to another section, where
Arno keeps his more primitive weapons. He stops in front of
a high tech BOW AND ARROW with a complicated pully system
attached.

ARNO
You like that? The arrows have
exploding tips.

DANNY
It looks familiar.

ARNO
I got it from an old Nam buddy.
Crazy guy. He got arrested a few
years ago...Blew up a small town.

They move down even farther to his last exhibit, a gun kept
in a hermetically sealed, climate controlled box. Arno pops
the seals and pulls the gun out.

ARNO
Now this...(he holds the gun up)
This is my Beretta from the war. An
amazing gun, saved my life a thousand
times. It has great action, reloads
quickly...(yelling) BAM! BAM!

He puts it back up on the wall.

ARNO
I love that gun.

CUT TO:

FIRING RANGE --

Arno has a professional firing range set up just behind his arsenal.

ARNO walks up to one of the stalls, hefting four or five weapons, including the one's he's already showed Danny.

Danny hustles up behind him.

DANNY
So your wife, she's pretty understanding about all this.

ARNO
What do you mean?

DANNY
Well, you know, all the guns in the house, you coming home bleeding. That's pretty messed up. Don't you think it's a little strange that she puts up with it?

Arno turns to Danny, angered by his questioning.

ARNO
Strange? Is it strange to fight crime, to stop criminals from harming innocent people with their evil ways?

DANNY
No, I...

ARNO
Is it strange for a wife to support her husband as he struggles to avenge the death of his cousin? If there's something wrong with that, Danny, then there's something wrong with me too!

He picks up the Beretta and pumps off a few rounds, hitting the target in the eyes, nose and mouth.

DANNY
Alright, I'm sorry I asked. (trying

to change the subject) So who do you think's behind all this, anyway, killing Frank and everything?

ARNO

The Twins.

He picks up the compound bow and zips a few arrows into the mannequin's chest.

DANNY

No, I know... I mean, obviously the Twins are involved. I mean, who do you think they're working for?

ARNO

A big drug dealer.

DANNY

(getting frustrated)

Obviously, they were selling drugs. But the point is, there's always something more... a conspiracy.

Arno hefts up an assault rifle.

DANNY

You know, like they're really working for a huge corporation, or they're using drug deals as a decoy for a political assassination. (beat) Do you know any corporate criminals or corrupt Senators who might have wanted Frank dead?

Arno fires off a few more rounds, these blowing the right arm off the mannequin.

ARNO

I don't know who they are, Danny.

Arno now picks up the Roland Street Sweeper.

(cont.)

But I know where they're going.

Arno fires a deafening round from the street sweeper, pulverizing what's left of the dummy into dust.

DANNY

(giving up)

Okay, forget it. What's our first

move?

ARNO

We go to Malibu, find the Twins.

As they walk out through the arsenal, ARNO picks up two metal rods attached by an electrical cord.

DANNY

What're those?

He smiles and touches them together, setting off sparks.

ARNO

Taser Sticks. They can stun an elephant.

CUT TO:

THE LIVING ROOM --

Jessica is in the kitchen now, dressed in a tight black dress, carefully cleaning the last few parts in Arno's gun and putting it back together. Arno bounds into the room, carrying a gym bag, Danny close behind. He grabs some Gatorade from the fridge, takes a swig, then heads for the door.

ARNO

Bye honey, have a good day at work.

JESSICA

Arno?

He turns around.

JESSICA

Your gun?

He takes it from her.

JESSICA

And here, you left this clip of bullets in the station wagon last week, I didn't know if you needed them...

ARNO

Thanks.

He gives her a peck on the cheek.

ARNO

I'll try to be home for dinner.

He and Danny skip out the door like excited adolescent schoolboys off to their first scout meeting.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE MALIBU HEALTH AND FITNESS CLUB - DAY

The Club is an exclusive, high-tech, very private organization situated right on the beach.

Danny and Arno pull in through the tall wrought iron gates, and view the imposing long black awning, shading the entrance.

ARNO

Time for payback.

DANNY

Ah, Arno...Tell me if I'm way off here, but aren't we going to have some trouble getting in?

ARNO

No trouble for us, trouble for them.

DANNY

Right, we could do it that way...But then The Twins will be on their guard.

ARNO

So?

DANNY

So, what if we enter inconspicuously?

Arno draws a blank.

DANNY

(explaining)

We pose as customers who are thinking of joining the club, and ask for a tour...

ARNO

Inconspicuously. That's pretty sneaky, Danny. I like it.

They march up under the awning, pull open the heavy oak doors, and enter the club.

INT. HEALTH CLUB -

Solid gold wall sconces illuminate the marble front desk, where a surly young CLERK with a moustache awaits them.

CLERK

Can I help you?

Arno walks forward.

ARNO

We want to join your club. I need to get in shape.

CLERK

How nice for you. I'm afraid that's impossible.

ARNO

Why?

CLERK

Perhaps you are unaware of our two year waiting list for membership? That is if you make the list at all. And the little fellow there is not old enough to join in any case.

ARNO

You are never too young to get in shape. Give us a tour, now.

Danny cringes.

CLERK

Look, Sir, we're running a health club here, not a muscle farm.

Making a last ditch effort to negotiate, Arno takes out his badge.

ARNO

I'm a cop, give me a tour, or I'll have you brought in.

The smarmy mustachioed Desk Clerk is unimpressed.

CLERK

I'll have to see your warrant first.

Arno is getting frustrated, he starts to squint...

DANNY

Wait, Arno...

Arno reaches over the desk, picks up the yellow bellied Desk Clerk by his tie and head butts him into a coma.

They walk past the desk and into a door marked 'Locker Room'.

CUT TO:

THE WORKOUT ROOM -

A high-tech ego-maniac's playground, filled with hard-bodied Californians in tight spandex body gloves. On one end of the room, six gargantuan MUSCLE HEADS are doing curls in a circle. Into the weight room come Danny and Arno. Arno is bulging out of his tight T-Shirt and shorts, while Danny seems lost in the folds of his.

Under his towel, Arno is carrying his Taser Sticks like a bus boy. He walks up to the Universal Machine, drops a pin in the bottom hole, and begins benching a few tons of iron.

The MUSCLE HEADS look on, ticked off by Arno's hot-shotting in their gym.

ON THE OTHER END OF THE ROOM --

The DESK CLERK from the front hall rushes in, clutching his sore head. He skips over to the angry MUSCLE HEADS, and begins pointing to Arno. They get up from their bench and strut over to the Universal.

Arno continues to pump away, concentrating on his routine. Then, as Arno pushes the bar upward, one of the goons pulls his pin out. Without the resistance to hold him back, Arno slams upward ripping the benching bar out of its socket.

ARNO

Is there a problem?

The MUSCLE HEADS gang around him swinging big free-weights in their hands.

MUSCLEHEAD #1

This club is for members only. We have a problem with free-loaders.

ARNO

I'm here on a trial membership.

MUSCLEHEAD #2
We don't think you'll like it here.

ARNO
No? Why's that?

MUSCLEHEAD #1
Because the equipment isn't much good
to a dead man.

Two of the thugs jump Arno, and he deflects their attack with the benching bar, sending them to the ground.

ARNO
Good work-out. Who's next?

DANNY --

has been checking this out, and satisfied that Arno is more than holding his own, decides to do a little investigating. He sneaks up a spiral lucite staircase to the second floor.

SECOND FLOOR -

The health club's administrative offices. Danny creeps down the hall and comes to a door marked "Employees Only". Quietly, he cracks it open and sees inside...

A MEETING ROOM -

A map of the world is spread out over the far wall. A MAN with a walking cane is talking, his back to DANNY.

On the glass table in front of him is a comprehensive lay-out of DEADLY WEAPONRY.

CUT TO:

INT. THE WORKOUT ROOM -

Meanwhile, one of the MUSCLE HEADS is locking horns with Arno in front of the Nautilus.

Arno gets some leverage on him, and dunks him down into the butterfly press, boxing his ears with the press arms.

No sooner has he dispensed with him, when another Steak-Head is climbing on his back. Arno takes him in a half-nelson, and shoves the guy's face into the spokes of a whizzing life cycle. SPLOOSH!

A final Beef-Boy lunges for Arno's waist, as Arno spins, grabs on to him, and sends him crashing through the second story glass wall of a squash court.

Turning away from the squash court, satisfied that the guy he just tossed is sufficiently dead, he turns back to face the empty room when...

WHAM!

Two fists punch him at once, knocking him on his ass.

It's the TWINS, dressed in their poncey frog workout clothes. They stand over him, smiling. One of them, JULES, has a bandaged hand.

JULES

You're a dead man, Slater.

CUT TO:

THE MEETING ROOM UPSTAIRS -

Danny's looking in through the crack in the door. A big arms deal is obviously coming down.

Then, the MAN with the cane turns around and Danny gets a glimpse of his frightening face.

It's covered in bandages.

CUT TO:

THE WORKOUT ROOM -

Arno and the Twins are engaged in a furious hand to hand struggle. While he might have no problem with either one of them individually, together they are a menace. One Twin DUCKS as the other PUNCHES, catching Arno offguard and sending him backwards on to the STAIRMASTER.

The fight vacillates back and forth until the Twins have Arno cornered against the Universal Machine.

Jim takes a swing at Arno, and in one smooth motion, Arno lifts the bench press bar, grabs Jim's fist, and slips it under the weights. He then lets go of the bar, crushing Jim's hand and leaving him stuck to the Universal, screaming.

Enraged, Jules flies at Arno, but the big man head butts him, and hurls him towards his brother. The pissed Twins clutch on to Universal machine, trying to bring themselves to their

feet. Suddenly, Jim yells...

JIM

Les couteaus!

And the Twins pull out mini-knives from the sides of their cross trainers.

Arno, standing on the other side of the UNIVERSAL, pulls out his own surprise...the electric TASER STICKS.

ARNO

Now, I'm going to make French Fries.

JULES

We're Belgian, you idiot.

Arno lays the Taser sticks against the metal bars of the weight-lifting machine, and grips the handles. A surge of electricity zaps through the machine, and then through the Twins, jolting them into unconsciousness.

Arno is busily tying up the unconscious Lumiere brothers with weight-lifting cords when DANNY comes running over.

DANNY

Arno...There's some sort of huge arms deal going down in the back room.

ARNO

Good work, Danny.

DANNY

And I think whoever was behind Frank's death is upstairs running the show.

ARNO

I'll destroy him.

But, at that moment, a figure appears at the top of the stairs. It's the bandaged-faced MAN with the walking cane.

MAN

You'll do nothing of the kind, Mr. Slater.

Arno spins around and beholds his old Nemesis, MR.ID.

ARNO

It's you!

DANNY
Arno, who is that guy?

ARNO
Mr. Id, the biggest scum-bag on the
West Coast.

MR. ID
We really have to stop running into
each other like this, Slater.

ARNO
Then let's end it. Now.

Arno heads for the stairs.

MR. ID
I'm afraid your cro-magnon tough-talk
is growing rather tedious. Luckily
for me, I don't have to hear much
more of it.

And then, as if on cue, ten police officers storm into the
room, led by Killgallon and McMurphy.

MR. ID
Ah, right on time. Gentlemen, this
man is trespassing on private
property. My property.

But Arno keeps steaming up the stairs, until Killgallon
catches up to him.

KILLGALLON
That's enough, Slater. Time to go.

ARNO
You don't understand. That's Mr. Id,
arrest him!

McMURPHY
We can't do that, there are no
charges.

Arno moves towards the staircase again. Killgallon grabs him.

KILLGALLON
You're in a enough shit already,
Slater. Quit while you can still beg
for your job back.

McMURPHY

(to Id)
If you'd like to file a complaint...

MR.ID
That won't be necessary. Just get
the Piltown Man and his little puppy
out of my sight.

KILLGALLON
Fun's over, Slater. Let's go.

MR.ID begins to laugh fiendishly from the balcony. Arno
points a long finger up at him.

ARNO
Don't go away, Id...

MR.ID
(interrupting)
I know, Slater...(beat) You'll be
back.

ARNO
That's right.

MR.ID
I can't wait. We'll do lunch.

He and Danny head out with the cops.

CUT TO:

EXT. PRECINCT PARKING LOT -- DAY

Arno and Danny get out of the car, Arno slamming his door.
Hard.

DANNY
Look, Arno. You'd better cool off,
I'm warning you...

ARNO
You don't understand. Mr. Id is the
most notorious drug dealer on the
West Coast, I've been trying to bust
him for years...

DANNY
Really? So maybe this is some sort
of far reaching CIA conspiracy, three
decades of, I don't know, rogue spies
or something plotting an overthrow.

And Id is a famous public official,
that's why he wears the bandages!

Danny smiles, thinking he's got it.

ARNO

Wrong. (beat) I gave those to him,
Danny. When I was a rookie. I used
to be out of control, headstrong. I
threw him into a vat of boiling
acid...

DANNY

Ouch...

ARNO

Since then, he's been selling twice
as many drugs, making twice as much
money. I've stopped hundreds of his
men, but I've never gotten Id
himself. We've never been able to
find his hideout. (beat) I owe him
big, Danny. And I always pay my
debts.

He blasts through the Precinct doors.

INT. POLICE PRECINCT -

DANNY

So, look, just take it easy with
Decker...

ARNO

Forget Decker, Danny. He knows how
much Id means to me. Besides, he
owes me....

DANNY

From Nam. I remember.

DECKER

SLATER!!

Danny and Arno stop in their tracks. The whole precinct falls
silent. Decker is standing at the end of the precinct, in
front of his office.

DECKER

SLATER, get your stinky Petes in this
office! PRONTO!

Decker disappears back into his office. Danny looks up at Arno.

DANNY

Hey, Arno? You'd better give me the laser gun.

ARNO

No, Danny....

DANNY

I'm not gonna do anything with it. But you'll thank me later, just trust me.

Arno reluctantly unstraps his Beretta and hands it over.

DANNY

I'll put it right here, for safekeeping.

He drops it in his bookbag. Arno reluctantly trudges forward towards Decker's office.

As Arno walks away, Danny glances back over to

THE SERGEANT'S DESK

A ROW OF RECRUITS, fresh up from Police Academy, await their assignments.

SERGEANT

Lincoln?

A black Detective steps forward.

SERGEANT

Jones?

Another recruit steps forward. He's black also.

Lincoln and Jones stand there, looking at each other awkwardly.

LINCOLN

Uh, Sarge? (The Sarge looks up at them) We're both...

The Sergeant scans down his list.

SARGE

Oh, I'm sorry. That's Johansen, not

Jones.

A surly looking white guy with a long messy pony tail and a cigarette dangling from his lips steps out of the line. Lincoln smiles, gives the Sarge a thumbs up and heads off with his new partner.

INT. DECKER'S OFFICE --

There is a huge pile of guns on Decker's desk.

DECKER

All of em. Including the one taped to your back.

Arno reluctantly lifts up his shirt. Sure enough, there's a gun stuck there with electrical tape. He tears it off and puts it down.

DECKER

And the badge. (beat) Let's go, Slater.

ARNO

But I didn't do anything, Decker...

DECKER

Thirty thou in property damage, ten hospitalizations... I've got the Malibu chamber of Commerce doing cartwheels in my cocoa factory, and you're saying you didn't do anything? Hand me your badge, Slater. You're suspended.

Arno reluctantly turns his badge over to the Captain.

DECKER

Now move your funky mangos outta here before I have you arrested for trespassing!!

Arno turns and opens the door. Before he leaves, however, he turns back around again.

ARNO

Hey Decker...

Decker looks up from his work.

ARNO

I'll be back.

He slams the door.

IN THE HALLWAY --

Danny is still watching partner assignments.

SERGEANT

Alright, Dotson?

A grizzled white Detective steps forward.

SERGEANT

Teacatotl?

A Native South American officer wearing full Aztec head dress steps out from the line up.

TEACATOTL

Reporting for duty, sir!

Arno comes storming by. He grabs Danny and starts dragging him out.

DANNY

Didn't go too well, huh?

They storm out through the front door.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE HOLLYWOOD HILLS -- DAY

Arno's car winds slowly up the twisting hill roads. Arno is gloomy and peeved over his suspension, as Danny sits beside him holding the Beretta.

DANNY

Arno, aren't you over-reacting a little here?

ARNO

When I think of all the times, I saved Decker's ass in the Nam...

The car passes a turn-out for a SCENIC OVERLOOK of the city.

DANNY

Look, why don't we pull over a minute? You gotta relax.

Arno slows down and pulls to the side of the road. They get

out of the car and stroll up to the edge of the cliff, the massive sprawl of L.A. gleaming brightly beneath them.

It's a moment of quiet reflection for Arno who is still sulking.

DANNY

Arno, you destroyed an entire gym, what did you think Decker would say?

ARNO

I'm a cop, Danny. That's all I know how to do. A cop without his badge, it's like...

DANNY

Like something that's never stopped you before? I mean, when was the last time they gave you the boot?

ARNO

What do you mean?

DANNY

The last time Decker suspended you?

ARNO

Ah...last month.

DANNY

And before that?

ARNO

Well...this February, I...

DANNY

Arno, don't you see how absurd this is? You get suspended every month, and you get just as pissed every time.

Arno is silent as he thinks about this.

DANNY

It's all so ridiculous, they never let you do it your way, and you just keep trying...

ARNO

But...

DANNY

Now, if you really want to get Id
back for Frank, you gotta stop
busting heads and start using yours
instead...

ARNO
(humbled)
Maybe, you're right.

Arno seems enraptured by the beautiful scenery.

ARNO
God, it's incredible up here, isn't
it? Look at those lovely clouds.
They look like giant cotton balls.

DANNY
That's real poetic, Arno. And that's
smog by the way.

ARNO
Smog! It's beautiful! I should come
up here more often.

DANNY
Actually, this suspension could be a
perfect opportunity for you...Take
some time off. Enjoy the world a
little.

Arno turns to face Danny.

ARNO
You know, Danny, you're pretty smart
for a kid your age. What's it like
where you're from?

DANNY
It sucks. You'd hate it..

ARNO
Why?

DANNY
Because, shitty things happen all the
time, and nobody does anything about
it. There's no justice there, Arno,
no payback, life sucks, and that's
it.

ARNO
You seem like you've done alright.

Danny sees something hovering on the horizon.

DANNY
Hey, what's that?

ARNO
Copter. (it gets closer) Looks like
the ones we use on the force.

DANNY
What's it doing out here?

ARNO
I don't know.

The Helicopter is closing ground fast.

ARNO
Look! The front, you see the rounded
nose? That gives it a lot of upward
lift.

The Helicopter swoops down near the edge of the cliff, careens
left, straightens, and comes right for them.

DANNY
Ah, Arno...

ARNO
Yeah...

The copter opens fire directly at their feet.

DANNY
Hit the dirt!

The Helicopter flies by overhead and Arno gets a good look at
it.

ARNO
See the markings? That's DEFINITELY
a police copter.

DANNY
Well who the hell's in the thing?

ARNO
I don't know, but they're going to
wish they never learned to fly.

DANNY

What are you going to do, beat it up?

ARNO

Come on. I've got a surprise for them.

They run over to Arno's car as the Copter takes its turn and heads back towards them.

THE HELICOPTER -

In the cockpit, in an orange pilot's jumper is JIM LUMIERE, guiding the copter wheel with his unbandaged hand.

Leaning out of the side door, also in orange, is JULES aiming his long range assault rifle, his trigger hand bandaged.

BACK ON THE GROUND -

Arno pops open the trunk and takes out a big cardboard box.

ARNO

I bought myself a little present the other day.

Arno rips open the packaging and pulls out an assembly required Stinger Missile kit.

DANNY

Ballsy!

The copter's speeding towards them. Jules is training his gun sight on Arno's head. Danny can just make them out.

DANNY

Arno, it's the Twins!

ARNO

Good, we'll kill two birds with one stone.

But Arno's busy puzzling out the instruction manual. Slowly, he sticks the parts into place. It's starting to look like a weapon, but it's upside down. Just as the Copter passes over, Arno gets the STINGER-RIG to stand up...It's a race against time...Jules opens fire.

Arno clamps on the missile, tilts the launching track, aims...

ARNO

See you in Hell, Helicopter!
and click...nothing happens.

DANNY
Fire already! What are you doing?
The copter fire erupts all around them, narrowly missing.

ARNO
I don't know, it's jammed or something.
The copter has turned again and is buzzing at high speed 10 feet above the ground right in their path.
Arno continues to dicker with the launcher.

ARNO
It's these Russian instructions, and then they never give you all the parts...
The copter is making it's final assault turn, the Twins wink to each other, and open fire, strafing the ground at Arno and Danny's feet.

DANNY
Arno, try it again, Now!
Arno aims, pulls the trigger, and...click. Another dud.

ARNO
I think we're missing a spring.

DANNY
Oh, great...
In a second, the copter will be directly overhead.
Arno takes a long hard look at his new Russian Launcher.

ARNO
What a rip off.
Then his mighty hand grips the pivot rod, rips the missile-head off the stand, takes it back in his arm, and as the copter passes overhead he hurls it javelin style right into the tail-blade, blowing it clean off.

The Twins give a look back towards the tail of the Chopper. Uh oh, nothing there. It's crash landing time.

Danny and Arno look on as the Copter goes bumping and rocking down towards the big houses on the Hollywood Hills.

THE HELICOPTER -

It cuts off the top branch of a tree, careens left, then nose dives into a beautiful blue swimming pool.

The copter slowly sinks to the bottom as the Twins surface and swim to the side of the pool.

BACK ON THE CLIFF -

DANNY

Mr. Id sent those guys, Arno. He wants you dead.

ARNO

Let him come! He can send a thousand men, I will kill them all!

DANNY

(frustrated)

Jesus Christ. Arno, that's just the attitude that got you into all this trouble in the first place. This time, we've got to get out ahead of the game...Anticipate them.

ARNO

(trying)

I know, we'll go back to the Stripper bar, find Id's hideout once and for all...

DANNY

No, no, definitely not. (Beat) Look, Arno, what's the one thing that can stop you from killing Id?

ARNO

(trying hard)

Nothing?

DANNY

No, think about it. If he had something that meant a lot to you, and held it hostage...

ARNO

Jessica...

DANNY

Exactly. If we go after them, they kidnap Jessica, use her as blackmail.

ARNO

Yes, they've done that before. I forgot.

DANNY

So what do we do? We save Jessica before they kidnap her, taking away their trump card, so you can kill with impunity.

ARNO

What's impunity?

DANNY

It means you can shoot whoever you want.

ARNO

Impunity, I like that.

DANNY

(smiling)

Then let's go.

They jump into the car and tear out.

CUT TO:

INT. BEVERLY CENTER MALL - DAY

Arno and Danny come screeching up the circular PARKING ramp and into the gargantuan LOT.

CARS all over the place; parked, circling, coming and going, but no spaces.

ARNO

(furious)

I can never find a goddamn spot here!

JUST THEN, down the row, a space opens up. Danny makes a turn right for it, but a YUPPIE in a little red sports car shoots in just in front of him.

DANNY

What an asshole.

ARNO

Wait here.

Arno gets out and walks over to the sports car.

The YUPPIE, in the driver's seat, sees Arno coming up in his side view mirror, and turns a whiter shade of pale.

DRIVER'S P.O.V. --

Arno's massive torso leaning into his window...Arno grinning wide.

ARNO

You just made a Big Mistake.

The YUPPIE swallows his tongue, screeches into reverse and hauls out of there.

Danny smiles and pulls into the space.

CUT TO:

INT. CENTRAL ATRIUM --

Arno and Danny quickly weave their way through the onrush of shoppers.

DANNY

Okay, where does your wife work?

ARNO

Top floor, the jewelry store. Come on, we'll take the escalator.

DANNY

No, the elevator, it's much faster.

CUT TO:

INT. ELEVATOR --

Rushing upward, Danny and Arno peer out the glass elevator walls into the swarming mall.

Arno spots THEM first. A unified battalion of Hard-Ass MERCS, led by Jules and Jim, files into the atrium below.

ARNO

Look, Danny! You were right.

The Twins give out their orders, the Mercs synchronize their watches, and fan out in all directions.

DANNY
Shit, we gotta move.

INT. TOP FLOOR --

The elevator reaches the top, Arno bolts out.

Danny hesitates a second, then presses every button in the elevator, looks three floors down at the MERCs, and grins.

Arno's up ahead waving him on. Running past the DOWN ESCALATOR, Danny plows into a kid in a baby stroller.

ARNO
Danny, come on.

He rights the stroller, then it hits him; it's THE MOTHER AND CHILD from the TRAILER. Quickly, he snaps on the child-restraint belt, and turns to the mother.

DANNY
Lady, you really gotta start watching out for your kid.

The concerned mother bends over and hugs her child, as Danny and Arno take off down the hallway.

CUT TO:

INT. DAVIDSON JEWELERS --

Arno's wife, JESSICA,

She's listening to her Walkman, reading

"COP WIFE: THE MAGAZINE FOR THE WOMEN, BEHIND THE MEN, BEHIND THE BADGES..."

The Cover Story depicts a Cop Wife, still dressed in her house apron, but now armed to the teeth with a necklace of deadly weapons.

"MY HUSBAND GOT SUSPENDED, NOW I WEAR THE BADGE!
-- A cop's wife's story."

ARNO and DANNY barge into the store, panting heavily.

ARNO
Jessica! Come on, we've got to go!

JESSICA
Arno...Honey, you're all flushed,
what's the matter?

ARNO
The guys who killed Frank are in the
building; they're coming after you
now, and --

DANNY
Can we explain this later?

JESSICA
And you want to set up a surprise
ambush and kill them? Good thinking,
we can tip over the display tables
and...

ARNO
No, we've got to get out of here,
quickly.

JESSICA
But, then you'll miss them...

DANNY
Yeah, that's the point.

ARNO
Danny's got it all figured out.

JESSICA
(shocked)
I can't believe my ears. Since when
did Arno Slater start running away
from criminals?

ARNO
Jessica, it's not like that.
We're... (he looks at Danny for
approval)... anticipating them

JESSICA
I don't know, this is very unusual...

ARNO
Trust me, here are the car keys.
We're parked on...on...Dammit, I can
never--

DANNY

Floor two, near the elevators. They haven't seen you yet...Go down to two, get the car, and meet us at the ramp in front in five minutes...Can you do that?

JESSICA

Alright, if that's the way you want it, Arno.

Jessica kisses Arno and heads out of the store.

CUT TO:

INT. MALL HALLWAY --

Danny and Arno are back in the Mall Traffic when they spot the THREE MERCS from the opening trailer converging at the Elevator Banks below.

DANNY

Quick, the elevators!

The Three Mercs look deadly and determined, waiting calmly for the lift. They check their watches, and load up their guns.

Then, DING, it arrives, the doors swoosh open, and look who's there, it's Arno pointing his Beretta right in their faces.

ARNO

Fourth floor...Guns and Ammo!

Then, Boom, boom, boom they drop in formation.

CUT TO:

INT. CENTRAL ATRIUM --

Arno and Danny book through the mall towards the elevators, but stop short when they see JULES and JIM leading a troop of MERCS out of Bullocks.

ARNO

Dammit! There must be a back door.

DANNY

(realizing it)

The lingerie store!

ARNO

Not now, Danny!

The gang has spotted them from the other side of the mall.

DANNY

Come on!

ARNO and DANNY tear by the huge NEWS KIOSK, when Danny suddenly remembers...

DANNY

Oh, shit! I ate the gum!

ARNO

So what?

DANNY

Arno, trust me, we need some gum.

NEWS KIOSK --

Danny and Arno run up, grab a pack of gum off the shelf and hand it to the COUNTER GUY.

COUNTER GUY

That's fifty cents.

Arno and Danny search their pockets...NOTHING.

COUNTER GUY

No money, no gum.

Arno shrugs. Danny grabs Arno's gun and points it at the guy.

DANNY

Big Mistake.

The Counter Guy is just able to hand over the gum before fainting.

The GUNMEN are closing in fast.

Arno follows Danny's lead, sprinting down the hallway.

CUT TO:

INT. VICTORIA'S SECRET --

It's the Lingerie store from the trailer; Beautiful Women flowing to and fro in silky apparel.

DANNY and ARNO burst in. Danny looks around a moment then, followed by Arno, runs through the front of the store, into the changing room of outraged women, and out the back door...

CUT TO:

EXT. BEVERLY CENTER PARKING RAMP --

IN ARNO'S CAR -

Jessica waits impatiently in the driver's seat, tapping her fingers on the wheel, when...

SUDDENLY -- The air is pierced by the cacophonous fury of one thousand horns and car alarms blasting out at once.

Jessica covers her ears in agony as Arno and Danny come running down the ramp like bats out of hell, pulling the gum out of their ears.

They jump into the car, Jessica steps on it, and they peel out.

CUT TO:

INT. CAR -- DAY

Jessica is driving, as Arno turns and talks excitedly to Danny in the back seat.

ARNO

You were right, Danny. It worked!

DANNY

I know, just lemme think for a second.

Danny is staring intently out the window, as they drive through Santa Monica along the beach.

ARNO

What do we do now? What's next?

Suddenly, Danny spots something.

DANNY

Jessica, pull over!

Jessica quickly swerves to the side of the road.

CUT TO:

EXT. SANTA MONICA BEACHFRONT -- DAY

Arno, Danny and Jessica are walking quickly down the sidewalk in beachfront Santa Monica. Danny is staring intently at something up ahead.

JESSICA

Arno, I'm tired of this, I want to go home.

ARNO

Alright, honey, we'll see if...

DANNY

We can't go home, Jessica. That's the first place they'd look, there's probably guys waiting for us right now.

JESSICA

Well I've got work to do, and I'm not in the mood for cops and robbers. Where are we going?

Danny points straight ahead.

DANNY

There...

They look up to see, in the distance...

EXT. THE SANTA MONICA PIER --

ARNO, JESSICA and DANNY stride across a walkway towards the SANTA MONICA PIER, a somewhat run down amusement center right on the water.

The Pier is a swirling mixture of bad seafood restaurants, cheap ice cream shops and cheesy carnival games that are impossible to win.

Arno is fascinated by the good-natured activity on the Pier. He's never been to an amusement park before. Jessica is not as pleased.

JESSICA

I don't get it, why are we at an amusement park?

ARNO

She's right, Danny. I never come

here.

DANNY

That's the point. They'd never think to look for you here, that's why we came.

ARNO

That's true, but...

DANNY

Look. The villains will eventually catch up with us, they always do. But instead of going to them, we let them find us. In the meantime, we phone the police, call in for back up...

ARNO

But I never call for backup.

DANNY

I know, that's your problem. You wanna go take these guys on singlehandedly. Well instead, we get about 200 cops down here, the villains show up looking for us, they get wasted. (Danny smiles) We hang out and play air hockey.

ARNO

It's brilliant. That's a great plan, Danny. I'll call Decker.

Arno takes off down the boardwalk.

JESSICA

If it's so simple, how come I've gotten kidnapped so many times? How come I'm always in danger, if all you need to do is call the police?

DANNY

Look, Jessica, you're not gonna get kidnapped again. So just relax and enjoy yourself.

OUT

INT. ARCADE TENT --

The tent is filled with games of all sorts; video, pinball,

skee-ball, air hockey -- a kid's fantasy.

Danny and Jessica walk through a gauntlet of video games. Jessica doesn't seem to like any of them. She points toward the larger, carnival games.

JESSICA

Oh, look, Skee Ball.

SKEE BALL --

Danny and Jessica pitch the hard, wooden balls up the ramp toward the holes.

JESSICA

(missing)

Damnit...

DANNY

This is really lame. You gotta try Double Dragon, now that's a good game...

Danny tosses a skee ball, just as Arno walks over to them. He's carrying a Soft-Serv ice cream cone.

ARNO

Alright, I spoke to Decker. They're sending 30 cars, they should be here in ten minutes.

JESSICA

(frustrated)

Well then I'm gonna go look around. You boys have fun...

Jessica leaves.

DANNY

What's eating her?

ARNO

(more concerned with his ice cream)
I don't know.

DANNY

Hey, listen, let's go check out the air hockey...

CUT TO:

AIR HOCKEY --

ARNO and DANNY bat the floating puck back and forth. Arno's having the time of his life, going at the game like it's the Super Bowl, balancing the ice cream cone in one hand.

ARNO
(licking his ice cream cone)
You know, Danny, this stuff is great!
It's all cold and creamy...

DANNY
You've never had ice cream before?

ARNO
I've never played air hockey either!
He smashes home a goal.

ARNO
I don't usually have time for this...

DANNY
I can imagine...

ARNO
I'm too busy out busting criminals
and exacting vengeance...(he blocks
a shot)... but this is great!

Danny scores on Arno, ending the game.

DANNY
You lose again, Slater.

Arno laughs and puts down his paddle.

ARNO
(wistfully)
I wish Jessie and I did stuff like
this more often. It seems like the
only time I ever see her is when
we're making a getaway, or when she's
taping up one of my wounds...

DANNY
Yeah, well you're a busy guy, Arno.

ARNO
Maybe. (beat) Do you know why we've
never had children?

DANNY

No, I just thought...

ARNO

...I wouldn't let her. I said that a child would just be one more person to kidnap, one more obligation that would stop me from fulfilling my duties. Well now I'm suspended, and all these criminals are out to get me...

Arno looks down at Danny, who's listening to him raptly.

ARNO

Come on Danny, let's go outside...

CUT TO:

ON THE PIER --

Arno stops to buy another ice cream cone. The two of them walk along the Pier soaking up the warm, California sun.

ARNO

You're a smart kid. You must make your parents very proud.

Danny has grown very quiet. He walks to the edge of the pier and looks out over the water.

DANNY

Yeah, I guess...

ARNO

What's wrong, Danny?

DANNY

Nothing. It's just that this all reminds me a lot of Coney Island, in New York...

ARNO

Sure, I busted some Jamaican drug smugglers there.

DANNY

Yeah, well this might be a different Coney Island, the one where I'm from. My Dad and I used to go out there, ride the Cyclone, get a hot dog at Nathan's...

ARNO
(concerned)
And now you're so far from home...

DANNY
Nah, it's not that. (beat) My
father died, Arno. He's dead...

ARNO
(shocked)
Did someone kill him?

DANNY
No, no he died of cancer. They
didn't know what it was for a long
time. The doctor's jerked him
around, the hospitals kept switching
the treatments. My mom was a wreck,
she just withdrew from it all...

ARNO
I'm sorry, Danny, it's very hard to
lose someone who means so much to
you...

DANNY
(heatedly)
Yeah, but the whole thing was so
lame, he just sat there dying and I
didn't do shit to help him...

ARNO
Well, Danny, there wasn't much you
could do...

DANNY
Look at you, Arno! Someone kills
your cousin Frank, you go get payback
for it! You find the guys who killed
him and wipe them off the face of the
earth! That must make you feel
better, at least you're doing
something...

Arno takes a long, hard look at Danny, listening to the anger
and bitterness in his voice. He wonders, perhaps for the
first time, just how much better vengeance makes him feel.

ARNO
Danny...

Arno's sentence is interrupted when his ice cream scoop

explodes, splattering all over his face.

ARNO

What the...

He looks down at the cone, and both he and Danny watch as it too explodes in his hand.

DANNY

Look!

They look down to the end of the Pier and realize -- someone is shooting at them.

ARNO

The game room, now!

Under a hail of bullets, Arno and Danny run around behind the tent for cover.

DANNY

Jesus Christ, how they'd find us so quickly?

ARNO

And where are Decker's men?

They hear footsteps, men shouting and coming closer.

Arno leads them around the tent and in through a flap. They see five of Id's men enter the tent, all brandishing guns.

THE ARCADE CROWD flies into a state of total panic, running and diving under tables and games.

THE GROUND --

ARNO and DANNY are crawling along the floor. ARNO holds his Beretta, Danny drags his bookbag.

ARNO

I thought you said the Pier would be safe?

DANNY

It should be, this doesn't make any sense.

Another cloud of bullets shatters a wall of Video Machines above their heads.

DANNY

At least they're really bad shots.

ARNO hands his gun to DANNY.

ARNO

Danny, listen, when I count to three,
you stand up and start firing, okay?

DANNY looks ready, then something occurs to him.

DANNY

Arno... Just one question...(beat)
Aren't we out of bullets?

Arno checks the chamber on his Beretta. Sure enough, it's empty.

DANNY

Remember? You ran out in the mall...

ARNO

That's right. (he looks around)
Okay, don't worry, I have a plan.

Arno crab-walks backwards along the floor, dodging bullets, until he reaches the SKEE BALL booths.

Grabbing a rock hard SKEE BALL, he springs to his feet and goes into a Nuclear pitching wind-up.

An unlucky Gunman tries to duck, but it's too late, the Skee Ball has conked him into next week.

DANNY smiles and tosses Arno a handful of balls.. ARNO goes into a rotary launching fury, running across the room, wasting every Gunman in his path.

BUT he's out of balls, and there's a gun pointing right in his face...

With lightening speed, Arno tumble rolls on to the air hockey sets and scoops up a bundle of pucks. The Gunman just gets his aim, when a bright PLASTIC PUCK zings into his forehead.

ARNO

Let's move, Danny...

BUT Danny's nowhere in sight.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE MIDDLE OF THE PIER --

An angry gunman is backing Danny along the wooden pier with a gun muzzle stuck under his chin. He pushes Danny up against the railing and leans over him, sticking the gun in his face.

Meanwhile, The TWINS stand at the exit to the ARCADE TENT, waiting for Arno to emerge.

JULES .

(to Danny)

Call your friend! Call to heem!

Danny is petrified, he strains against his captor...

BAD GUY

You heard the man, call him, or you die!

But Danny won't do it, and the bad guy shoves him to the ground. As he falls, he hears a clanking sound when his bookbag hits the pier. THEN, he remembers.

JIM

Go ahead, keel him. We'll get the big guy anyway...

The gunman cocks his pistol.

GUNMAN

So long, kid...

Danny reaches into his bookbag, then points up towards the gunman...

DANNY

Bye, asshole!

What explodes through the end of Danny's bookbag would be best described as firing a cruise missile through a pea-shooter. The force is incredible, it tears the bookbag to shreds and the gunman is literally blown to dust. No blood, no guts, just a fine cloud of bad guy residue.

DANNY

Holy shit...

Danny looks down at his hand in wonder. He's holding the gun The Projectionist gave him. It glows a bright metallic blue, smoke pours from the barrel.

Two other BAD GUYS run towards Danny...

He fires again and another incredible explosion rips forth from the gun. BAD GUY #1 is blown to bits, his gun sent tumbling backwards down the pier.

BAD GUY #2 runs up and grabs Danny's hand. Danny looks down at where he's been grabbed.

His skin is somehow GLOWING. It's like he's in technicolor and the rest of the world's in sepia tone.

Danny closes his eyes as BAD GUY #2 rears back and PUNCHES him in the face.

Danny opens his eyes. The guy is staring at him. His face feels fine. He lunges forward, and the result astonishes him...

BAD GUY #2 is sent hurtling end over end down the Pier, at least 100 ft, racking up in a ring toss booth.

DANNY

Jesus...

MEANWHILE --

Arno is body slamming a group of attackers. In typical Arno fashion, he's holding his own even though there's at least ten of them.

Suddenly, bodies start flying off him one by one, and Arno sees DANNY, fighting really awkwardly, but kicking total ass nonetheless.

ARNO

Danny! What's happened to you, you're glowing!

Danny tosses the last attacker into the arcade tent.

Arno watches in disbelief. The Bad Guy's attack has been completely repelled. Id's men lie all over the pier, unconscious.

ARNO

That was incredible, Danny.

Suddenly, footsteps. SEVEN MORE MEN are running down the pier towards Arno and Danny.

ARNO

This looks like trouble, better get behind me...

Danny smiles.

DANNY

No, Arno. You get behind me.

Arno watches in amazement as Danny brandishes his porcelain GUN.

DANNY

So long, suckers!

KABOOM!

The force of the blast blows the bad guys out of their shoes, shaking the pier to its foundations.

Arno and Danny look around. All the assailants have fled; in fact, the entire pier is deserted, except for...

All the way at the other end, THE TWINS are dragging JESSICA towards their Peugeot. Parked around them are three black Lexus's, filled with Mercs.

Jules shoves Jessica into the back seat and screeches away.

ARNO

Jessie!

DANNY

Let's move!

They start running down the pier when suddenly, Arno stops.

ARNO

Wait a second Danny, I was just thinking. There's four cars filled with armed men, and only two of us. Maybe we should wait for the back-up.

DANNY

What are you, kidding me? They've got your wife, it's personal now! We gotta kick ass!

CUT TO:

EXT. LOS ANGELES CITY STREETS -- DAY

Arno and Danny are engaged in a high speed, nail biting chase through the streets of L.A. The VILLAINS have about a three block lead on Arno's brandless American tin box.

Danny picks up his porcelain gun. He holds it up, and inspects it fondly.

ARNO
Be careful, Danny...

DANNY
Don't sweat it, Arno. It's under control..

ARNO
There's something wrong with that gun. It shouldn't have that kind of firepower...

DANNY
Jealous, Arno? Let me see your old clunker.

Arno hands Danny his Beretta and catches sight of his skin. He's even brighter than before.

ARNO
You don't look so good.

Danny flips down the sun shade, and checks his face out in the vanity mirror.

DANNY
Jesus...I don't know...I feel fantastic...Like I'm ten times as strong...

The Villains are gaining distance up ahead. They turn off down a bumpy stretch of road.

ARNO
We're losing them. Hang on.

ARNO spins the wheel, making sick turns, swerving through gridlocked traffic and running lights.

After twenty seconds of veering, roaring hell, Danny clutches his stomach. All this driving is starting to make him sick.

DANNY
God, this is awful, I think I'm gonna heave...

ARNO
Maybe we should have waited for the

back up.

DANNY

No, keep going. It's too late now.

Danny hangs his head out the window, obviously very uncomfortable. Then he spots something up ahead...

ON A SIDESTREET, DANNY'S P.O.V. --

Two WORKMEN carry an enormous PANE OF GLASS down the block.

DANNY

Stop the car!

ARNO

What? How come...

DANNY

Pull over, Arno! Now!

ARNO

Are you going to throw up?

Arno swerves violently over to the side of the road.

CUT TO:

EXT. ALLEY -- DAY

The two WORKMEN with the pane of glass are walking down an alley now. ARNO and DANNY are following them.

ARNO

Danny, if you're not going to be sick, I really think we should get back in the car...

DANNY

Trust me, Arno. I think this is gonna work.

The WORKMEN turn the corner on to a bright, noisy street up ahead. Arno and Danny follow close behind.

CHASE STREET --

What they see when they turn the corner surprises them. A large, wide street, literally buzzing with activity.

ARNO

What's going on, Danny?

As they walk down the block, they pass the two workers with the pane of glass. Then, they come to a SIDEWALK CAFE, filled with afternoon eaters.

A HUCKSTER, pushing a FRUIT CART rumbles past them down the street.

They keep walking, passing RACKS OF BEEF dangling over the sidewalk on meat hooks.

On the other side, they pass FIRE HYDRANTS, GARBAGE CANS, a STUDENT DRIVER CAR, and finally, at the end, a trucker directing his friend, in an EIGHTEEN-WHEELER, back first into traffic.

DANNY

This is it.

As Danny and Arno stand at the end of the block, they look back over the street. It is a domino line of every CAR CHASE OBSTACLE you've ever seen, all packed together on one block.

DANNY

Arno, if we wait here a few minutes,
I guarantee the villains will come
right to us...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CHASE STREET - MINUTES LATER

Danny and Arno are standing next to the EIGHTEEN WHEELER at the far end of the street.

ARNO

Where are they?

DANNY

Any minute now...

THEN, sure enough, from the other end of the block, the Villains' Cars come barreling on to Chase Street.

The LEAD CAR races down the road, crashes through the PLATE OF GLASS, topples the FRUIT CART, to the angry yells of the HUCKSTER, and then plows into a FIRE HYDRANT.

The gushing water spray causes the second Villain Car to veer off into the rows of HANGING BEEF, and the third to rack up on the GARBAGE CANS.

But they're all still plowing ahead to the panic stricken horror of the STUDENT DRIVER, whom they rear end into a CHINA SHOP.

The Villains have practically made it through Chase Street when the mammoth EIGHTEEN WHEELER starts backing up into the road. The Villains are sizing up the situation. It looks like there'll just be enough room to squeeze through. They'll just cut around the back.

But there's DANNY, his gun pointed at the truck.

DANNY

Back up faster!

TRUCK DRIVER

(petrified)

But...Then they won't...

Danny puts the gun to the Driver's head.

DANNY

Faster!

The DRIVER steps on it, and the huge truck picks up speed and, uh-oh, closes the little remaining gap.

The Peugeot veers off into the wall, as the three Lexuses rack up in a heap under the truck.

The fifteen indefatigable MERCS spring from their cars and take up positions guarding JESSICA in the center.

DANNY AND ARNO --

are standing safely on the other side of the truck.

DANNY

You go around the front, I'll take the back. We blast them from both ends, and meet in the middle.

ARNO

Right.

They split up, and duck around both ends of the truck. The MERCS spin around to face them.

Suddenly, Arno panics...

ARNO

Wait...Danny! You've got my gun!

But Danny, on the other side of the truck, is in a kill frenzy and can't hear him.

Then it's too late. THE TWINS have seen Arno panicking, and now they're coming right for him.

DANNY is busy blowing away MERCS with two fists, firing Arno's gun and his own, in an arabesque of Extreme Violence.

ON THE OTHER SIDE --

Arno is struggling bare handedly with JULES AND JIM. He's just barely holding his own, wrestling his armed attackers to the ground. But the Twins are relentless.

At the same time, Danny manages to penetrate the MERC'S guard circle. With one hand he valiantly springs JESSICA from the car, and with the other he blasts three Mercs into oblivion.

ON THE OTHER END, Arno's in bad shape. THE TWINS have him cornered and they're about to play their favorite trick. Jules runs around and kneels behind Arno's legs as Jim pushes Arno over backwards. He bangs his head down on the cement. The world goes black. He's knocked out.

DANNY --

Leads Jessica to safety and turns around just in time to see The Twins pulling out in their PEUGEOT with ARNO captive in back.

CLOSE ON -

Danny's face, watching Arno go...

DANNY
(quietly)

No...

Then, his features slowly tensing with rage. He screams.

DANNY
NO!

CUT TO:

INT. ARNO'S ARSENAL -

CLOSE ON -

A black boot. Hands yank the laces taut and knot them. Then

a thudding as the boots clod heavily down on to the floor.

It's DANNY.

He's glowing like a roman candle, literally plastered head to foot with guns.

CLOSE ON -- HIS FACE --

Painted with Camouflage.

He is no longer the fresh-faced young boy of the beginning, but a snarling, angry, Out-For-Justice-Commando, ready to do serious damage with a variety of deadly weapons.

He charges upstairs.

THE LIVING ROOM -

Jessica is lying on her back nursing a bruise with an ice-pack when Danny bursts into the room.

JESSICA

(shocked by his appearance)

My God, what have you been doing down there?!

DANNY

Let's move out.

JESSICA

You know, you're not supposed to touch that stuff...

DANNY

We're going for Arno, right now.

JESSICA

(incredulous)

Danny, he's being held by 100 hundred grown men. There's nothing you can do.

DANNY

Oh, yes there is. Arno's in big trouble and I'm not going to turn my back, and neither are you.

JESSICA

What do you need me for?

He tosses her the car keys. Jessica stares at them.

DANNY
(sheepishly)
I can't drive.

CUT TO:

INT. DECKER'S OFFICE, POLICE PRECINCT -- NIGHT

Decker sits behind his Desk at the precinct, anxiously wringing his hands, and waiting for a phone call. He chomps down on his cigar, and looks at his watch. Then the phone rings.

DECKER
Decker...(beat, his face lights up)
You're joking. (beat) When are you going to kill him?... What about a little torturing or something first?...Perfect, he should really enjoy that...

Decker hangs up the phone, pours himself a celebratory Chivas Regal out of a hidden bottle in his desk, then heads out of the office whistling, a new spring noticeable in his step.

PRECINCT PARKING LOT --

Decker, giddy and a little tipsy, is sauntering over to his lemon colored Oldsmobile, doing a little jig as he reaches for his car keys, and then all of sudden he freezes...Because the cold steel of a Browning 9 mm is being thrust into the back of his skull.

DECKER
Whoever you are, you're making a big mistake....

VOICE
You made the big mistake, Decker.

Decker spins around to see DANNY, standing behind him. He's glowing brighter than ever.

DECKER
Wha...What? I don't know what you're talking about...

DANNY
Forget it, Decker. I know you set us up. You never sent the backup, you

just called Id's men and told them
where we were...

DECKER

(nervously)

That's ridiculous, who told you that?

DANNY

You're the old Vietnam Buddy, Decker.
The Old Vietnam Buddy always betrays
you...

DECKER

I...I can explain...

DANNY

Explain later, jerkoff. Right now,
you take me to Id's hideout or you're
gonna have a serious Excedrin
headache.

Danny pushes Decker over to Arno's Car. Jessica is waiting
impatiently in the driver's seat. She looks pretty annoyed
by the whole thing.

JESSICA

Hi Bob.

She frowns as Danny pushes Decker into the back seat.

DECKER

Jessie...How's things?

JESSICA

Just carpooling the kiddies. I don't
suppose you two could just go ahead
and do this yourselves?

DECKER

Sure...Whaddyasay, kid?

DANNY

Shut up, Decker.

Danny puts the gun up to Decker's head and cocks it.

DANNY

Take us to Id's hideout while you can
still talk.

Decker stares at Danny nervously.

DECKER
You don't understand, kid. Slater
and I have a long history, I had my
reasons for doing what I did...

DANNY
(screaming)
I don't GIVE A SHIT!! Take us to
Arno, NOW!!

DECKER
Head for Hollywood, Jessica...

They pull out.

CUT TO:

INT. ABANDONED MOVIE STUDIO -- NIGHT

An enormous, run down Sound Stage now functions as the
Villains' Main Warehouse.

Overhead, there is an iron CATWALK, once the Lighting Bridge,
that runs the perimeter of the room, connected in the middle
by a cross-bridge.

ID'S Sentinels are posted all over the place, pacing the
perimeter from above.

At one end of the room is ARNO, his arms tied together over
his head, secured to a long ceiling chain.

Bound, and manacled, Arno is defenseless against the cruel
punishments being administered to him by JULES and JIM, expert
torture specialists.

JULES
Power is ready, Jim?

JIM
Yes, Jules. I have channeled the
master power unit into this one
dangerously loose wire.

JULES
Oh, then we must be most careful not
to touch it...Especially if we are
somehow wet at the time.

Jules then sticks Arno's feet into a bucket of water.

JIM
Have you taken all your safety precautions Mr. Slater?

ARNO
You're a funny guy, Jules...

JIM
He's Jules, you idiot!

JULES
Safety first Mr. Slater, watch the loose wires.

Jim then presses the end of the long cable up against Arno's bare chest. His massive frame begins to seethe and convulse, but he grits back the pain, refusing to scream out.

ENTERING THROUGH THE FRONT DOOR comes the infamous MR. ID, his face wrapped in bandages, followed by a full compliment of his hardiest Mercs.

Through the pain, Arno spots ID on the other end of the room, and he chafes against his chains.

ARNO
Id, I'm going to rip your bandaged head right off that skinny neck!

MR. ID
Ah, if it isn't Arno Slater, the walking muscle. I trust you're enjoying the accommodations...

ARNO
I'll enjoy burning them down.

MR. ID
That wouldn't be advisable. I went to great lengths to obtain this space, Mr. Slater. The man who owned the building made a rather comprehensive deal with me. When he defaulted, I collected this studio, as well as other valuables far more precious. And, as I'm sure you know already, mercy is not one of my strengths...

ARNO
Is that why you killed Frank, Id? To prove how ruthless and evil you are?

MR.ID

You never get any smarter, do you? Your cousin Frank's death was an error. A foul up. A completely unnecessary killing that I, above all, regret.

ARNO

What?

MR.ID

It was you whom we intended to kill, Slater. Frank was wearing your hat, he came out of your gym, and you both have that Cro Magnon slouch...

ARNO

(disbelieving)

It was all a mistake?

MR.ID

I was just as upset as you were. I despise incompetence. I can assure you, however, that we will be far more thorough when it comes to killing you.

ARNO

I'll see you in Hell, Id!

MR.ID

That's right, you will. (he laughs) Jules, Jim, destroy this Mongoloid half-wit before I do it myself.

They sizzle Arno with another rocking dose of electricity.

ARNO

You French assholes!

JULES

We're not French assholes...

JIM

We're Belgian assholes!

Jules takes a smoldering hot iron out of his bag, and presses it against Arno's chest.

Arno bites back the pain silently as his skin sizzles.

MR.ID

It's okay to be upset, Slater, let
your emotions out, cry if you feel
like it.

THEN, suddenly...

A THUNDEROUS EXPLOSION at the far end of the room.

AN ENORMOUS HOLE has been blown in the wall, sending bricks,
plaster and dust flying everywhere. There is silence for a
moment. A cloud of dust and smoke hangs in the air.

THEN, A VOICE --

VOICE
I'm coming for you Id!

SFX - A low rumbling of steel wheels.

An old CAMERA DOLLY parts the smoke, rolling through the hole
and out into the room.

On top of the DOLLY, steering, is DANNY.

IN HIS RIGHT HAND --

A smoking bazooka...

IN HIS LEFT --

Two more of Id's men, dead. He tosses them to the ground.

DANNY
Hey, you Twin buttheads. You can
kiss my ass.

He brandishes two guns at once.

(cont.)
Two times.

CLOSE ON --

Jules and Jim, looking alarmed. Then running for cover.

OVERHEAD --

Id's men take up positions on the center bridge between the
catwalks...

DANNY --

with cat-like speed, hops off the Dolly, tosses the bazooka aside and whips out an intricate, Compound Bow.

ON THE BRIDGE --

Id's men aim their rifles at Danny.

DANNY --

Slowly, deliberately, pulls a long arrow from its quiver, and lays it across the bow. Down the shaft, at its point, a shiny golden triangle...An explosive head.

ON THE BRIDGE --

Id's men yell "Fire!"

DANNY --

releases the arrow...

CLOSE ON --

The arrow, whizzing through the air and then...

THE BRIDGE EXPLODES

It's the Fourth of July, as human fireworks light the air. The burning wreckage tumbles to the floor and smolders.

DANNY --

steps through the smoke once again.

DANNY

Who's next?

He tosses the bow and arrow on the ground.

ARNO

(obscured by the smoke)

DANNY! Watch out!

A TOP-CLASS MERC --

Comes charging out of the smoke, and grabs Danny around the throat from behind. He starts to choke him when...

DANNY reaches over his shoulder, grabs the back of the Merc's head, and delivers a SHATTERING REVERSE HEAD BUTT.

The Merc crumples to the ground in a heap.

ARNO

Danny, look out, there's two more...

Two Bad Guys come charging through the smoke.

DANNY --

smiles, relishes the moment, then reaches over his shoulder for the gun taped to his back...

But wait, something's wrong, he can't reach it, he's taped it too low.

BAD GUY 1 --

charges at him, punching him in the stomach.

DANNY buckles over, faking the pain, then elbow blasts the unaware guard in the temple.

THE LAST BAD GUY --

stares at Danny now. He thinks twice about attacking him, then starts to run.

DANNY --

smiling, swings the laser sight pistol out of a holster.

ARNO

Danny, don't...

The red dot from the laser travels up the man's back and...

BLAM!

He tumbles over head first.

NOW, THE ROOM --

Is a panorama of death and destruction. Bodies lie scattered everywhere among the wreckage.

ARNO, still hanging from a chain.

And Danny, in the middle of it all.

He steps forward, towards Arno...

ARNO

Danny...thank God.

Danny still has the laser gun in his hand. He raises it and points it in Arno's direction.

ARNO

Danny! It's me, Arno...

The red laserlight, travels up his stomach, over his neck, past his face...

ARNO

Danny...

The light keeps moving, right up to Arno's manacled wrists, stopping in between them on the chains.

DANNY fires.

And ARNO crashes to the floor, free now.

ARNO'S P.O.V. --

He's lying right at Danny's feet.

ARNO

That was good shooting, Danny, but you didn't need to kill that man...

DANNY

(not listening)

Id and the Twins got away.

ARNO

How did you find me?

DANNY

Decker. He betrayed us at the Pier.

ARNO

Decker? But why?

DANNY

He's a bureaucrat Arno, think about it. Here, you'll want this.

Danny pulls Arno's 9mm Beretta Combat Pistol out, and hands it over to him.

ARNO stares at the gun, quietly. He turns it over in his hands.

ARNO
I've killed a lot of people with this
gun, Danny.

DANNY
Get ready to kill a lot more.

Danny and Arno move out through the back door into a long
corridor.

INT. HALLWAY --

A long, narrow, hallway filled with costumes and old
backdrops. The winding corridor doglegs at its middle.

Danny and Arno creep cautiously ahead.

SFX -- GUNSHOTS

Two bullets clang against the wall, inches away from them.

DANNY
That's the Twins.

TWO MORE GUNSHOTS --

ring out in the hallway.

ARNO
Dammit. (beat) Cover me...

ARNO gets out down on his hands and knees. Danny grabs his
shoulder.

DANNY
Wait, Arno.

He tears a grenade off his vest.

How's your curve ball?

FARTHER DOWN THE HALLWAY --

Jules and Jim backed up by a group of Mercs. Every few
seconds, one of them reaches around the corner and fires off
another shot in the direction of Arno and Danny.

SFX -- CLANGING

Jules and Jim take a few steps backwards as the clanging gets louder and louder.

A GRENADE --

skips straight down the hallway, spinning wildly. It brushes against a wall, then takes a vicious curve straight for...

THE GANG OF MERCS, who stand there, transfixed.

JULES and JIM run for a doorway.

SFX -- EXPLOSION

ARNO AND DANNY

come barreling down the hallway, right behind the explosion, guns drawn. They look down and see the MERCS' dead bodies, but no sign of The Twins.

They duck through the door and see another long hallway, which splits into a fork. Running up the middle of the hall, side by side, are Jules and Jim.

ARNO

The Twins!

DANNY

We've got to split them up!

Arno takes hold of the high tech archer's bow, kneels and zings an arrow down the long hallway.

As they reach the fork in the hall, The Twins look back...The arrow's coming right between their shoulders. Jules dives left, Jim to the right, and the arrow explodes into the wall between them.

Arno and Danny charge down the hall after them. Danny slings a rifle over his shoulder and cocks it. Arno takes hold of the massive Rocket Launcher. They reach the fork, and Arno pulls Danny aside.

ARNO

(he grabs Danny's arm)

Look, Danny, I want you to be careful...

DANNY

(smiling)

They can't touch this.

ARNO
Be careful anyway. Try not to kill
anyone who doesn't deserve it.

DANNY stares at him strangely.

DANNY
You okay, Arno?

ARNO
(quietly)
I'm fine. Let's do it.

They take off down the halls; Arno to the right towards Jim
in the loading dock, and Danny to the left after Jules.

LOADING DOCK --

An expansive Loading Dock, filled with huge crates. Arno
steps into the room quietly, watching as Jim desperately tries
to climb into an air shaft from on top of one of the crates.

ARNO
Come down from there, Jules. I don't
want to kill you...

JIM
I'm Jim, you overgrown American
idiot.

Jim snorts and fires off a few rounds towards Arno. Arno
doesn't even flinch as the bullets miss by a wide margin.

ARNO
Okay, I warned you...

Arno walks over to the mountain of crates that Jim is standing
on. With a massive heave, Arno topples one of the crates,
sending the others tumbling down in a chain reaction.

MEANWHILE --

Jules is running for his life down an old studio hallway
from...

DANNY, who cackles loudly and fires a few shots off now and
then.

Jules comes to the end of the long hallway and bursts through
a doorway, outside, into an...

OLD WESTERN TOWN SET --

A cobwebbed, crumbling but still standing set from an old Western. JULES stands in the middle of Main Street.

Hearing Danny coming up behind him, he darts over to THE SALOON.

As Jules pushes through the swinging doors of the Saloon, he realizes that these are only stand up flats. He presses himself up against the flimsy material, and peers out the glassless window to the street.

JULES P.O.V. --

Danny stands in the middle of the street now. He has a big smile on his face. He pulls the Porcelain gun off his back.

DANNY

Eenie, meenie, miney...

A HUGE EXPLOSION

blasts the saloon flat into splinters, but JULES has managed to slip out and race across the street to the BANK.

What follows is an extremely violent cat and mouse game, as JULES runs from the BANK, to the POST OFFICE, to the BROTHEL. Danny blowing away each just after he starts running..

NOW, Jules is behind the OLD JAIL set, and has no place left to run. He tries taking a few shots at Danny, but they miss.

DANNY

Nowhere left to run, Jules. Say your prayers...

Danny fires, and Jules is buried under a mountain of wood.

BACK TO ARNO, IN THE LOADING DOCK --

He pushes away the enormous crates. Finally, he comes to Jim's body. His eyes are wide open, but his neck is twisted hideously.

Arno shakes his head, then reaches down and shuts Jim's eyes. He gets up and walks out of the room.

HOLD ON JIM, for a moment, waiting for Arno to leave. As soon as the door closes, one of his eyes POPS OPEN.

WESTERN TOWN --

Is now entirely destroyed. The outdoor set is littered with shattered, smoldering pieces of wood. At the end of the street, where the jail used to be, something stirs under a mountain of rubble.

The pieces of wood start to fall aside, and rising from the ashes is JULES...

Beaten, bloody, but still alive. He limps forward out of the wreckage, cocking his gun.

DANNY

(O.S)

Thought I'd left, didn't you?

Standing behind Jules is Danny, who hasn't left at all, but is in fact pointing his gun right in Jules' back.

DANNY

Sorry Jules, I'm not that stupid. You're the second most evil bad guy. And the second most evil bad guy always comes back to kill you at the end...

Jules reaches nervously for his gun...

DANNY

Not this time...

Danny fires, blowing Jules into dust.

INT. OLD HORROR MOVIE SET -

Arno barges through a side door and on to a dusty old Horror Movie Set of Hell. Everywhere in the room: Stalactites, stalagmites, boulders, caverns, steel cages, and once fiery pits.

ARNO

Come out, Id.

Arno cocks his rifle, and blows a paper mache Stalactite off the ceiling.

ARNO

There's nowhere left to run.

Then, a small crackling noise from behind him.

Arno spins and fires off another round into the big boulder. Plaster flies up, and clogs the air with dust.

Behind the cloud of debris, Arno makes out a figure, standing very still. It's ID.

MR.ID

Very impressive, Slater. You knew just where to look.

ARNO

The drugs, Id. I want them. Now!

MR. ID

(laughing)

Of course. They're in the pit.

Arno looks at Id, surprised. He glances over to a pit, covered by wooden slats.

ARNO

Why don't I believe you?

MR. ID

Because you're a moron? (beat) You still don't get it, Slater, do you?

Arno looks puzzled.

MR. ID

The drugs are nothing. They were simply the means to an end.

ARNO

And what was that? Funding hostile rebels in Central America? Bribing government officials? Maybe a Senator?

MR. ID

My, what an active imagination. It was much simpler than that.

Id takes a step forward.

(cont.)

We were only selling the drugs to make money. We used the money to buy guns. We needed the guns to kill

you.

ARNO

But why? Why would you want me dead?

MR. ID

You interfered with our drug operations.

ARNO

But you were only selling the drugs so you could kill me...

MR.ID

Precisely.

ARNO

So, if I hadn't been there stopping you, you wouldn't have been selling the drugs...

MR.ID

How perceptive.

None of this makes any sense. Arno tries desperately to figure it out.

MR. ID

Look, if you don't believe me, check the pit. Blow up the drugs, they've served their purpose.

Arno reluctantly walks over to the Pit and kicks the slats off. He almost doesn't want to look in there. If Id's telling the truth...

ARNO

Frank would be alive...All this killing. It was all for nothing...

Arno kicks the slats off and...

No booby trap. no surprises. Just a mother lode of drugs in plastic bags at the bottom of the pit. Arno can't believe Id has told him where they are.

ARNO

(trying to work it out)

You sold the drugs to get the money to kill me, but I didn't stop you until you started selling the drugs...

Id looks over at Arno, who seems paralyzed by self doubt.

MR. ID
Confusing, Slater, isn't it? Almost maddening. (beat) Well, what are you waiting for? Take the rocket launcher, aim it in the pit, and fire...

Arno is disoriented; his whole world seems to be crumbling around him.

MR. ID
Or do you have something else in mind? Perhaps you're going to kill me first? Isn't that what you always do?

ARNO
No.

Arno lets the rocket launcher fall to his side.

ARNO
There's been enough killing.

JESSICA
(O.S.)
Get off me!

Decker pushes into the room, with a gun pointed to Jessica's head.

DECKER
Slater, you pasty faced sauna monkey, drop the gun!

MR. ID
It's about time, Captain.

ARNO
Jessica, how did you get here?

JESSICA
He kidnapped me. What else is new?

DECKER
That crazy kid left her in the car with me. (Arno approaches them) I'll shoot her, Slater, I swear I'll do it...

ARNO
Decker, you're a cop! How could you do this?

DECKER
It wasn't just me, Slater. The whole precinct chipped in to pay these guys. Killgallon and McMurphy had a bake sale.

ARNO
I don't understand, we were buddies. Why would you do this to me?

DECKER
(snorts)
He's askin me why. Why would I do it? I've said it to you a million times, but did you ever listen to me? Nooooo. You just did things your own way...

ARNO
But I thought...

DECKER
You've given my department the worst reputation in the country, Slater. I've got media hounds doing the Thomas Flair three feet up my cornhole, the ACLU white water rafting down fudge river canyon.... (getting louder) I'm this close to getting kicked out on my sweaty petards without a pension, and you ask me WHY?!

ARNO
Yes...

DECKER
(in a total frenzy)
Because you're a ball-peen jacka-menace, Slater, that's why! Because I've slurped about all the cock toasting I can take from you poncey poon fackers...(he thinks for a minute) and you take the shingles off the monkey-stick!

They all take a second to register this.

JESSICA
(interrupting)
This is moronic.

She shakes her self free from Decker.

DECKER
Don't move...

JESSICA
Go ahead and shoot, Bob, I'm not playing hostage for you! (beat) I am so tired of this, Arno! The worrying, the kidnappings, playing along with all this goddamn macho posturing...

ARNO
Jessie, not you too?

JESSICA
Don't lump me in with these guys, Arno. I've been supportive, I've helped you all these years. I cleaned your guns when you wanted them clean, I sewed up your wounds when they needed stitching...I need to do something for me... I want to go back to school, start a career, have kids...

ARNO
Jessie, now is not really the best time for this...

JESSICA
I think it's the perfect time. I'm leaving you Arno. Goodbye.

Jessica starts walking away.

DECKER
Get back here!

ARNO
Jessie, please...

She turns around to face them.

JESSICA
You two have some kind of score to

settle, go ahead, settle it! But leave me out. (beat, she looks at Arno) I'm sorry Arno, but we never really knew each other anyway. Good bye.

Id laughs, enjoying this little revelation.

ARNO

Decker, look, let's drop our guns, we can talk this out...

MR.ID

Don't do it, Decker.

ARNO

I'll quit the force, you'll never have to see me again...

DECKER

And give up the one thing you know how to do? Yeah, sure...

MR.ID

Shoot him!

ARNO

Decker, please! I'll put my gun down first...

DECKER

I know that one too, Hot-shot. You've got another one taped to your back!

ARNO

Decker, I don't have... Please, let's not shoot each other over nothing...

MR.ID

Do it!

Decker raises his gun...Arno makes no attempt to protect himself. Then...

KABOOM!

An enormous explosion pulverizes Decker into dust. It's DANNY. He's smiling, holding his smoking gun.

Sensing the opportunity, ID slips away from them and out through a side door...

DANNY

Arno, he's getting away!

But Arno is kneeling down, looking at Decker's gun and shield which lay on the ground.

ARNO

He was a good man, Danny. He cursed a lot, and I didn't understand what he was saying all the time, but he meant well...

DANNY

Hey Arno, Mr. Arch Villain just made a break for it.

ARNO

Decker hated me, Danny. I made his life hell.

DANNY

Well, that's too bad, but we don't have time to cry over back-stabbing bureaucrats right now...We've got to finish off Id.

Arno rises to his feet.

ARNO

No. No more killing.

DANNY

Hey, Arno, news flash! Mr. Id, biggest drug dealer on the West Coast and all around scum bag just high tailed it out of here...

ARNO

You don't understand, Danny. He was just selling drugs to buy guns to kill me...

DANNY

What the hell are you talking about?

ARNO

It was me, Danny, I caused all this crime. It's like an endless roller coaster ride that I started, and now I want to get off...

DANNY
I can't believe you! They killed Frank!

ARNO
It was an accident. They were trying to get me. (beat) I feel bad, sure, but killing them won't bring him back.

DANNY
What about justice, Arno? He was your cousin.

ARNO
You wanna know the truth, Danny? Frank wasn't even really my cousin. His father was my Dad's best friend, and, you know, we started calling him Uncle, so you call his son cousin, and pretty soon it just sticks.

Danny cocks the porcelain gun.

DANNY
We're wasting time.

ARNO
Look, Danny, this whole thing's been pointless...Just let it go.

DANNY
If you're not going to kill Id then I will.

Arno grabs Danny by the arms.

ARNO
No, Danny, I won't let you do that.

DANNY
Try and stop me!

Danny slaps Arno's arms away, breaking free from his grip, and sending the big man a few steps backwards. Arno stands frozen, shocked by how violent Danny has become.

JUST THEN, Jim, the remaining Twin, stumbles out from behind a Stalagmite. Before Danny and Arno can react, he fires off a shot...

BLAM!

hitting ARNO in the chest. Arno stumbles backwards, as Danny raises his gun. Jim fires again, propelling Arno over the edge of the PIT, and sending him falling down...down...finally crashing on the bottom.

DANNY

You sonofabitch!

Jim tries to scurry away, but Danny FIRES repeatedly, blasting him back to Brussels, air mail express.

Danny runs over to the PIT and looks down. Way down. Arno's body lies still at the bottom.

Danny gets to his feet.

DANNY

(screaming)

Id! You bastard! You'll pay for
this!

His voice echoes through the studio. He cocks his gun, and goes racing out the side door.

CUT TO:

ON THE STUDIO GROUNDS --

Mr. Id is running for his life, looking backward over his shoulder and then picking up the pace whenever he hears his name being called in the distance.

As he runs, the bandages around his face start to unravel and flake off, leaving a trail of torn gauze in his wake.

THE CHASE leads Danny out through the studio property, up a side street, and then on to HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD.

Danny chases Id past whores, bikers, the grand, old Movie Houses of Hollywood Blvd: Mann's Chinese, El Capitan, the Egyptian...

CUT TO:

INT. OLD HORROR MOVIE SET -

At the bottom of the PIT...

A clenched fist unfurls. Slackened features resume their shape, and ARNO stirs awake.

A light dust fills the air. He comes to his knees and sneezes. He looks down and sees a white bed of cocaine, his body imprinted in the flakes. Arno is bleeding bad, but he's still alive.

The drugs must have broken his fall.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD -

Danny keeps running, still following the trail of unraveled gauze. Suddenly, it ends.

He looks up and realizes he's way at the end of the strip now. He's standing in front of an enormous, decrepit movie theater.

The lights are all off, the windows are boarded up. The Marquee is missing all its letters but one; an "A" that hangs off to one side.

The front door looks like it's been pried open. An old rotting slat swings back and forth on a rusty nail. Id went through here.

Danny smirks, raises his gun and...

BOOM!

Blows half the facade away. He steps through the smoking wreckage into...

AN ENORMOUS THEATER LOBBY --

The paint is dusty, peeling, chipping away, and we can barely make out a flame-like pattern on the walls.

DANNY
I'M COMING FOR YOU, ID!

Danny hears footsteps, and sees Id run from behind the concession stand...

BOOM!

Danny blows it to smithereens, barely missing Id.

He chases him down the hall, then swings up and around the aisle, into the middle of the theater.

DANNY looks up to the ceiling, then turns around. HE'S IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ASMODEUN --

DANNY

What the hell?

This is not the Asmodeun that Danny knows, however. All but a few scattered rows of seats have been ripped out. The balcony is crumbling and sags in the middle. The walls are chipped, peeling, scarred by flames...

Danny walks to the center of the theater and screams at the top of his lungs...

DANNY

I'M GOING TO MAKE YOU PAY, ID!

His voice echoes off the walls. Danny moves up to the stage, to the lip in front of the movie screen. He stands there, smoking gun in hand.

Suddenly, a light comes on from the projection booth, shining out through the portholes. It blinds Danny and he puts his hands up to shield his eyes.

MR. ID

Here I am, Danny.

Id walks out on the balcony, one or two bandages remaining on his face. He pulls them off as he walks forward, and when he steps into the light we realize...

It's THE PROJECTIONIST.

PROJECTIONIST

Arno's dead, Danny, it's just me and you...

Danny's not sure what to do...

PROJECTIONIST

Come on, Danny. Kill me. That's what you want, isn't it? I killed Arno, now shoot me and even the score.

Danny closes his eyes and fires the gun, taking a chunk out of the balcony, and barely missing Id.

VOICE

(O.S.)

NO!

The voice comes from a figure, standing in the lobby.

The Projectionist glances down in annoyance, and instantly, the DOORS SLAM SHUT.

PROJECTIONIST
Here's your chance, Danny, make up
for everything in one shot...

He spreads his arms...

The DOORS BURST OPEN AGAIN...

VOICE
Danny, wait!

The VOICE nears. Danny trains his gun on the figure moving forward through the aisles. The man stumbles, clutching his mid section...It's...

DANNY
Arno...

ARNO
Don't do it, Danny. Don't shoot.

He's bleeding, dying, but he's managed to drag himself all the way to the theater. He sits down next to front aisle.

DANNY
You're alive...

PROJECTIONIST
I'm waiting...

ARNO
Danny, listen to me. If you shoot
Id, it will never end. Someone else
will come after you for killing him,
on and on, forever. You'll be stuck
here like me, killing just to stay
alive yourself.

PROJECTIONIST
Come on Danny, don't listen to a dead
man. Go ahead and shoot, I know you
want to...

ARNO
Believe me, Danny, it's not worth it.
I've lived that way my whole life...
But you don't have to. You can
forget all this, go back to where you

came from...

Danny is torn, he wants desperately to pull the trigger...

PROJECTIONIST

(growing furious)

SHOOT ME, DANNY! Take your
revenge...

Danny raises his gun, he looks like he might shoot...

Arno, his breath escaping him, crawls forward towards him...

ARNO

You won't feel any better, Danny. It
won't bring your father back...

A long moment passes, both the Projectionist and Arno hang on
Danny's next move...

Danny's fingers tense around the gun.

THEN --

Slowly, they loosen. The gun begins to slip, and Danny lets
it fall from his hand.

It crashes to the ground as Danny climbs down off the stage.

DANNY

Arno, come on...

ARNO

You ended it, Danny...Go home...

DANNY

I'm not leaving you here!

Danny helps Arno to his feet...

ARNO

Forget me, I can't go...
It's over...

MEANWHILE --

The Projectionist is growing furious. His eyes flame, he
seems to grow larger on the balcony. Jets of fire spew out
from the projection room. The whole theater begins to shake.

PROJECTIONIST

USE THE GUN, DANNY! That was the
agreement...

Beams fall, the walls crack...

Danny and Arno start limping forward down the aisle...

PROJECTIONIST
YOU MUST USE IT...DAMN YOU!!

The theater seats catch fire and explode, as the whole building threatens to fold in.

Through it all, The Projectionist stands perfectly still on his balcony, his eyes glowing red.

Danny and Arno are running now, straight for the center of the screen.

A long TEAR in the fabric is just visible.

The theater begins to explode behind them as DANNY hurdles the stage thrust, leaps forward and dives... Right into the tear.

BLACKOUT

For a few moments. Then Danny plops right back down in his original theater seat. He is unharmed, his bookbag still slung over his shoulder.

Danny rises out of his seat, just as...

ONSCREEN --

A raging fire burns in the Movie's Asmodeun, as EXTREMELY VIOLENT'S credits roll.

The Projectionist stands still on the balcony. His face, now expressionless, as flames lick at him in all directions.

He stares out from the screen, coldly, watching Danny. Suddenly, the balcony collapses and he plummets into the burning wreckage.

HOLD ON --

DANNY'S FACE, his eyes desperately scanning the screen. But the fire just roars higher and higher...

He turns away and walks out of the theater.

EXT. TIMES SQUARE --

Danny pushes open the front doors to the Asmodeun and steps

out into Times Square, bathed in the gray-yellow light that comes just before dawn.

He stands just outside the theater for a moment. His eyes are blank, expressionless. He closes them for a second.

EIGHTH AVENUE --

Danny trudges up Eighth Avenue, his hands thrust in his pockets, trying to keep warm in the early morning chill.

He picks up his pace, until he is no longer walking but running, soaring past sex shops and porno theaters and sleazy go-go bars whose doors have finally closed.

He comes to the subway and bounds down the steps.

INT. SUBWAY CAR -- A FEW MINUTES LATER

Light all but disappears as the car roars into a tunnel, then reappears as it comes out again, overground.

Danny stares out the window, trying to find his destination in the small family homes and industrial parks that make up the borough of Queens.

EXT. SOMEWHERE IN QUEENS --

Danny is running again, his chest heaving as he races towards his destination...

A large, sprawling graveyard. The intended tranquility is drowned out by the zooming of traffic on the super-highways ringing the lawns.

EXT. THE GRAVEYARD --

Danny wanders through the sea of white gravestones until he finds the one he's looking for.

HIS FATHER'S GRAVE --

He stands in front of the grave, staring at it.

HOLD ON -- HIS EYES

still dry, still cold. He just stands there, not knowing what to do.

He turns to walk away, then falls to his knees. The sobs come slowly at first, then harder and harder until he is short of breath from crying.

A HAND reaches out and touches his shoulder. He looks up to see HIS MOTHER, standing over him, tears in her eyes as well.

DANNY

Mom...

She kneels on the ground, taking him into her arms.

HOLD ON -- THE TWO OF THEM

in the sea of gravestones. The morning sun has just peaked out over the smog and grime of New York City.

THEN DISSOLVE INTO:

INT. THE ASMODEUN --

The ROWS OF EMPTY SEATS in the Asmodeun. All is still in the theater now, the projector shines a white light across the theater, the clack of the film unspooling can be heard in the background.

Slowly, a hand comes up over the first row of seats. Then an arm, followed by a muscular torso. Then the rest of...

ARNO SLATER. He rises to his feet.

He is unscratched, no bloodstains, his clothes are clean. He steps forward down the aisle.

He walks through the lobby and out of the theater, into...

THE MIDDLE OF NEW YORK'S BUSTLING TIMES SQUARE

He smiles broadly. As he walks down the street, he passes a garbage can.

He pauses for a second, then takes his gun out, his prized Beretta with the laser sighting, and drops it in the garbage can.

Arno walks on, seeing the world around him as though for the first time...Like a man born into life full grown.

END