

They Fall by Night

by

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"In the past, those who foolishly sought power
by riding the back of the tiger ended up inside."

- jfk

OVER BLACK:

ARTHUR CODY (V.O.)
Someone once said of New York,
"it'll be a great place if they can
ever finish it."

FADE IN: VIDEO FOOTAGE. ARTHUR CODY, SPEAKING AT A POLITICAL
RALLY. THE VIDEO STOCK, CLOTHING INFORM: 1970'S.

ARTHUR CODY (CONT'D)
But I know New York doesn't strive
for completion. To be set in stone.
We move always ahead, our sails
never shored, in tireless pursuit
of perfection

Continues over...

EXT. NEW YORK HARBOR - NIGHT ESTABLISHING/VARIOUS SHOTS

New York City. The Hudson. The George Washington Bridge. The
city lights rising from a lush darkness.

ARTHUR CODY (V.O.)
America is not singular in the
hardships it's faced, but in it's
perseverance despite them. And
nowhere is this exemplified more
than New York, where this country's
destinies were forged. Where kings
are crowned in the alleyways. For
when I look upon these spires and
weaving neighborhoods, I see not a
finality but a progress, and it
fills my heart with such a quiet
sense of awe that I thank the lord.

Just inside the city's shore, a sprawling limestone Chateau,
encompassing an entire West End block, looks down from its
godly mount. The last of the great turn of the century villas
on Riverside drive. From with in...

A GUNSHOT ECHOES OUT.

TITLE CARD READS: **1988**

(CONTINUED)

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BRIAN LESPANE (V.O.)

"At 8:40 PM, police responding to 911 calls found screen legend Arthur Cody dead at the Monroe Stahr, his palatial estate overlooking the city, often called "the most lavish home ever built on Manhattan Island."

EXT. MANHATTAN - ESTABLISHING

A Newspaper bundle flung to the sidewalk in Times Square. The headlines: "**CODY DEAD BY OWN HAND**"

A PAPER BOY cuts the ribbon, as all across the city...

Crowds flock bars and electronic store windows where TV's broadcast the news.

Businessmen look up from bar stools.

In midtown traffic, the reports sound from CAR RADIOS.

THIS VOICE CARRIES US OVER THE ENTIRE NEXT SEQUENCE. WNYC RADIO HOST. BRIAN LESPANE.

BRIAN LESPANE (FILTERED)

"The exact cause of death, not yet released, but initial unconfirmed reports say suicide. As the city mourns the passing of the onetime presidential candidate, prayers already flock to the home of his daughter, Hollywood Starlet Vivian Lake, and her son Charles, the new keeper of his crown.

INSERT: NEWS MONTAGE/OBIT

Images of Arthur Cody. Scenes described in NEWS PRINT, ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE, FILM and POLICE STILLs.

BRIAN LESPANE (FILTERED) (CONT'D)

"He was a titan of a bygone era. A luminary. A former Hollywood star who'd survived two heart attacks. Often described as the embodiment of the American male, Cody's life was the stuff of legend. But along with his triumphs, there were many hardships, and for the two time widower, few happy endings. Perhaps only the knowledge of legacy.

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Faded photographs of Young Arthur and Family in Dustbowl like settings. Young Arthur in a hospital cot. His legs bandaged. Despite this, he has the tall, gangly, jutting body that often fills out in heroic proportions.

BRIAN LESPANE (CONT'D)

Born to a poor family; Cody escaped the depths of the depression in the boxing arena, his success earning him influential fans at RKO studios.

Cody at 17, gloves up in the ring.

Photos of a large, husking film crew. Zoom in to see his young face among the crowd. In Film Stills on Bogart like sets, Arthur's young, half cocked face in the background. Now Arthur as lead. Arthur smoking a cigarette with great long fingers, arching back in a directors chair. His titanic face lingers.

BRIAN LESPANE (CONT'D)

But his rise to prominence would not come without a price. Few men's private lives were as public. His first marriage to screen actress Marianne Shelly ended tragically nearly as soon as it began.

Photos of this familiar crime scene. A beauty splayed naked across an opulent bed; a sea of scattered pills.

BRIAN LESPANE (CONT'D)

It would be another 15 years before he'd marry again and become a father. His romance with Vivian Irene DuPont would provide him entrance into the enclave of America's most storied families. Making him a quiet man of unimaginable wealth, and just 12 years later, a widower once more.

Photos of golden Irene. Of the grandest seaside wedding. Of yachts, and polo matches. Of their daughters birth. Of a horrific car crash. A Porsche demolished.

Dated news footage reports the accident. A Country Estate beneath a cover of fog and rain. An AMBULANCE races in, converging around the Porsche, violently crushed against a stone wall.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Arthur shields his YOUNG DAUGHTER from view of carnage as EMT workers begin to remove a IRENE'S body from the wreck.

NEWSPAPER HEADLINES: "*DuPONT LOST IN DEADLY CRASH*"

BRIAN LESPANE (CONT'D)

In the lowest depths, he sought rejuvenation in his family. As father to a willful daughter, Cody orchestrated a career that would rival his own.

NEWSPAPER HEADLINES: "*A NEW STAR SHINES - VIVIAN LAKE*"

Shots of a young captivating VIVIAN LAKE on stage, on film, escorted from parties, night clubs, premieres, on the arm of her father.

BRIAN LESPANE (CONT'D)

And so it is that his legacy lives on with Vivian and through her son.

Scandal rag shots of VIVIAN LAKE, and baby CHARLES LAKE. Dozens and dozens of fast flipping shots of the infant. A towheaded toddler. A Public obsession.

BRIAN LESPANE (CONT'D)

Though before we look ahead, we pay a final homage to this cinematic life, brought to an end in the same fashion in which it was lived. On his terms alone."

The final image: Arthur, vibrantly alive, young and haunting in a black and white noir film clip. He smolders, clutches a willowy starlet channeling Marlene Dietrich.

ARTHUR

"Honey, we live in a tough, dishonest world, but you got stars in your eyes. Maybe that's why I love you."

STARLET

"Last time I looked, you had a wife."

ARTHUR

"Next time you look, maybe I won't"

And he pulls in for the big kiss. She wilts in his arms.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BRIAN LESPANE (FILTERED)
 Arthur Cody. Dead today at 75. New
 York - another of your kings has
 fallen.

The image of Arthur freezes. End Sequence.

TITLES: *They Fall by Night*

EXT. MANHATTAN / ESTABLISHING - VARIOUS SHOTS: NIGHT

PAPER BOY
 New York Daily News! Get your New
 York Daily News! Cody dead! Vivian
 vows to retire!

The headlines match. The NEWS BOY in Times Square shaking papers. A MAN buys one. A line formed behind him. This is the New York in which this story takes place.

Pre Guiliani NY. Boomtime for some. Hard times for many others.

Times Square 1988. Hookers. Dealers. Panhandlers hassling tourists. Neon on the strip joint marquees. Filth in the streets. Fog rolls over Central Park. Trump Towers gleam. The great discrepancies of means - nowhere is this more true than...

Downtown. The East Side. Night over Tompkins Square Park, where fires burn as Homeless, Punks, Skinheads, Junkies, Squatters occupy the park in the shadow of growing condos. Some hold picket signs. "GENTRIFICATION IS CLASS WAR!" A city on the brink.

Behind one of these doors, we start our story.

INT. 9TH PRECINCT - ESTABLISHING

A smoke filled police station. A multi-ethnic force pushing papers. Various shots of file stacks. Of Eastside neighborhood maps. Of want sheets. Of prostitutes and junkies lining the benches. Over top of this...

DENIHAN (O.S.)
 This may not be the New York of
 your childhood. The streets you
 walked with your fathers and
 mothers, that you saw in movie
 theater and each of us has a
 reckoning to that.

This heard, behind closed doors in...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRIEFING ROOM

Where Commissioner RAY DENIHAN, flanked by his Lieutenants, MANCUSO and HODGES, addresses a mass of NYPD DETECTIVES.

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

Our initiative is crime on the streets. It's quality of life. The dope and the prostitution. The homeless in the parks and the squeegee men at red lights. For this to kind of grass roots campaign to be effective, if we are going to ask the everyday citizen of our neighborhoods, battling poverty, angered by gentrification, prone to small crime, suspect of corruption, to ask these people to hold themselves accountable to a higher moral responsibility, than we must hold ourselves to those same standards. These demands can only be implemented by a police force who's honesty and reputation is beyond reproach. That is why you are here today.

Slowly now, we push in on the Detectives.

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

It is my belief that there are two kinds of cops. The Grass Eaters and the Meat Eaters. The Grass Eaters being those of you who from time to time take minor cash favors from small business owners, bodegas, ticketmen, mostly under pressure and influence of your superiors. And the Meat Eaters, being the opposite. Those who take a much bigger bite from considerably more unsavory enterprises.

Passing a Detective, under his breath...

DETECTIVE

Is this his campaign speech? He's already measuring the drapes at Gracie, the fucking prick.

Our focus continually narrowing in on the listener, a single officer in a back row. A handsome face. An air of class. Of education. In stark contrast with his surrounding officers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Hold on this man, DETECTIVE RYAN HALAS.

DENIHAN

We are hear to let you know that before I leave this post, the curtain of dishonesty that has hung for too long over this institution will fall. Those of you with illicit pasts on the Bowery, on Narco details under Bob McGuire, investigation have already begun and indictments will come down. Officers in this room, will go to jail.

(hold on Halas)

Your friends are no longer among the favored. And my advice to you today is get your house in order, because your names are on this list, and there are very few above it. And let it be known to those among you, the worst of the offenders, we're coming after you with a sledge hammer and we will bury you.

Hold on Halas, an unbreaking calm.

INT. THE MAJESTIC - NIGHT

A CHANDELIER, high above the audience lights this decidedly anachronistic theater.

HOST

And for tonight's final performance, we invite you to witness the final torrid hours at the Monroe Stahr.

The crowd howls...

A gregarious audience of BANKERS and ARTIST around candle lit tables of alcohol, all watching the vaudevillian stage where...

The showmen HOST exits. The curtain rising to reveal...

"ARTHUR CODY," or rather a TRANSVESTITE dressed as the man in heavy stage makeup, sits in a rocking chair. Piles of money on the floor. A shotgun by his side.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

"ARTHUR"

"Ah, it is in old age when a man
thinks of his youth. Vivian, could
you join me for a moment?"

Enter "VIVIAN." A huge chested facsimile of the real thing,
scantily dressed. The audience applauds.

"ARTHUR" (CONT'D)

"I'd like you to take a look at
your inheritance."

"He" pulls aside his robe. A throbbing strap-on beneath.

"VIVIAN"

"Father, I didn't expected it to be
so generous."

The audience howls.

"VIVIAN" (CONT'D)

"Now what have I told you about
playing with guns."

...as she kneels before him and begins to service him. It is
extravagant filth and the audience applauds, while...

BACKSTAGE, things are graver...

HALAS

This is all of it?

A WAD OF BILLS; flipped through urgently. Counted Again.

LEANNE

Gina says we'd of done better but
the neighborhood's gone to shit.
What a waste, huh? All this beauty.

Ryan Halas, found counting bills among the sex circus of
freakshow performers, twin contortionists, transvestites,
sword swallowers, *fire* eaters.

HALAS

Damnit Leanne. This isn't a fucking
joke. I need the money. Now.

LEANNE'S a street kid, a prostitute. Nervous now.

LEANNE

Sorry. I can get it, just not right
this minute, you know. What's the
hurry?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

VOICE

Halas, quit harassing my girls.
I'll have to call the cops.

Says a tall, swarthy man in the wings. ADAM BABBITT. The proprietor. He laughs, go back to his bidding.

Off Halas' hollow face...

LEANNE

You're running, ain't you?
(scared for herself)
I heard they busted a bunch of
Lower East Side girls last week.
They coming for us, aren't they?
(off his silence)
Halas?

HALAS

It ain't about you.

He looks through the wings to the crowd. The decadent crowd applauding.

LEANNE

You're really gonna leave, huh?

HALAS

I don't know, Leanne. I don't know
what I'm gonna do.

EXT. LOWER EAST SIDE - NIGHT

Beneath the trembling, Williamsburg bridge, Halas watching the changing neighborhood. The subway rumbling past. The homeless burning fires. The yuppies lighting smokes outside bars.

Halas lights his own, heads off.

INT. LOCKERROOM / 9TH PRECINCT - NIGHT

Halas, emptying his locker in the dead of night. Everything in to a duffle bag. He pauses at a picture taped inside the door. Startles, as a cough comes from a back room. He freezes as...

CAPTAIN MARGRAFF enters from the sauna. He's a kindly, gentle figure, a bypass scar down his chest.

MARGRAFF

I can't sleep much these nights
now.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARGRAFF (CONT'D)

(a hand to his chest)

Things just, not yet right in here.
My wife thinks it good for my
blood. Couldn't sleep either?

(eyes on Halas' bag, his
packing)

You know, you're a smart guy,
Halas. I always thought that. Hoped
you'd do well. You just made some
wrong decisions, that's all. Got in
with the wrong crowd.

(a hand on his shoulder)

You face it like a man. On your own
two feet.

HALAS

If I'm lucky, I'll spend the rest
of my career on a traffic detail,
in a fucking uniform at the tunnel.
If I'm lucky.

MARGRAFF

Could be worse. It's honest.

(Halas, almost laughing)

At least you'd still be a cop.

Margraff exits. A beat. Halas rips the picture from the door.
Stuffs it into his bag.

INT. HALAS' APARTMENT - NIGHT

His badge and his service revolver on a night table. Halas,
drinking, considers them.

DENIHAN (FILTERED)

This week, with the passing of a
great New Yorker, we are reminded
of the difficulties we now face.

Ray Denihan on TV in Halas' sparse apartment, speaking from
outside the Precinct.

DENIHAN (FILTERED) (CONT'D)

Today, many American's are facing
the toughest financial crisis of
their lives, and the gap between
those with great means and those
struggling to provide the barest
necessities grows larger everyday.
Well I say look to Arthur Cody as
exemplar...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

His speech continues, though Halas' lamentations have turned to a photo in his hands. His stare bores straight through it.

ANGLE ON:

The photo shows Halas, a young boy in his first suit leaning on the hood of a gleaming Mercedes. The place is somewhere rural, far from the city. The look on his face is promise. Of someone who's just realized the whole world lies before him.

DENIHAN (FILTERED) (CONT'D)

...we need upstanding citizens like Cody at our helm to remind us, that we all might thrive if this city's promise can once again be a right for all, not a privilege for a few.

APPLAUSE, Halas' decision is made.

He is packing to run. Only what he can take on his person. Only what he'll need to start over. Few clothes, few precious items, his own personal PISTOL, and rolls and rolls of cash pulled from various hidden spots.

He considers them...not nearly enough. Puts them in his bag. Zips it shut. A last look at his life, when...

THE PHONE RINGS. AND RINGS. Halas, considers. He answers.

HALAS

Hello?

MALE VOICE

Ryan?

HALAS

Ron?

KURKON

Fuck, I'm glad I got you. Man I'm...I'm into something here that...I'll just be honest, Ryan. You know I wouldn't ask if it wasn't the way it is but...I'm in some real shit here. This thing just got so fucked. I just need to...I need you to take care of something for me.

HALAS

I can't.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

KURKON

Please. There's a girl. She's young
and she's real --

(then)

There'd be something in it for you
too. I promise. Something you can
use.

(beat)

I heard about Denihan.

Hold on Halas. His badge on the night table. The bag in his
hand. A long consideration. Halas sets it down.

HALAS

What is it?

Their conversation continues overs...

EXT. THE PLAZA - NIGHT

KURKON (V.O.)

Some patrolman's got called.
Already arrived and you gotta get
him outta of there. I had two guys
there trying to handle this thing
but they -- I can't get tied to
this.

LIMOS arriving and departing, a perpetual revolving door
outside the landmark hotel.

KURKON (V.O.) (CONT'D)

This girl, she's got something of
ours. We need it, man. It can't get
out.

HALAS (V.O.)

And the girl?

Between them, Halas scaling the stairs.

KURKON (V.O.)

Just quiet, you know. She just
needs to disappear.

(beat)

Ryan? You still there?

HALAS (V.O.)

I'm here.

KURKON (V.O.)

You got a pen?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

And Halas enters the building.

INT. THE PLAZA / OAK ROOM - NIGHT

Lavish chandeliered ballroom. Dinner and cocktails for old money New York. People, at least here, are doing well.

From somewhere among the murmur of voices, this is heard...

VOICE

Savings and Loan. Black Monday. Let me tell you, nobody aspires to be middle class. Rich or poor. That's all there is. The middle is a wash.

As Halas passes through the tables, a ghost in the crowd, he notices TWO, quite out of place FIGURES furtively heading to the exit. Halas zeroes in...blood on the smaller ones hands.

He pockets them and we see their faces for just a moment as they look back at Halas. Gaunt, hard up. Junkies.

Just as quickly they are gone. Halas, a moment, he heads for the elevators.

INT. THE PLAZA / ROOM FLOORS - NIGHT

UNIFORM

Detective Halas?

The door to a Penthouse Suite where a UNIFORMED PATROLMAN waits; anxiously wards outside.

UNIFORM (CONT'D)

(they shake hands)

I took the call. Came from a couple next door. Thought they'd heard a woman - a girl screaming. They thought it sounded like a domestic but...

HALAS

They're still inside?

UNIFORM

Just gone...Kurkon told me to let 'em go but...

HALAS

And the girl?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

UNIFORM

Locked herself in the bathroom
and...A whore probably, but she's
real young, sir. And from what I
can tell, they worked her over
pretty good.

HALAS

Has anyone else been through?
(No.)
Paramedics?
(No.)

Halas considers him. Peels a couple bills from his pocket.
Passes them across.

HALAS (CONT'D)

All right. Good work, Officer. You
can go.

UNIFORM

(hesitates)
With all due respect, Sir. I'd like
to-

HALAS

Good work. Go home.

A look at the cash in his hands.

INT. THE PLAZA / PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

Halas enters. Mental notes of the whole scene. The room; a
plush suite. Empty. Park views. The bed made.

But here, in the corner, broken bottles. Blood drips across
the carpet to the foot of the bed.

Halas pulls back the comforter. Blood stains on the sheet.
The trail snaking to the bathroom. Light on beneath the door.

Quiet, Halas breathes deep.

Around him, view from the window shows Central Park, the
whole city laid out before him. But the face that looks back
in the reflection is tired and sorrowful. Empty. He all but
sighs.

There's still hard work to be done. He feels for his gun.
Approaches the door.

BATHROOM

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Outside the door...

HALAS

Hon, my name's Detective Halas. I'm
a Police Officer. Are you all right
in there?

(nothing)

He tries the door. Locked.

HALAS (CONT'D)

I'm gonna take you home. Those men
are gone now. It's just us. There's
nothing to be afraid of.

A moment. The sound of a chair removed, the lock unhatched.
Halas opens the door.

INSIDE

Blood trails along the floor, leading Halas to...

The tub, where the GIRL is crouched inside. She's small, 14
or 15. Her clothes are tattered. Her head held low,
concealing the full extent of her damage, though it's
obviously substantial.

She shudders as Halas approaches, kneels. Brushes back her
hair.

Her face is badly beaten but despite it, her features are
immaculate. Bright and ethereal and familiar. This is ELLEN
GRAHAM. Halas takes her in. Then...

HALAS (CONT'D)

Where are the pictures, Honey?
(her hopes crushed)

Sorry, kid. I'm sure it's not fair.
It's just the way it is.

She takes a moment. Cold reality setting in, but she stays
silent.

Halas scans the room. The vanity, the garbage, the toilet.

He pops them open. Nothing. Removes the lid from the top of
the toilet. Here. Inside, an envelope.

He retrieves it. While we don't see the contents, he does.
It's something to be valued.

HALAS (CONT'D)

Come on. I'll take you home.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ELLEN

Home? You're the police?
(beat)
You don't look like it.

EXT. SECOND AVENUE - NIGHT

Littered with abandoned building. Crazies with mangy dogs at their feet, carts pushed with discarded VHS'S and collected garbage. Here, times are not so plentiful.

A FORD TEMPO trolling south down the street. Inside...

I/E. HALAS' FORD TEMPO - THAT MOMENT

Halas drives. Silent. Ellen stares out the window. All nerves, broken hearts.

ELLEN

I know you, right? I mean, you run
a couple girls from the Majestic,
right? I tried to work there once.

Halas doesn't answer. Drives on. Her eyes going wide as they pass St. Marks St.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

Hey, you just passed...

The Marquee for THE PEARL STREET THEATER slipping behind them.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

You just missed it. That was my
stop.

(Halas is silent)

Where are you...where are we going?

Rightfully, she grows concerned as she watches her neighborhood pass away. She puts her hand to her mouth. Holding back tears.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

We're not going home?

HALAS

Shh. Just a little further. We're
almost there.

Ellen steels herself. Hides the coming tears.

EXT. THE SEAPORT - NIGHT

Halas' car rolls beneath the as yet, undeveloped docks. Shadows throw long from the overpass above. Halas knows the lay of the land. He parks deep in one of them and gets out.

He moves around to Ellen's door. She tries to hold it shut but he's too strong. He lifts her out.

Ellen is led to the water's edge, Brooklyn factories hazy across the river.

They stop in the quiet darkness. She shakes.

HALAS

Shh. It's all right.

Unsheathes his gun.

ELLEN

Please! You don't have to do this!
You don't have to...Look. I have
money.

(bills from her pocket)

Take it. I don't want it. It's
yours.

(he's unmoved)

Wait! I can tell you things. I can
make you rich. I know things about
that family. More than the
pictures. I know who has it all.
More than you'd believe. More
than...

She looks him in the eye. They seem untouched. Hollow.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

(at the end of it)

We had a deal. And they...I swear,
I never meant for it to be like
this...oh god! Please! Please!
Please! I don't want to die.

Halas cocks the gun. A creature of habit. He raises the barrel to her head.

HALAS

Shh.

And...A SOUND. SOMETHING SHATTERS in the street.

They freeze. Footsteps slapping away, a distant FIGURE passing beneath a street light.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Halas, turning back to her...the money pushed back into his hands.

ELLEN

Please! You're not a bad guy, I bet. I can tell. You could just let me go. No one would know. I'd never say a word.

(then)

I could be really nice to you.

Finally, Halas looks at her. She's just a kid. He tilts her head to the light. The wounds on her face.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

(toughening up)

I've had worse.

HALAS

How old are you?

ELLEN

19.

(then)

15.

HALAS

I'm old enough to be your father.

ELLEN

Never stopped him.

Halas looks at her. A turn. He hands her back the money.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

I don't want it.

HALAS

Take it. It's the best you're going to get.

ELLEN

(collecting herself)

It was never about money, you know. It never was.

(then)

You wouldn't believe me if I told you...No one does.

(finally)

Where will I go?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HALAS

I don't care. Away. But you can
never come back.

(she nods)

Don't make me have to find you.

A last look, and she runs off along the water. Her footsteps scampering away till she's gone.

Halas watches her, walks back to his car. Slams the door.

I/E. HALAS' FORD TEMP - THAT MOMENT

Stares out the window. Now the pictures in the seat beside him. For the first time, we see them.

Grainy but unmistakable. TWO MEN has sex. One shot more compromising than the next. One face undeniable in each suck fuck scenario. Vivian Lake's husband. SENATOR JOHN LAKE.

Halas, headlights on, he drives away.

EXT. THE WESTSIDE HIGHWAY - NIGHT

His Ford Tempo speeding by the water. Up ahead, break lights line the horizon.

Halas puts on his sirens, exits the highway.

92 Street - Riverside Drive. Up on the hill, traffic, floodlights, a spectacle illuminates the night.

Halas heads for it.

EXT. THE MONROE STAHR - NIGHT

"The most lavish home even built on the Manhattan island."
National media assembled outside its gates. Fog rolls up from the river.

French manicured sculpture gardens and marble watering pools occupy the entire block. Evidence of what once existed all along Riverside drive; the estates of competing Tycoons built at the boom of the century.

HALAS' FORD TEMPO travels the long straight drive to the chateau.

AT THE CUL-DE-SAC

Halas exits his car. RON KURKON, a barrel chested ex-cop heard on the phone, steps down to greet him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They shake hands.

KURKON

I'm sorry. There was no one else I could call.

HALAS

You make it right.

KURKON

I can. So it's settled then? The girl, she's...taken care of?

Halas intimates.

KURKON (CONT'D)

Thank you, Ryan.

Halas, the castle before him. The folder beneath his arm. He steels himself.

KURKON (CONT'D)

Be careful what you wish for, right?

Halas ascends the stone stairs leading him onto...

A great elevated courtyard leads toward the house. Passing fountains and extravagant topiary, all built to out do some rival millionaire, Halas stops at a modest area, just off the shadows of the house.

A cemetery. A collection of unassuming grave markers date back a century.

And Halas pauses to consider them. The names on the humble stones are unfamiliar, "Benjamin Lewis...William Humphrey..." but the dates which are interesting. Halas leaning in to read...

"Born 1895 - Died 1901," "Born 1884 - Died 1889." They are all children. As Halas considers one stone, a small marble cross. No name. No date. A closer look...

SINCLAIR

The block had once belonged to the city. The Asylum of New York Orphans. Mr. Cody had a touch of the macabre.

He turns to greet SINCLAIR, head of the family servants.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HALAS
They're children?

SINCLAIR
Orphans, sir. Ms. Lake is waiting
for you in the library.

As Sinclair gestures the way to the house.

INT. THE MONROE STAHR - NIGHT

Now he waits in the cavernous foyer. Gilded ceilings. Masterworks on the walls. He watches a servant unfurl a white sheet and drape it over a credenza. All about, SERVANTS are shutting down the house, packing up. Packing things away...when footsteps echo toward him down the canyon.

Vivian Lake appears.

VIVIAN
Sorry to keep you waiting,
Detective. Things are...it's a busy
time. Let's not speak in here.

A last look, but she's already leading him off.

INT. THE MONROE STAHR / PRIVATE LIBRARY - NIGHT

Vivian, smoking, peruses the pictures with little reaction. Silence.

In person, she's more human, though glamorous in a way that hardly exists anymore.

Halas, attempting an air of cool indifference, waits among the cloaked, white sheeted furniture.

For a long time, she's silent.

HALAS
Mrs. Lake?

VIVIAN
(indicating the photos)
Have you seen them?
(Halas nods)
And what did you think?

HALAS
They were none of my business.

Vivian smokes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VIVIAN

We've never claimed to be the picture of domesticity. That was them. I suppose it's very naive of me, but I still believe that people's private lives should actually be private.

HALAS

You may be the last of that breed.

She stamps out her cigarette. Lights another. She offers one to Halas. He accepts. Considers the lighter she's handed him.

VIVIAN

It was my father's. You want it?
I'm ready to be rid of all of it.

He lights his cigarette, hands it back.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

We're leaving, you know. My family.
We just want things quiet.

She ashes.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

You know we're very appreciative,
Detective. If there's something we
can do for you in return?

(he's silent)

Please, you don't need to shuffle
around the edges.

HALAS

I'm not looking for money.

VIVIAN

That's not what I was implying.
You don't need to be delicate with
me. I'm aware of your situation.

(he remains silent)

Mr. Halas --

HALAS

Ryan.

VIVIAN

- Ryan. Ron's said you were very
smart. You'd work together. He also
said you earned yourself quite a
reputation. What did they call you
on the Bowery? Jack the Ripper.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HALAS

That was a long time ago.

VIVIAN

Was it?

(beat)

I have friends who can be quite persuasive. If that's the way you want to go with it.

HALAS

I don't know that...

VIVIAN

It's not a big thing. Denihan worked with my father for a long time before he came back to the police. I'm sure he owes us a favor or two.

HALAS

I'm not looking for a handout. I don't want to run. I just want fresh start.

VIVIAN

Of course. I can't promise you anything, but I'll try.

HALAS

I imagine you can be pretty persuasive.

At this moment, CHARLES LAKE totters into the room and the two-year-old's sudden appearance is like an apparition. Golden haired, he bobbles in carrying a Teddy Bear.

Vivian gathers her child up in her arms.

Her husband now appears in the doorway. He wears a rough night, but JOHN LAKE still cuts an immaculate figure.

JOHN

He won't sleep. I got him up but he was calling for his mother.

JOHN (CONT'D)

(Pause. Then realizing Halas' presence)

Oh - excuse me. I thought you were still...I'm sorry.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

VIVIAN

It's alright. Go on back up. I'll put him to bed.

A beat. John exchanges "Good Nights," and retreats from where he came. A moment.

Halas, now aware of his location. The presence of this family, of this child.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

You thought he'd walk on water?

(then)

Let me show you to the door.

As they approach it, Charles in tow, Vivian hesitates.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

It's a difficult time for us, you know. It's been hard on John. They were close, he and my father. Do you have family, Mr. Halas?

HALAS

My father passed a couple years ago.

VIVIAN

Were you close?

HALAS

Not particularly.

VIVIAN

You know, it strikes me we must have similar philosophies. What's past is past. Our marriage is complicated, but then...it's only personal. John's a good man, my husband. We just want to be left alone.

Finally, opening the door.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

The girl? With the pictures? Is she all right?

HALAS

You don't have to worry about her.

VIVIAN

That's not what I asked.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

She offers her hand. They shake.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

It was nice to meet you, Detective.
Good luck with your promotion.

EXT. THE MONROE STAHR - JUST LATER

Halas descends the stairs towards his car. Kurkon at his side.

KURKON

Thank you. I hope you're not tied
too tight. This family, they'll
drag you down with them. All of us.

It is at this moment, that CHARLES -

caught by some instinct, has escaped the house and totters
alone down the long drive toward the gates, behind which, the
media's lenses stalk.

Vivian runs from the house to retrieve him, but she is too
late.

Halas watches as the gates illuminate with exploding
flashbulbs, capturing Charles, silhouetted, immortalized
before the mansion.

Vivian scoops him up in her arms.

KURKON (CONT'D)

See what I mean?
(as Halas gets in his car)
Thank you, man. I owe you, I know.

HALAS

You don't. She already took care of
it.

Off the slam of his door.

EXT. HALAS' APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Halas closes the car door and crosses the street toward a
modest clapboard two story. A blue collar Brooklyn Street.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

Detective?

Ellen Graham approaches him from an idling car, a bouquet of
flowers in her hand.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELLEN

I just wanted to come by, say thank you. I know I shouldn't be here but I...

HALAS

What'd did I tell you?

ELLEN

I know. I just...

HALAS

How'd you find me?

ELLEN

Just...girl's talk.

She looks him brightly in the eyes. Whatever it is, she has it in spades.

She extends him the flowers. Halas, suspicious. He looks to the car, where a SLIGHT MAN waits at the wheel.

HALAS

Go back to your father.

ELLEN

Sean? He's not my father. He's just a queer. He took me in.

(beat)

There's a lot you don't get, Detective.

HALAS

I don't want to.

(leaning in close)

You show up here again, I'll slit your throat, kid. I swear to god. The queer too.

He leaves her holding the flowers.

ELLEN

I'd probably deserve it.

A look to the sky. Dark clouds are coming.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

What's gonna happen to us?

HALAS

Us? That's not up to me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

She's crying now.

ELLEN

You don't worry about me,
Detective. I'm gone. I promise.
You'll never see me again.

She turns and hurries to the car, which disappears into the street, beneath a vacuumous sky.

Halas watches her go. The rain's coming again.

EXT. BENEATH THE FDR - SAME

Rain pours past the overpass. Halas' FORD TEMPO parked beneath. Halas stares out from behind the windshield. Racked with thought. With guilt.

Finally, two sets of headlights veer off from the passing masses, turn into towards him. Park.

The occupants of one vehicle emerge. Approach him.

Ray Denihan is flanked by his lieutenants, MANCUSO and HODGES.

DENIHAN

You think you've made a good play here, son?

HALAS

I guess I made the one I had.

DENIHAN

At what cost? I read your file. You were one Bob McGuire's hatchet men. Is that wrong?

(Halas is silent)

What I don't quite understand Ryan. You finished college. You're an educated man. That's a luxury most officers haven't had. There must have been many opportunities for you to advance in the department, honestly. Through your own merit. What was it then that steered you astray. Was it the work or did you just lack the character?

(beat)

Things are changing, Detective. This city will have honest public servants. I'm going to see to that. Will you be one of them?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DENIHAN (CONT'D)
Do you think it's in your
constitution to change?

Denihan considers Halas.

DENIHAN (CONT'D)
I hope so, Detective. For your
sake. There won't be another hand
out from me.

Hold on Halas. A last thought.

DENIHAN (CONT'D)
Mrs. Lake said to give this to you.
To keep an eye to the future.
(Halas takes the offering)
You make some impression.

Denihan and his men head back to their car, and pull away
into the rain, a stream of headlights.

Halas, alone beneath the underpass, considering Arthur Cody's
lighter.

INSERT TV SCREEN:

News footage presents FIFTH AVENUE, jam-packed as far as one
can see. Men hoist children on their shoulders before St.
Patrick's Cathedral. Dapper NYPD line the streets where:

The first black limousines of Arthur Cody's funeral
procession appear and roll down the street. The spectacle,
the caravan is nothing short of presidential.

Among the procession, the camera finds HALAS. His place not
among the rank and file guarding the pedestrians, where
despondent UNIFORMS can be glimpsed, but rather on the steps
of the cathedral with the high brass. Commissioner Denihan at
his side. Halas' eyes, the eyes of the city all trained on...

THE LAKE FAMILY

in elegant mourning on the street. Our camera holds on
Charles Lake, his Teddy close at his side. As the motorcade
passes, the baby releases his mother's hand, steps forward
and salutes the gleaming hearse. Flashbulbs explode. Hold on
Charles' image:

FADE TO BLACK.

MONTAGE

INSERT TV SCREEN:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

News footage of Police activity in Tompkins Park. Junkies and homeless, cuffed, escorted out of the park. As the Paddy Wagons pull away, bottles smash in the street.

INSERT TITLES: ONE YEAR LATER

NEXT STATION

Ray Denihan speaks before a grass roots crowd in Tompkins Park at a campaign rally. A now familiar speech.

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

You been out here! You know it!
It's the street tax paid to drunk
and drug-ridden panhandlers! It's
the squeegee men shaking down
motorist in Times Square! The trash
storms, the drug deals, the
vagrants and squatters in your
parks! Well I'm here to say, no
longer!

On stage, at his side, Ryan Halas.

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

So it is, I stand before you today
on this spot where Arthur Cody
dreamt so hopefully for this city,
that it's with great honor and
great humility, that I announce my
candidacy for Mayor of New York.

A banner drops. "**DENIHAN FOR MAYOR**"

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

It will be a long, hard road, my
friends. But we will prevail. There
can be no turning.

Applause. Halas watching from the side lines. A team player now.

CUT TO:

AT THE MONROE STAHR, the great estate now sits dark and shuttered. Vacant on its lot. Its occupants, along with the Press and faithful once gathered outside. All have since gone.

Outside it's gates, Halas views through his windshield. He finishes his cigarette, and pulls off.

INSERT TV SCREEN: A NEWS MAGAZINE INTERVIEW - VIVIAN LAKE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

VIVIAN (V.O.)

I guess I would hope most that the public would respect our privacy. Now both my parents have died. I'm not blaming anyone, but I'd think that would be enough. My mother wanted things quiet. She never wanted this life for me.

BRIAN LESPANE (FILTERED)

But your father did? And his version prevailed.

VIVIAN (FILTERED)

It seems that way, doesn't it?

NEXT STATION

INSERT TV SCREEN: Hollywood B-roll. Gowns, red carpets, popping flashbulbs. Parties and premieres go on, but the real stars are missing. As this shot comes up, a reporter informs us...

BRIAN LESPANE (FILTERED)

It's been months and still they hide. Either they've gone the way of Jimmy Hoffa, or they should be taken at their word. *Retired*. Say it isn't so.

Grainy footage. Vivian, John Lake and the Eaglet boarding a private plane beneath the cover of night.

As they head up the stairs, into the cabin, the baby by the hand, the image freezes.

BRIAN LESPANE (FILTERED) (CONT'D)

Vivian, your fans demand a sign.

A NEWSPAPER BUNDLE hitting the ground in times square. The headline reads:

"YEAR PASSES SINCE CODY'S DEATH - STILL NO SIGN OF THE LAKES - DENIHAN VOWS TO CARRY THE TORCH"

END MONTAGE - CUT TO BLACK. FADE IN ON:

HALAS, a smart suit though a kept man, found inside...

INT. LOWER EAST BARBER SHOP - DAY

...where Denihan, paper in hand, is getting a hot shave. PRESS and LOCALS around for this campaign stop.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DENIHAN

Already a year gone, it's still hard imagine. But I think they deserve from us their privacy, after giving so much of themselves to this city.

He sets the paper down. Halas's eyes fall on it. Cody's picture brimming on the cover beside "In Manhattan, Gentrification spurs fears of Violence."

REPORTER

How do you reconcile it then? You're campaign, so tied to his achievements, while he helped create the very problems these people are facing today. Rezoning laws for condos and retail out of step with the communities here are pricing out the people who work our everyday jobs, the teachers and fireman, forcing them to live in the outer boroughs. Hasn't Cody helped create a city so enamored with its excess that it can hardly be afforded by its own citizens.

DENIHAN

Look, I understand. Things are not easy for a lot of people, and that's why I believe if we begin with quality of life, there can be a groundswell. Priority number one will be Tompkins Park, and that's why I'm asking for a curfew for all inhabitants, to be instituted today at 1 am.

Reporters scribble. Halas, eyeing escape, is already out the door.

EXT. LOWER EAST BARBER SHOP - THAT MOMENT

He escapes outside. His tie loosened, he lights a cigarette. Pulls the lighter away. His gift from Vivian.

On the street, he sparks the flame once. Twice. Quietly consumed in it. Halas purposefully puts it away. Smokes.

INT. RON KURKON'S HOME - NIGHT

MRS. KURKON

You look like you're doing real well for yourself. I was just asking Ron why you don't come around much anymore, but I guess that's why.

HALAS

Things have changed.

Halas, waiting. Having a drink in the kitchen of the new, ostentatious home. Kids watching big screen TV in the den.

MRS. KURKON

You never struck me as one of these blue collar types. You always had class, Ryan. We all said that about you. Not like this one.

Kurkon enters, grabbing his coat.

KURKON

(to Halas)

You ready?

He finishes his drink.

MRS. KURKON

Bring him home safe. We finally got him away from those people. I want him in one piece.

As he nods understanding we...

INT. LOWER EAST SIDE SPEAKEASY - NIGHT

KURKON

I was surprised to hear from you.
(Halas "yeah")
It's hard being a kept man, ain't it?

A despondent Halas and Kurkon at the bar of a posh, yuppie filled establishment.

KURKON (CONT'D)

When I first started working for Cody, I don't know what I thought. That I could be something else. That I could put it away, you know.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KURKON (CONT'D)

You and I, whatever mistakes we made, we knew what we were, right? You know what I mean.

HALAS

You know where they are?

KURKON

I still get my check in the mail, but I haven't seen 'em since...you don't get it, man. Nobody knows where she took that kid.

(he drinks)

Let that shit go, Ryan. You don't want it.

The bartender arrives.

KURKON (CONT'D)

Do these again.

(to Halas)

This place. I had a CI, used to sell H outta of the back, remember. There's no more scary places in New York. When we were kids, when we went to the penny arcades in Times Square, we went in groups cause you had a better shot against the muggers and the niggers. Now it's Disneyland. Maybe people don't see what's wrong with that, but they should.

HALAS

You've been gone along time.

KURKON

You're feeling guilty about the girl? You'll get over it. What'd you do with her? To the docks - the old dumping grounds?

HALAS

You ever see her? Looked like your boss, even after those guys took a bottle to her face. She's 15, about give up her whole family to get out, the time I got there.

KURKON

What do you mean?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HALAS

(drinks)

...said she knew things. That I could make a lot of money, but she'd of said just about anything, I bet.

The drinks arrive. Halas puts his down before it hits the bar. Kurkon doesn't take his eyes off his friend.

KURKON

She say what about?

(beat)

Ryan. She say anything? We go back along way, man. I brought you up. I showed you how this all works. Be straight with me. What'd she say to you?

Pause.

HALAS

Nothing man. Nothing.

Halas, his glass to his lips. Kurkon watches him.

KURKON

You let her go?

(silence)

Ryan?

HALAS

All that shit, man. She was just a kid. I just wanted to start again.

Kurkon doesn't take his eyes off him.

HALAS (CONT'D)

Don't worry. She's gone.

KURKON

You better hope so. We cleaned your slate remember. If she shows up and knocks on your door, it's both our asses.

HALAS

She was just a kid.

KURKON

Do you know where she is?

Hold on Halas. He stares down his glass.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

KURKON (CONT'D)

Ryan?

THE SOUND OF WAVES ON THE SHORE.

EXT. LONG ISLAND SOUND - DAY

CAMERA LANDS ON: A 240 Volvo station wagon tearing over a clearing, down the empty road.

On all sides, Lush farm country. Grand ocean views. Rich real estate behind.

The Volvo takes a sudden, sharp turn, away from other traffic onto an isolated country road that goes on alone for miles.

In the long distance, heavy woods mark the horizon.

EXT. PINEWOODS - LATER

The Volvo traverses a gravel outlet road which now gives way to an unpaved path. Soon nothing but woods. No roads in sight.

The Volvo continues in a long ways, pulls in at a angle, K turns till it's facing the direction from which it had entered, stops. Kills the engine. The occupants look out.

THE TREE LINE

Through it, several hundred yards away, a stately secluded estate can be glimpsed.

THE VOLVO

In the trunk, a wooden extension ladder is visible. In the backseat, a child's car seat. An astute viewer may now recognize the passengers as the men seen leaving the Plaza where Halas met Ellen many months ago.

The driver and larger of the two is ROBERT PRICE. A stringy, hollow looking figure.

The effete, hard up little man beside him is TRUDY LITTLE.

Robert lights a cigarette. His focus locked on the breaking tree line.

LATER - HOURS PASSED

Pitch black. Robert smokes, staring out the window. Trudy watches as Robert deposits something into his inner jacket pocket. An envelope.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The estate house in the distance. The windows; all dark.

A silent moment, the car doors open. Trudy following Robert's lead.

Robert opens the trunk, removes the ladder. Closes the door.

JUST LATER

They walk away deep into the woods. The car quite a ways behind. Robert hoisting the ladder on his shoulder...

They approach a clearing. The woods break. The men gaze upon:

The ESTATE HOUSE occupying the immense clearing.

A PISTOL in Robert's hand. He secures it in his waistband. The men pull down their ski-masks, move on with absolute surety towards one corner of the house.

An EXTERIOR FUSE BOX: Robert pries it open. Yanks a cable.

The last few lights in the house go dark.

Beneath a SECOND FLOOR WINDOW, Robert sets and extends the ladder to the wall beneath it. Trudy foots it. Robert ascends.

He reaches the window, attempts to open it, but it's locked. He looks down to Trudy.

INT. MANSION ESTATE/BEDROOM - THAT MOMENT

Robert, no choice. He shatters the glass with the butt of his gun. The crashing elicits the sound of a CRYING CHILD. Robert climbs into the room. Gun in hand. Stops.

His eyes goes wide.

INT. MANSION ESTATE/ BEDROOM - NIGHT

A women's eyes snap open.

Vivian sits up in bed. She's alone. She shivers. A bedside lamp. She flips the switch. Nothing goes. She considers.

HALLWAY

A candle lit, Vivian escorts the flame down the hall.

BEDROOM

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The door pushes open. Vivian's candle cast a dim glow across the baby's room. She freezes. A gush of wind from the broken window extinguishes her flame.

Alone in the dark, Vivian approaches the crib.

It's empty. The crib vacant save an envelope placed squarely on the pillow. The neatly printed words: "Dear Sir!"

The head of Charles Teddy bear, ripped from it's body.

VIVIAN

Before she can scream...

EXT. MANHATTAN/ ESTABLISHING

Rain pounding the east river. Hazy city lights beyond the mist.

Lights go on in a midtown High-rise window.

INT. HALAS' NEW APT - NIGHT

A ringing phone. The lamp flipped on. Remnants of heavy drinking abound in the tony, newly occupied apartment. Bed on the floor, no other furniture.

Halas searches for the receiver. Follows the cord along unpacked moving boxes. Answers.

HALAS

Yeah?

MARGRAFF (FILTERED)

I've been calling you for an hour.

HALAS

I didn't know where I unpacked the phone.

MARGRAFF (FILTERED)

Get up. You need to get down to here.

HALAS

What time is it? Call Stabler. I'm not on tonight.

MARGRAFF (FILTERED)

You are now - turn on the TV. It's gonna be a fucking circus.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Beleaguered, Halas hangs up. Flips on the Television.

NEWSCASTER (FILTERED)
 --this just confirmed. Two hours
 ago, June 15th, 20 month old
 Charles Lakes was kidnapped from
 the Lake family estate in Montauk
 Long Island.

ON SCREEN: Frantic news footage. Every channel. Live Chopper
 shots of the sprawling mansion. Police lights play out over
 the exquisite Seaside estate. The newscaster...

NEWSCASTER (FILTERED) (CONT'D)
 --on this familiar plot of ground
 where tragedy struck so many years
 before, for a year they'd escaped
 the limelight, while the public's
 demanded their return. Well
 somebody has sought them out.

Halas in the TV's glow. A turn in his eyes. He jumps as the
 phone rings again.

HALAS
 Yeah. I'm watching. I'm on my way.

VIVIAN (FILTERED)
 Is this Ryan?

Pause.

HALAS
 Vivian?

Silence from the other end.

EXT. WESTSIDE HELIPORT - NIGHT

Propellers churn, rippling the surface of the water. Halas
 enters a Helicopter. It rises over the Hudson, while...

SFX: A VARIETY OF NEWS REPORTS CARRY US OVER THE CITY.

REPORTER 1 (FILTERED)
*"As the facts come in, one wonders.
 Who knew where they were? Who had
 the access to this child? Because
 many had the motive."*

ARIEL VIEW

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Out the window. Standstill traffic all the way up the West Side Highway.

REPORTER 2 (FILTERED)

"And these early hours, so critical. As hour by hour passes, hope for a safe recovery grows more and more dim."

The entrance to the Lincoln Tunnel. An absolute bottle neck. Same at the GWB. Horns pound. Break lights all across the city.

The helicopter soars off.

EXT. ABANDONED REST STOP - NIGHT

BRIAN LESPANE (FILTERED)

"And on the line, we've got Laura from Queens. Laura, let's hear it."

A single street light illuminates a vacant parking area, suddenly shattered. Dark.

Robert Price hurries back to the STATION WAGON, stashed behind the rest-rooms. A half dozen other lights shattered above.

LAURA (FILTERED)

"In my opinion, that girl was never fit to be a mother. With the drugs and the partying and the men. What example does that set."

THE STATION WAGON

The Eaglet in the backseat. His head half shaved and Trudy Little attempts to finish the job in the dark. The baby wails.

Robert snatches the buzzer away. Locks eyes with the child. A connection - a determination between the two. Shorn hair clings to Charles' tear wet face. Robert takes the babies hand. Seems to consider it.

FEMALE CALLER (FILTERED)

"It was Willie Horton."

MALE CALLER (FILTERED)

"I'll tell you who did it. The guys who did Sinatra's kid. They got paid, didn't they."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The razor buzzes as Robert brings it to the child's head. The Eaglet's remaining locks float down around him.

EXT. 495/ QUEENS/ LONG ISLAND - NIGHT

Our chopper flies over midnight traffic jams in every direction. Break-lights light the highway like a Broadway marquee.

FEMALE CALLER (FILTERED)
*"...just goes to show you. All the
 money in the world, you still
 aren't safe."*

Police Sirens flash over road blocks at every exit.

EXT. 495 ROADBLOCK - NIGHT

A HIGHWAY PATROLMAN on foot at the entrance to an on ramp, that backs up with cars well into the distance.

He shines a flashlight into a waiting car. Glare in the eyes of its occupants. He waves them along. Long night. Next car approaches...

BRIAN LESPANE (FILTERED)
*"With so much speculation and so
 much interest, we all must ask
 ourselves, how are we culpable..."*

Our station wagon. Flash light hits Trudy behind the wheel. Robert plays asleep in the passengers seat. The Cop shines the light into the back seat. A moment of hesitation.

The light illuminates Charles Lake, asleep in the car seat. His head shorn.

BRIAN LESPANE (FILTERED) (CONT'D)
*"...with so much attention lavished
 on this family, on this child, are
 we partly to blame..."*

Hold on the Cop's face. A moment. He waves them along.

Their taillights merge onto the highway.

The next car approaches the Patrolman. He hesitates as the Station Wagon disappears into the distance, indecipherable from a thousand others headed west, toward the CITY SKYLINE on the horizon.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRIAN LESPANE (FILTERED) (CONT'D)
*"...have we preordained this
 nightmare to come to pass."*

Hold on the Patrolman's face. Too late.

EXT. LAKE MANSION - PRE-DAWN

The CHOPPER touches down on the lawn. Halas exits, set back by what lies before him.

The path to the house is already blocked by a media frenzy which will only multiply in the hours, days to come.

As Halas navigates through this leviathan to reach the house, he cuts between:

Fans lighting votive candles. Images of Charles Lake, gripped like prayer cards. REPORTERS clamor for quotes and photos. News Vans file into the area like a Rosebowl Tailgate. A POLICEMAN ushers Halas through a barricade, separating the crowd from the crime scene...

MARGRAFF
 (screaming over the roar)
 Halas! OVER HERE!

Captain Margraff (from early on) greets him, sleepless, disheveled. They shake hands.

MARGRAFF (CONT'D)
 What did I tell you? It's a circus.

The house now before him. It's size and grandeur are jaw dropping.

MARGRAFF (CONT'D)
 There's the kid's bedroom. That's
 the only site of entry.

He's indicated the second floor window, beneath which DETECTIVES examine the escape Ladder, still resting against the house. Photos are taken, documenting footsteps, shattered glass.

HALAS
 Where are they?

MARGRAFF
 The Senator's been in the guest
 house for most of the morning.
 Since we arrived. She's upstairs.
 Inside.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HALAS

And she made the 911 call?

MARGRAFF

Before she'd opened the note.

Halas looks up at the mansion.

HALAS

What is this place? I've seen it.

MARGRAFF

It's where her mother died.

Halas looks to the familiar stone wall running along the west end of the property.

Just before they enter.

MARGRAFF (CONT'D)

And Halas, I should tell you.
Kurkon's inside. They've had him
under a sweat lamp for a couple
hours.

HALAS

But he wasn't here? Hadn't been
with them for months.

MARGRAFF

So who was on their detail?

HALAS

No one. You didn't hear? They'd
vanished.

Beat. They pass through dozens of Police to enter...

INT. LAKE MANSION - CONTINUOUS

As Margraff fills him in, Halas is led gazing at the enormity of the unfolding spectacle. Constant police activity all around.

MARGRAFF

It's bad now, in an hour this
place'll be Penn Plaza. They want
to set up an entire headquarters
here.

HALAS

Who does?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARGRAFF

Your boss. He's upstairs. In the kid's room.

Platoons of YOUNG OFFICERS inventory the endless rooms and artifacts of countless wealth, open-mouthed as soldiers shipping to foreign shores.

Each room they pass is more extravagant than the last. Solariums. Galleries. Bowling Alleys. No whim gone unsatiated.

MARGRAFF (CONT'D)

It'll take 'em a fucking century to comb through this whole place. But I'd bet the kidnapppers never left the kid's room. And I mean, there's easier items here to move. This place is fucking Xanadu.

They ascend a great staircase. The crowd collected before a bedroom door betrays the baby's room.

Just outside, Ron Kurkon emerges, absolutely broken down. The two old partners hug.

KURKON

Jesus, Ryan! I had nothing to do it, man. You believe me?

HALAS

Of course.

KURKON

She called you?
(Ron grabs Halas's
shoulder)
It's damn good you came.

MARGRAFF

C'mon, Halas. You go it alone from here.

KURKON

Find me before you go.

Leaving Kurkon behind with a handshake, Margraff passes Halas before the crowd at the bedroom door.

Through the bodies, Halas has an obscured view of the scene.

John Lake, fraught. Interviewed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DETECTIVE

What was your son wearing? Did he have any distinguishing marks? A Birth spot. Something unusual.

JOHN

His hands. He had...Charles was...

He stops himself. Breaks down.

DETECTIVE

Sir?

DENIHAN

I don't believe identifying Charles will be a problem, Detective.

(then)

Is that the note then?

Ray Denihan assumes command, his back to Halas, the ransom note delicately held in gloved hands.

THE NOTES READS:

"Dear Sir! Please have 10,000,000 dollars ready. We will contact you in several days with details about the money and where to find the child. But we warn you, do not contact the police and or press or we will too. We know who we have. We are serious people and serious action will be taken. Do not fuck with us or we'll send him back to you in pieces."

Denihan turns over his shoulder; Halas in the doorway.

MARGRAFF

(already down the hall)

Halas - you're this way.

(Halas looks to him)

Be strong in there, son. She needs it.

Halas looks back to Denihan, already moved on. Halas heads down the hall.

INT. LAKE MANSION/ROMAN POOL HOUSE - THAT MOMENT

MANCUSO

I'm sorry. It's important we get the timeline correct here.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MANCUSO (CONT'D)

Your husband was in the guest house
asleep at 9:30 and in which bedroom
were you asleep?

Vivian smokes at the foot of a sprawling indoor pool, while
Mancuso, tactlessly attempts a delicate interview.

VIVIAN

We've already been over this.
Please, I've told you already.
Isn't it in your notes?

MANCUSO

I'm just trying to be clear, Ma'am.
You and your husband were not
sharing a bedroom?

Silence. Then both aware of Halas, waiting in the doorway.

VIVIAN

(to Halas)

God, can you get him out of here
please? How many times do I have go
over the same thing.

Halas gestures to Mancuso. "Go."

MANCUSO

Good luck. I hope you brought your
bible.

He exits. Halas and Vivian watch him go.

HALAS

Repetition of events. It's
important.

(then)

Do you want to tell me what
happened?

VIVIAN

I can't. Check their notes. I've
already told them our dirty
laundry. How many times do I...

HALAS

Tell me.

(calm)

Start from the beginning.

She's exhausted, but his presence seems to settle her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

VIVIAN

John had gone in a couple hours before. He's been sleeping in the guest quarters.

HALAS

Had anyone been to seem him?

VIVIAN

No. I don't think so. He wasn't exactly in the habit of informing me when he had "company."

HALAS

All right.

VIVIAN

I'd put him to bed at about 11 and read in my room till--

HALAS

--put Charles to bed?

VIVIAN

You mean the eaglet? Yes. My son. Charles.

Halas backs off. Beat.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

We'd been here for months with nothing. We never left. Sinclair did all the shopping.

HALAS

And you never had anyone over? Never had any visitors? Did anyone else know you were here?

VIVIAN

No one. My family.

(then)

Until...two men came by. They said they were looking for work. You know, landscape stuff. I wasn't here. Sinclair sent them away.

HALAS

When was that?

VIVIAN

I don't know. Two, three weeks ago maybe.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

And we'd called a man here a month ago to check the pool.

(almost laughing)

The police just brought him in. An elderly guy. He wet himself. I mean, they put Ron over a barrel for three hours.

HALAS

I know. I saw him.

Halas is tentative. He looks out the window.

OUTSIDE:

The spectacle. Worshipers before the thrown.

HALAS (CONT'D)

Will you pay?

VIVIAN

Will it bring him back?

HALAS

I don't know. It's a lot of money.

VIVIAN

Not to us.

Beat.

HALAS

Why'd you call me, Vivian? You've got quite a crew here at your disposal.

A moment. She takes out a cigarette case.

VIVIAN

I had seen them before. The pictures of John.

She lights the first of several cigarettes.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

They belonged to my father. He had...people he employed to keep him informed, you know. About his business partners, his advisories...you know, their private lives.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

HALAS
Blackmail stuff?

VIVIAN
Some of it.

HALAS
Even you?

VIVIAN
It's complicated -- after he died,
I went to recover some of his
things. He'd kept those photos in a
safe at his house. We were leaving
and I wanted them back. But they
were gone. It meant a great deal to
him to keep those secret. If he'd
known they were out in the public,
it would have been crippling to
him. To us.

HALAS
Is that why he shot himself?
(too blunt)
I'm sorry.

VIVIAN
That was probably somewhere on his
list.

HALAS
The guys who worked for your
father. Who were they?

VIVIAN
I don't know. Some were ex cops, I
think. Others were...I don't know.
I kept away from all that, you
understand. I didn't want to be
involved in those things. I just
wanted to raise my family.

HALAS
But you knew her. You had Ron set
up the meeting at the Plaza to get
those pictures back?

VIVIAN
No. Not before this.

Vivian stands. Stamps out her smoke.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

Is she -- still around? You can be honest.

HALAS

I think.

VIVIAN

Did you -- d'you think she could be involved in this, Detective? In Charlie?

HALAS

Do you?

VIVIAN

I don't know. I don't know who she got them from but those pictures of John would've been extremely valuable. When you got them back...we probably cost her a lot of money.

HALAS

She didn't seem particularly interested in money. Have you brought this up to anyone else?

She looks at him crossly. "Of course not."

VIVIAN

Can you find her?

(taking his hand)

I'm not saying we handled it in the best way but...My father was -- he was trying to protect us with those pictures. He'd been through more than -- we all have our ghosts, Detective. You understand.

HALAS

Sure -- we all swim in the same pool.

VIVIAN

And if there's a price to pay for that. If Charlie is --

Halas considers Vivian, fragile. She toughens up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

It doesn't matter, Ryan. Find her.
No strings. Whatever she wants. I
just want my son back.

HALAS

And what do I get this time?

INT. LAKE MANSION / LIBRARY - DAY

A LOUIS VUITTON TRUNK. Open. Deep. A pair of gloved hands align stacks of 100 dollar bills inside. One after another.

That fortune is prepared on a desk, catalogued by TREASURY ACCOUNTANTS. They record the bills serial numbers onto a list, pass the stacks along.

John, Vivian, Denihan watch the proceedings stoically. Halas with wide eyes, until Margraff appears in the doorway. Gestures, *"we're ready for you."*

Halas follows him out.

Passing through police presence in every corner in the house.

The library converted to a conference center. Phone lines. Switch boards, manned, taking calls.

The living quarters now decked with cots for 40 men. The kitchen bustling to prepare meals for the platoons.

Lt. Mancuso and Hodges oversee the operation in the Garage where a dozen gleaming vehicles have been invaded by Police. Here they take statements from "Witnesses," Faux confessors, Neighbors, all seeking their entry into the Lake's orbit.

Halas led past...

BOOKISH OFFICER

NO NO NO. We need at least a
semblance of order here. Now,
where'd you say these are from?

A dozen OFFICERS occupy a desk which at this moment, is inundated with letters. Now multiplied as hundreds more are spilled from a mail sack by ANOTHER OFFICER.

A beleaguered BOOKISH OFFICER tries desperately to sort them.

MAIL SACK OFFICER

Uhhh -- that batch was from,
Westchester I think -- wait. Maybe
Far Rockaway.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Bookish officer begins to sort them. Agitated.

LIBRARIAN

Do not do that next time! We've got
to keep these separated. Please.

MAIL SACK OFFICER

(walking off)

I'm not a fucking mail man.

He exits the great commotion which is now the Lake's house,
leaving the Bookish officer the arduous task of sorting the
piles and piles of letters. The lot of them, in one variation
or another, they all read - "VIVIAN LAKE."

Margraff finally pulls him away toward an idling vehicle. A
CHAUFFEUR waits. It's Sinclair, the butler.

MARGRAFF

I don't want to know why you were
called up here. I don't know what
deal you cut with them before, but
you've been giving a second chance
here. Remember that, son. Play it
straight. You'll find people much
less forgiving this time around.

Halas steps into the car. Off the slam of the door:

DENIHAN (V.O.)

At this time, I can't go into
anymore detail, but I can confirm
for you this.

ANGLE ON

The lenses of a hundred cameras trained on Denihan before...

EXT. LAKE MANSION - DAY

...where he conducts a press conference on the great lawn
before the legion of fans, worshipers and media growing ever
more fervent in the background.

DENIHAN

(to camera)

At approximately 2:15 this morning,
several men unlawfully entered the
house behind me and abducted this
boy, Charles Lake.

A PICTURE viewed through various lenses.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

In the coming hours and days, the fullest extent of our authority will be executed to help return this child. A 1-800 hotline has been set-up that we urge people to implement, but use with discretion. The special circumstances of this case, the amount of public interest, sympathy and scrutiny demand a flawless investigation, and we'll do our best to deliver it. The NYPD has offered its full support, but our efficiency will only be maximized with the public's help. I implore those watching at home, for the safety of this child, please act with vigilance and self restraint and report only serious inquiries. And I assure you....

A NEW ANGLE HERE. MOVING.

I/E. CHAUFFEURED CAR - SAME

The press swarm seen from afar.

Halas inside his departing car, exiting the Lake property. A last look to Denihan, who's words are overheard on the radio.

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

All necessary strength will be utilized to find this boy. Heaven and earth will be moved.

SINCLAIR, driving.

SINCLAIR

They won't find him, will they?

HALAS

I don't know.

The car pulls away past a familiar stone wall scene in the opening news footage. Vivian's mother's crash site.

SINCLAIR

Do you believe in curses?

Halas leans back. Speeds off.

EXT. ST. MARKS ST. - DAY

Halas turning onto St. Marks, off of 2nd where he drove Ellen passed so long ago.

He checks the marquee over head. THE PEARL STREET THEATER, presenting, "*THE ONCE AND FUTURE KING.*"

He heads for the door.

INT. PEARL STREET THEATER - DAY

A slight, gentle man is overseeing the dismantling of a set on stage. A crew member gives him a heads up. "Behind you." He turns. We recognize him as SEAN HARRIS, Ellen's guardian.

SEAN

I wondered when I might see you again, Detective. You haven't come back to apologize, have you?

Halas regards him from a row in the empty house.

SEAN (CONT'D)

You look like you've done well for yourself.

HALAS

I need to see her.

HARRIS

You can't.

Harris stops his activity.

SEAN

She's gone, Detective. She left. I don't know where she is.

HALAS

When?

SEAN

Just in the last few days. I came home one night and she was gone. Without a word. Vanished...That was your advice, wasn't it?

HALAS

I--Do you know where she'd of gone?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SEAN

No. I don't. And don't think I'd tell you if I did. Maybe she went back home. Maybe she's back on the street.

HALAS

She might be better off on the street.

A moment.

HALAS (CONT'D)

I'd like to help her Mr --?

SEAN

Harris. Help her? Why? I thought the whole world was looking for that boy.

HALAS

I am.

SEAN

And you think Ellen's involved? That was this is about.

HALAS

Did she know them?

SEAN

You should ask them.

HALAS

I have. Look, I'm just trying to make amends.

SEAN

We all are, Detective. But I'm not sure that it isn't too late for that.

IN A BACKSTAGE DRESSING ROOM - JUST LATER

Several bank bound stacks of bills concealed in a desk drawer. A small fortune viewed by Halas in.

SEAN

It's hers. You see, she didn't need money for those pictures.

HALAS

What then?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Halas takes in the room. All around him are the possession of a kid. A teenager girl. Movie mags, makeup all tossed about. Photos of Ellen occupying the vanity. Halas regards them.

SEAN

She means a great deal to me, Detective. You see I don't have any family. She'd been on the street. She was pregnant when I first met her. The first couple weeks I knew her, she cried day and night. She was in some rough shape. But she was a sweet kid. She bought me flowers the next morning.

HALAS

Where'd she get those pictures?

SEAN

I don't know. I recon someone from work. She did nights sometimes at that - "cabaret" on Chrystie, with some of the girl's from the Majestic. What could I do?

Sean writes something down.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Ellen has a file. She was booked on a juvey charge a couple years ago.

HALAS

Prostitution?

SEAN

She never talked about it, got out right before I met her. But I imagine her parents were notified. They'd be in the report. If she ran away, maybe she did go home. I doubt it, but I've run out of places to look.

Passes the note to Halas. #174182 scrawled on the back.

HALAS

This is the incident report number?

Sean nods. Halas, toward the exit.

HALAS (CONT'D)

Would you run away and leave all that money behind?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SEAN

After what she'd through...There are some things you can't put a price on.

(beat)

If you find her, Detective, tell her she can come home. Tell her I miss her. I'll send you flowers.

Halas flips the note in his hands. It's a picture. Ellen gazes up at him.

EXT. THE MAJESTIC - NIGHT

HALAS

You know her?

Lighting a cigarette as Leanne (the prostitute in Halas' first scene) peruses Ellen's picture.

LEANNE

She came in here a couple years ago, looking for work. Adam wouldn't hire. Said she was too young...But he wanted too.

HALAS

Good memory.

LEANNE

Only cause we got to talking. She was real...you know. She had something you remember.

Studies her.

HALAS

You remember her saying anything about Vivian Lake?

(beat)

What?

LEANNE

Well that's what she'd come in for. To "play" Vivian. Look, that was always a part of the show. You know Babbitt worked for him back in the day.

HALAS

Cody?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEANNE

Cody. Denihan. Blackmail stuff. He liked to work it into the girl's acts, thought it was a kick. You know, an equal opportunity offender. I'll tell you, he's got stacks and stacks of the stuff in his office, guards it closer than his dick, but I think I know where he keeps the keys.

(then)

If you got a skeleton in your closet, I bet he knows about it.

Halas, feeling close.

HALAS

S'he here?

LEANNE

(shakes her head)

Never comes in before midnight. Only once the house fills up.

Halas, mind running, pocketing the picture.

LEANNE (CONT'D)

(of Ellen)

You might check beneath the bridge. A lot of kids are there now since the curfew. It's not pretty. I guess we thank Ray Denihan for that. What'd she do anyway?

HALAS

I'm just trying to set something right.

LEANNE

I bet.

He pitches his cigarette.

LEANNE (CONT'D)

I guess you couldn't run after all, could you?

Last look. He's gone to...

EXT. WILLIAMSBURG BRIDGE - NIGHT

Fires burn in steel drums beneath the trembling bridge where the HOMELESS are collected. Halas trolls among them displaying Ellen's picture.

GIRL

No sorry. Never seen her.

Many are here, MEN, WOMEN, asleep or nodded off in trashbags and cardboard boxes. All ages. All kinds.

HALAS

Have you seen her? Look at it, for Christ sakes.

A HOMELESS MAN does. Shakes his head.

POV: THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD OF A SLOW MOVING CAR:

Halas is watched, moving from one face to the next. Nothing.

Defeated, near exiting, stops. Lights a cigarette. Looks out over the collected disappointments of New York.

MAN

Is that...Detective Halas. Jack the Ripper! Long time.

From out of the darkness, a tall, languid figure ambles toward him.

HALAS

Chrissy?

Chrissy (35) wears a ratty top hat and a waistcoat, and looks as if he's been kicked off of some vaudevillian stage a long time past. A pimp's gate. A junky's hollow cheeks.

CHRISSY

Yeah, man. And look at you. You clean up nice, man. You clean up real nice.

HALAS

You don't look so bad yourself.

CHRISSY

You know. Got a keep up appearances. Dress for the job you want, you know.

(pops his collar)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHRISSY (CONT'D)

But you've done good for yourself, huh? Don't need that scratch from round here no more...Still arresting chinks for spitting in the Laundry?

HALAS

Still renting out your sister asshole for nickle bags?

CHRISSY

No man. Prices gone up. As you see, it ain't the Ritz round here no more, but that's just the way it rolls down hill, right. Not like the good old days when you and old man Kurkon were running things. Times are tough, now. Pinching pennies, you know.

(Off Halas's gaze)

It ain't so much fun coming home, now is it? What brings you back? Just the memories?

HALAS

You still run your girls?

CHRISSY

Yeah. I got a few. As you might imagine, not so many thoroughbreds as they gold days, but you know. Port Authority's still shipping 'em in...

HALAS

What about this one? You ever seen her?

Ellen's picture.

CHRISSY

Still like 'em young, eh Jack?

Halas slams him against the pillar.

CHRISSY (CONT'D)

Easy. What - think you're the only one looking for this broad? What'da they all got you on the same beat or something?

HALAS

What'd you mean?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CHRISSY

You're like the third guy this week. Two Dicks came through here yesterday asking questions. Days before that, your partner came through.

Halas perks up.

HALAS

Kurkon?

CHRISSY

Sure as your born.

(beat)

Look, I didn't tell em nothing. Got nothing to tell. I could ask around, but I never seen this girl. I could find you the type though, if your interested. We got all kinds here.

Halas walks away. Chrissy calls after him pleading.

CHRISSY (CONT'D)

Hey man. Don't do me like that. We were friends, Jacky. We were partners, like. Times are hard out here, man. They put a curfew on the park, you know. 1 am. After all the raids, ain't nowhere else to go. Help your old friend out a little bit. Something for the college fund.

HALAS

Sorry. I don't play that anymore.

CHRISSY

Wait...what if I knew something about that baby? Would that be worth anything to you?

Halas looks at him.

HALAS

You tell me what you know. I'll tell you what it's worth.

EXT. PAYPHONE ESSEX SUBWAY - NIGHT

Halas, excited on the phone above the subway stairs. Smokes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HALAS

Real early this morning, said there been a lot of chatter that a couple dopeheads in the neighborhood were dealing on the kid. He says he was coming back from a regular when he saw these guys in the car.....sounds like it was a older model station wagon.

INTERCUT:

INT. LAKE MANSION - SAME

MARGRAFF

How many were there?

Margraff, on the phone at a switchboard lit up like Christmas. The transformation is completed. The parlor of the Mansion has taken on the appearance of a full scale Police precinct.

HALAS (FILTERED)

Two of em. Didn't get a real good look, but they had blood on 'em. He got good and gone, but he's was scared something real.

Margraff is looking about the window. His POV:

Days into the spectacle, the crowds have not waned. LOCAL RESIDENCE have taken up selling food from carts to the out-of-towners.

MARGRAFF

Who else knows about it?

HALAS

No one.

MARGRAFF

Keep it that way.

As outside, local police are assisted by every able bodied man, boy, boyscout troupe, who scour the woods off the property with dogs and flashlights in hopes of turning up some misplaced clue. Some sign of hope.

END ON:

EXT. PAYPHONE - ESSEX STREET SUBWAY - SAME

MARGRAFF (FILTERED)
Be careful.

HALAS
I will. I'll be fine.

Halas hangs up the phone. Smokes.

NEW ANGLE:

He's viewed from a far, watched through a car windshield. A last drag, he pitches his smoke, heads toward...

EXT. TOMPKINS PARK - NIGHT

Other worldly sounds emanating. The screaming, moaning junkies, the squatters, the homeless burning fires have all been sequestered to one small corner of the park. POLICE occupied, maintaining the boundary.

They call out as Halas moves through.

COP
There's a curfew here! Parks closed!

Halas shows his badge. Walks on. Screaming out we hear...

HOMELESS MAN
You don't own this city, man! We know the truth! We know! We know! This ain't just yours!

His last words as the POLICE drag him away. As Halas heads into...

8TH ST ALLEY

Halas arrives in the opening Chrissy has described. Quiet. Desolate. His flashlight cutting over vacants, uncollected trash...

100 yards ahead, something concealed in the alley.

Halas points his light. With a cautious look behind, he withdraws his gun, approaches.

His beam catches chrome. A bumper concealed beneath a tarp. Slowly, Halas pulls back the plastic. The grill of a Volvo flashes in the light.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Hold on Halas.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. LAKE MANSION - SAME

Land on the mail desk.

Our MAIL OFFICER, reading a letter. Places it in pile.
"Discard." Reaches for the next. Pause.

He pulls his hand away. His finger glistens dark. Wet. He
looks to the envelope.

The manila envelope drips dark red. Scrolled across "VIVIAN
LAKE."

OFFICER
Detectives...Detectives!

At a distant station...

OFFICER (CONT'D)
DETECTIVES!

Margraff looks up, freezes.

INT. 8TH ST. ALLEY - THAT MOMENT

Halas, plays the flashlight over the discarded vehicle. The
front seat illuminated, vacant. Passing now toward the
back...

Halas goes grim. Fumbles for his radio.

HALAS
(desperately to his radio)
Badge number 82195. Officer
requesting assistance in 300 block
of East 8th St. Possible homicide.
Repeat, officer needs assistance.

Bravely, he refocus the light.

THE BACK SEAT

A child's safety seat, vacant, though flecked with shorn
blond hairs caught aglow in the light. The Teddy Bear is on
it's side, soaking wet. The seat around it glistens in the
beam, a pool of blood.

INT. LAKE MANSION - SAME

Margraff approaching the MAIL DESK where FEMALE POLICE and RURAL VOLUNTEERS weep and console each other with tissues. Margraff gets a view. Instantly.

MARGRAFF

Get 'em the fuck out of here. Clear everyone out. Everyone out--now!

Finally, people turn and disperse. Most with pale faces, their hands clasped to their mouths.

Margraff and Mancuso converge around the BOOKISH COP.

MANCUSO

Can we trace it? Can it be traced?

BOOKISH COP

Y-y-yes yes. I think so.

DENIHAN

Is it his?

Ray Denihan, arriving on the scene, assuming command.

MARGRAFF

We don't know. We'll need...

DENIHAN

Not a word of this leaves this room. Do we understand? No press. No news. This stays here.

(then)

Someone go get the family.

EXT. EAST VILLAGE ALLEY - JUST LATER

SPOTLIGHTS illuminate the Volvo. A crime scene established. Neighbors gathered on their stoops. The alley, blocked at either end to hold off the crowds.

Halas stands in the center of it all, among many SWAT MEMBERS and other Detectives viewing the car as forensics work by the beams of flashlights, exposing the cars interior. The sight is ghastly.

The CHILD'S SAFETY SEAT. The eaglets hair. The blood pools gleaming all around. A SWITCHBLADE soaked in its stream.

SWAT

All right, lads! We're going in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The SWAT TEAM has already assembled at the door of the building. They swing the battering ram. The door busts open.

INT. EAST VILLAGE FLOPHOUSE - SAME

The building is completely derelict. Flashlights illuminate vials, syringes littering the floor. Molded cots in unoccupied bedrooms. No doors on the hinges.

Halas, gun drawn, follows the team, ascending a rickety staircase.

UPSTAIRS

Halas stops. This floor has been occupied, through recently vacated. Clothes, magazines, newspaper scattered about displaying Charles Lake's image along side take-out containers. The place discarded in haste.

IN THE STAIRWELL

VOICES YELL OUT at Police try to hold back the rush of onlookers flooding into the house.

UPSTAIRS

Halas waits as the SWAT TEAMS kicks open a door. It falls off its hinges. They level their guns, though all is silent. Halas steps into the doorways to reveal:

A MAKESHIFT OFFICE - monumental plans. Maps illustrate the Long Island Sound. Montauk. The Lake Estate.

Time lines detail the dates of the Lake's exodus. July 15th. Circled.

Halas pushes in slowly on a Xeroxed photograph, blown up on a wall.

It shows one angle of the grand estate house. In Red Marker, a circle has been drawn around a second floor window. Charles Lake's bedroom.

COP

Jesus. They knew everything.

Off Halas face...

INT. LAKE MANSION - SAME

We follow John Lake, navigating through the gathered crowd toward.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FORENSICS

If its the boy's, I'd sit on every hospital in the Tristate, cause if they didn't take him in, you can shut this all down. The boy's dead already.

JOHN

What is it?

All action stops. The forensics working among the package, silenced.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Have they contacted.

The crowd at the mail desk falls silent as John appears.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Have they?

DENIHAN

Yes. I'm sorry.

Among the stacks of fan letters and notes of good prayers, the package is open. Its edges are soaked red. Its contents spilled out.

In a pool of blood, there lays a baby's right hand, severed at the wrist.

John's face drains white.

INT. TOMPKINS PARK - MUCH LATER

On the eastern corner, FORENSICS dusts a mailbox, illuminated by spotlights.

MARGRAFF

Good police, this guy Louima who'd found the letter. Tracked it back to the postman. The handwriting was so illegible, almost never made it out.

Halas smokes. The two scenes now joined. Margraff beside him.

HALAS

Finding a usable print on that box'll be like winning the lottery. Half the junkies in the park use it as a fucking toilet.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

 HALAS (CONT'D)
 (then)
 What'd the note say?

 MARGRAFF
 "Now you know we know. We told you
 no police. We told you no news. Get
 rid of them, or next time it's his
 head."

The park nears riot. Glass rains down from the protestors as police quarantine occupants in the park. Loading them into PADDY WAGONS. The people beginning to resist.

 HALAS
 (reflecting)
 This city's about to crack.

The two Detectives view the scene around them. Pandemonium.

CUT TO:

 BRIAN LESPANE (FILTERED)
 Here at Tompkins park tonight;
 gruesome developments in the
 disappearance of the young Eaglet.

INSERT NEWS FOOTAGE:

The reporter covering the carnage at the park.

 BRIAN LESPANE (FILTERED) (CONT'D)
 The events exemplify an already
 turbulent relationship between the
 police and the members of this
 community who've fallen through the
 cracks. The haves and the have-
 nots. And the commissioner is
 expected to announce another
 neighborhood curfew to go into
 effect at 12 am tonight.

INT. 9TH PRECINCT - DAY

A BRIEFING ROOM of COPS. Amped. Pack to the gills, all waiting for...

Ray Denihan enters the room, folder in hand. A hush over the crowd. Approaches the podium. His lieutenants at his side.

 DENIHAN
 (reading)
 This just back from the DMV.
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

Car was registered to a Linda Mansfield of Long Island City. Reported stolen, 5/12/86. We'll recanvass the owner, but for our intensive purposes, it's a dead end.

(grumbles from the crowd)

What isn't, is this.

Lights down. POLICE COMPOSITE DRAWINGS project on the wall. Spitting images - TRUDY and ROBERT.

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

At approximately 4:15 Thursday night, a patrolman regulating a roadblock on 495 now believes he saw Charles Lake in the possession of these two men. Both white males. Both between 25 and 40. They were traveling west, entering the LIE at exit 59a. driving our vehicle, green Volvo Station Wagon. New York Plates.

VOICE FROM THE CROWD

He let 'em go?

DENIHAN

We'll not afford to make the same mistake. You all are temporarily reassigned from your current cases to assist in the investigation of the Lake Kidnapping. Of these two men. Wake up the neighborhood. And gentleman, do not be shy with either your tactics or your hours. Overtime has already been unilaterally approved.

(a smattering of applause)

Anything you need on this one. I don't need to reiterate the sensitivity of this situation. The eyes of the nation will be upon us, and we must provide results. You treat this kid like he's Jesus Fucking Christ, which a lot of you already believe him to be.

Laughter ripples through the crowd. Lost on Halas.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MANCUSO

This is your directive. Careers
will be made from this boy. Go find
them, Detectives.

Angle on Halas, frozen in the streaming crowd.

INT. NYPD / 9TH PRECINCT - JUST AFTER

Officers hurrying in every direction. Margraff scanning the
crowd for...

Halas, at his desk. His gun checked into it's holster.

MARGRAFF

You got an angle?

HALAS

I got something.

As we cut to...

EXT. BOWERY - NIGHT

The two Detective, hustling south into rough territory.
Halas, filing him in.

HALAS

Not strong arm stuff, but you know,
blackmail. Cody had guys collecting
dirt all over the city. Ellen, she
got the pictures from this guy
Babbitt, where she tried to work.

MARGRAFF

How do you know all this?

HALAS

Some were ex-police.
(of Margraff's look)
Look, when Kurkon started for Cody,
he made it clear that not
everything was on the up and up.
He'd taken a call one night at
Vivian's, just after we'd been
detailed off the Bowery. A domestic
dispute. We were both in bad with
the D.A. Even then. A week later,
Kurkon was working for the old man,
clean slated, passed on his pension
two years away.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARGRAFF

So that's how you got your stripes?
Trading on runaways.

HALAS

We can't all be desk rats.

MARGRAFF

You try a triple bypass. I'm 53,
you prick. I took my share of
doors.

(beat)

You go after him and Kurkon's
behind this, they'll be a lot of
people digging around your
backyard? You know where all the
skeleton's are buried?

EXT. CHRYSTIE STREET - NIGHT

A familiar back door. Halas blew through it many months ago
on our first meeting. Now, he and Margraff wait for a way in.

MARGRAFF

What is this place?

Off Halas' face as the back door pushes open and a
TRANSVESTITE in a full mink steps out for a smoke.

The men exchange a look, then grab the door before it shuts.

INT. THE MAJESTIC - NIGHT

Land on the stage, the performance underway.

A BEDROOM SET: "Charles Lake's Bedroom."

A WOMAN - "VIVIAN LAKE" - enters, holding the hand of a
MIDGET - "CHARLES LAKE." She puts the *child* into the bed.

ANGLE ON:

Halas and Margraff, watching from the doorway of the packed
establishment as...

"VIVIAN"

"Get some sleep now, baby. You're
getting so big, pretty soon I won't
be able to carry you."

"CHARLES"

"Do you want to see how big I
really am?"

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He pulls back the sheets...

THE AUDIENCE *HOWLS*.

"VIVIAN"

"My my. Mommy better take a closer
look."

As she heads down...

HALAS and MARGRAFF - watching the back of one patron's head. He sits at lavish table, overseeing the degeneracy he's created. ADAM BABBITT.

Halas gives a nod, and the Detectives slip through the crowd to a backstage door, unseen. They disappear through it as...

ON STAGE...a "KIDNAPPER" in a skimask, mimes climbing through a bedroom window, shocked at the perversities taking place in bed.

"KIDNAPPER"

"My gosh! Two for the price of
one."

As he joins the festivities, we pick up...

INT. THE MAJESTIC - HALAS AND MARGRAFF

Backstage's freakshow. The performers preparing, different characters in the Charles Lake saga. They linger in the wings for their "entrances."

Halas and Margraff pass backstage. Smoke filled rooms of burlesque performers, prop tables of dildos, bottles for insertions, opium smoked behind veiled curtain.

Margraff lingers in disbelief, Halas moving on with accustomed purpose.

A locked office door.

Margraff stands guard as Halas jiggles the lock. One, two, it busts open. As the two men enter - hold on a MIDGET PERFORMER, watching from the shadows.

He heads off urgently as...

INT. THE HOLE - OFFICE

Dark. Until flashlights click on, illuminate the office. More like a records facility.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A cot. Overflowing ashtrays. Fuck pics and set drafts on the walls. But the two Detectives move intently to the collection of file cabinets. The Detectives begin to read.

Folders and folders of illicit photographs. Bank records. Xeroxed police reports. As Margraff flips through a collection of black and whites...

Halas kneels beneath the cot where a combination lockbox is stashed. As he considers it...

MARGRAFF

Halas.

Margraff hands Halas a picture off the desk. Light hits it.

THE PHOTO - Halas beneath the bridge on the SeaPort, leading Ellen at gunpoint toward the water's edge.

MARGRAFF (CONT'D)

What is it?

Before he can answer...the lights flip on.

MAN

What the...! Halas?

The bald man from the audience. Adam Babbitt.

BABBITT

The fuck are you doing? I thought you'd retired from the smut business.

MARGRAFF

(presenting his badge)

Adam Babbitt? We'd like to ask you a couple questions about Charles Lake.

A beat. Babbitt nearly laughs, then takes off out the door.

The Detectives giving chase...

BACKSTAGE

Babbitt sprinting through dressing room. Leathered girls looking up...

THROUGH the STAGE HANDS pulling curtains, moving dressing...

THROUGH the back sex rooms, costumers serviced....

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The Detectives on his heels to the back entrance...

EXT. THE MAJESTIC - THAT MOMENT

Babbitt burst out the door through smoking performers, taking off down the street.

Halas and Margraff, a beat later, breaking at a dead sprint up the alleyway, after Babbitt.

Up Essex, blurring past south bound traffic...

Babbitt, looks back. The Detectives sucking wind. A hard right. A pedestrian overpass above the FDR. Babbitt leaping the stairs, two at a time.

Halas, closest at his heels...up the stairs, tearing over the highway, roaring below them.

Margraff, slower, panting. Struggling up the stairs. As Halas follows Babbitt down the far side, Margraff stops above the highway, sweating and purple faced. A hand to his heart. He's stops and catches wind. He's out.

Halas alone now, chasing Babbitt up the tremendous highway along the water.

20 feet ahead, Babbitt heads for the green globe of a subway station, leaps down the stairs. Disappears.

Halas, full tilt, stops at the stairways edge. Peers down. A moment. He draws his gun, descends...

INT. ESSEX STREET SUBWAY - NIGHT

Silently, Halas descends the steps. No one on the platform.

The booth: Empty of an attendant.

Halas hops the turnstiles, down the station stairs.

PLATFORM

Dead of night quiet. Vacant. Fluorescents flicker overhead. Trash on the tile grime. Halas recoils from a VAGRANT, passed out in his filth on the bench. Wrapped all around him. NY POSTS. Discarded. Fluttering. CHARLES LAKE.

Halas peers into the tunnel for the specter of an oncoming train. Only black. Nothing ahead.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BAM! Halas is decked as Babbitt comes out of the shadows. Gun held cock-eyed. He whips it at Halas face. Connects. Blood flying.

Halas falls to the edge of the platform.

THE TUNNEL; the first glint of light appears, as Babbitt comes over him. Takes him by the scruff of the neck.

BABBITT

You've been looking for that whore.

The trembling of an approaching train.

BABBITT (CONT'D)

You're too late.

Halas, strains to look up as...light catches the rail like a flame in distance and runs down the tunnel opening.

BABBITT (CONT'D)

You should of asked your partner.

The trembling louder. The light misting the tunnel opening. Blood hitting the platform as Halas is driving toward the edge. The train roaring forward on the tracks.

Babbitt pushing him toward the blinding light emerging from the darkness, churning for Halas.

He screams. Held out into the path over the precipice.

HALAS

Wait. WAIT! DON'T DON'T DON'T
DONT'!

Muffled by the writhing train. The face of the half asleep, now panicked CONDUCTOR blows white to see...

Halas, leaning in the path of the oncoming train.

Too close to break now. Pounds the HORN.

HALAS

Light barreling toward his blood covered eyes. He SCREAMS.

VOICE

FREEZE! Put him down and turn
around! Put him down and turn
around!

Margraff on the landing - gun leveled.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The train squeals into the station...just passing Halas; balancing a hair's breadth from the hurtling metal, as Babbitt sets him down.

MARGRAFF

Now turn around...

Slowly, he turns...metal in his hand. BAM! BAM! BAM! BAM!

The platform lights in a blast of fire. Beat. The light falls, the dust clears...Margraff stands unmoved. Babbitt dead on the ground.

The two cops collapse. Halas to the platform. Margraff to the bench, regarding the gun in his hands.

EXT. PRECINCT - MORNING

In last night's clothes, Halas, a bandage around his head watches...

Deep in the packed precinct, Denihan and Vivian are in the midst of a heated discussions.

VIVIAN

I don't know. Maybe we let them come to us. We back off and pay them and they won't...

DENIHAN

Vivian, I know that seems like the right decision, but it's just not that simple.

In another cluster of cops, SINCLAIR the butler is pumped by a dozen Detectives.

Margraff, arrives, hands Halas a cup of coffee. Takes a seat.

HALAS

(of Sinclair)
What's he doing here?

MARGRAFF

He IDed the suspects. Said they came by the house couple months back, looking for work.

(of Vivian)
She wants to shut the whole thing down.

Halas, watching the commotion as...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VOICE
Detective Halas?

A BABY FACED UNIFORMED COP stands before him, looking like he just drew the short straw.

BABY FACE
I woulda told you right when you came in but, you know, with all this...

HALAS
What?

BABY FACE
You put out a want sheet on the girl, right? 14, 15. Dark hair. Real stunner.

HALAS
Yeah.

Beat.

BABY FACE
I think we found her.

Off the Uniform's reluctant face...

EXT. BROOKLYN BRIDGE - MORNING

Halas, at a dead broken sprint, runs up the entrance to the bridge. To the center. He stops.

The police scene is all ready assembled. Police cars, sirens block the roadway. As Halas hesitantly approaches the edge, the policeman chattering.

POLICEMAN
We're not gonna get much out of these yokes. The yid that saw her go over'll still be drunk tomorrow. Just kept saying she hit the water like a bird. Just quiet.

Halas pushes passed them. To the edge. Below.

THE WATER

A POLICE BOAT trolls. Dragging a net cast out behind it. Spotlights illuminate the black water. Searching.

HALAS

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

On the bridge's edge. The city aglow before him. He hangs his head in despair as...

BELOW

The search lights hit the boat's wake. A FEMALE BODY is caught in the net, drug pale and ghostly from the depths.

INT. MORGUE - DAY

The body is viewed on the slab. The tray suspended in mid air, half removed from its locker. Ellen is of course its occupant, beached and etherial.

Halas views her along side MULVEHILL, the morgue attendant.

MULVEHILL

May have been the impact. You hit the water from that height, you might as well of jump from the Empire State. But she was naked when they fished her out. Now maybe the clothes come off in the water, but I'd bet someone took 'em off before.

(indicating wounds along her biceps)

See these bruises here, these are preexisting. Victim has multiple lacerations--here--and here--and this bruising across her clavical--superficial wounds on the hands and fingers.

HALAS

Defensive?

MULVEHILL

Might be. I'd put the date, time of these markings the same day--give or take a couple hours.

HALAS

And this?

He indicates a scar cutting north from her pelvis.

MULVEHILL

Cesarian. I'd say, 2 years ago. Hard to say exactly. The cause of the rest of these, difficult as well.

(indicates)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MULVEHILL (CONT'D)

These could be a forceful strike
with something like a stick. A thin
hard instrument.

(he demonstrates)

Could be a fucking strap on. I
don't know. But somebody worked her
over 'fore she took her swan song.
Still, she's got some face.

(Halas, fuming as...)

Oh, here's our man.

Mulvehill turns to greet a new member to the room. Halas goes
white. Sean Harris, still in pajamas, stands before them.

A hand to his mouth as he approaches the body.

MULVEHILL (CONT'D)

She's been IDed. I'm sorry to bring
you down here for a formality
but...

Sean passes Halas with a cold eye. Stands over the body.

ANGLE on the girl's face. Waterlogged and devastating. The
extent of her damage is severe.

Harris hangs his head. "*Yes, it's her.*" He cries.

Halas can only look on as...

CLOSE ON THE MORGUE FILE. Mulvehill fills in her name.

ELLEN GRAHAM.

INT. OUTSIDE THE MORGUE - JUST AFTER

Halas blows out the doors, heartsick. Directly into the path
of...

VIVIAN

No. You listen! He's my son. He's
my son and I won't let you use him
as some sort of political capital!
You shut it down.

Denihan and Vivian at the end of their argument.

DENIHAN

Vivian -

VIVIAN

Don't. You owe it to me. I know
what's at stake.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

You think about why you're standing
where you are today. You think
about it when you're back in your
leather chair counting poll
numbers. You owe us. You owe it to
us.

Vivian storms off, meeting Halas eyes. A moment. She's gone.

DENIHAN

So it was your girl?
(Halas is silent)
That's a nasty cut, son. Go take
care of it.

Halas departing.

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

It's a long road, Ryan and there's
no turning.

Halas, ready to burst...

EXT. FDR - NIGHT

Quiet. The black river. Industrial Brooklyn. Headlights
blazing up the highway:

I/E. HALAS CAR - NIGHT

Halas' spare revolver in his lap. A box of bullets vibrating
on the dashboard.

Halas' car takes an exit, "WESTCHESTER," speeds out of the
city.

EXT. WESTCHESTER - NIGHT

Headlights bleeding along the darkened suburban roads.

BRIAN LESPANE (FILTERED)

(on the radio)

And the fate of the Eaglet, this a
horrific reminder of his captors
intentions and resolve. As the
hours, days tick a way with still
no sign, hopes for a safe recovery
grow ever more dim.

Halas' TEMPO tears around a turn, heading into the distance.

EXT. RON KURKON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

His car pulls to a stop before a ostentatious house of the new money variety. He shuts off his lights. Unholsters his weapon.

INT. RON KURKON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Halas creeps down the familiar, darkened halls.

Various rooms of recently accumulated wealth. The children's bedrooms. Thick with spoils.

KITCHEN

Gun drawn, Halas stops.

WOMAN

He said you'd be coming.

MRS. KURKON's been crying. She sits at the kitchen table, smokes.

MRS. KURKON

I knew when he got involved with that family that they were rotten. The first night he'd come home from them, he had blood on his hands. I'd never seen that before.

HALAS

Is he here?

MRS. KURKON

He left an hour ago. Someone called. He just packed a bag and left.

(beat)

I don't think he's coming back.

Halas waits. Mrs. Kurkon pushes a folder across the table.

MRS. KURKON (CONT'D)

He left these for you.

As Halas eyes them.

MRS. KURKON (CONT'D)

That's the guy on the news, right?

Halas flips open the folder. A RAP SHEET. A MUG SHOT. TRUDY LITTLE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MRS. KURKON (CONT'D)
 You were partners, Ryan. What did
 you men do?

Halas can't answer. He's reading the file. A line circled in red.

KNOWN LOCATIONS: 10 STREET RUSSIAN BATHS.

MRS. KURKON (CONT'D)
 Good riddance, huh?

Off her face...

EXT. EAST VILLAGE - NIGHT

To the east, the Marquee of the PEARL ST. THEATER. To the West, the flophouse days before. The boarded windows. Graffitied doors.

Halas looks back to the park, which seems to steam as a post war battle field. He heads east on 10th St. A sign above a town house door reads: RUSSIAN BATHS.

INT. 10TH ST RUSSIAN BATHS - DAY

Immigrant, bearded faces look up as Halas rolls silently across the lobby, his badge extended.

A swarthy MAN behind the counter gestures to a descending staircase in a far corner. Halas nods, heads toward it.

DOWNSTAIRS:

The schvitz in an old town house populated by OLD JEWS, RUSSIANS, the occasional leering QUEER. Conversations of politics and business MURMUR the groups.

The oppressive heat hits Halas in the face. His clothes cling damp. All eyes falling upon this stranger among the towelled, glistening men.

He scours their faces, bringing conversations to a halt. All coy advances stopped. Their attentions instead to his raised badge. To the heated metal of his gun as he patrols past.

Silently from room to room. From face to face. In each, no sign of Trudy. No sign of suspicion until...

THE RUSSIAN ROOM:

Halas opens the door to scalding heat. All voices fall dim at the sight of him in the stone room, except for...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VOICE

--come on, man. 20 bucks. Just
twenty bucks. I'm good for it. You
know I'm good for it--

This too, now silent. The desperate voice from the small,
scant man in the corner, now withdrawing his pleading hand
from the thigh of a large, sopping Bear.

His hands up at the sight of Halas, dripping in the doorway.
The gun leveled upon him. TRUDY LITTLE.

TRUDY

Oh god! Don't shoot.

MAIN ROOM

Halas leads Trudy at an arms distance by the scruff of his
neck past gaping eyes. Trudy remains stoic.

But as they ascend the stairs, his future closing in on him,
he breaks into sobs. Halas pushes him forward.

MAIN FLOOR

As they reach the landing, the arriving costumers and swarthy
COUNTERMEN watch confounded at the captured prisoner.

HALAS

(to the counter)

Call 911. Tell them it's Detective
Halas for Captain Margraff in the
9th. I only want Margraff.

He picks up the phone. Trudy blubbers through tears.

TRUDY

Can't I at least get my clothes on.
I don't want them to all see me
like this. Don't make me go out
there like this.

As Halas considers, the door rings as new costumers enter.
Freeze at the odd spectacle.

In the brief confusion, Trudy breaks for the stairs...

No chance to shoot, Halas goes after him...

Trudy bolts up steps toward the second floor. Halas at his
heels...to the landing. Trudy stops, nowhere to run. Hands
raised passively, backing away as Halas approaches.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TRUDY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I swear. I never meant to hurt him.

Halas cracks. Tackles Trudy into the wall. Pounds him with rib shots. Punishing, defenseless blows.

FACES peer out from the MASSAGE ROOMS which line the hall, witness the beating, then just as quickly retreat to their indiscretions behind closed doors.

Halas, unable to stop. Demolishes the dismal figure.

Finally, he pulls away. Blood on his hands. Trudy Little; in a rumpled mess, bleeding, sweating onto the floor.

TRUDY (CONT'D)

I wanna--I wanna speak to -- I wanna talk to John Lake.

The look across Halas' face. Sober realization. The end of the line. Sirens begins to sound.

EXT. POLICE PRECINCT - NIGHT

PRESS, collected on the grand steps of the department. Rising in unison as...

From the arriving FORD TEMPO, Halas escorts Trudy Little out the door, covered only in a robe. Instantly, flashbulbs surround him.

PRESS

*Is he alive? Where's Charles Lake?
What do you say to Vivian Lake?*

Trudy, terrified. Halas, fighting their way up through the flashing crowd, pushing through the station doors where...

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - THAT MOMENT

Margraff greets their escape.

HALAS

How the fuck do they find out so fast?

MARGRAFF

They have informants at the dispatch offices. Denihan'll be on his way soon.

(regarding Trudy's face)
Who worked him over?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARGRAFF (CONT'D)
 (no comment)
 What's his story?

HALAS
 A CI. Kurkon busted him on
 prostitution charge in '85.

Halas, leading Trudy on by the cuffs.

MARGRAFF
 Where are you going?

HALAS
 I want first crack at him.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - LATER

Trudy is at the desk, shivering. Margraff tosses a plastic bag on the table.

MARGRAFF
 Here. I don't know that they'll fit
 but give 'em a try.

Clothes. Trudy takes them, dresses.

MARGRAFF (CONT'D)
 We know you haven't done this on
 your own, Trudy. We've both seen
 your file. You've got nothing
 violent in your priors. Generally,
 you queers aren't the type I peg
 for that stunt with the hand, but
 if that boy dies, it's not gonna
 matter who wielded the knife.

Eyes on Halas, eyeing several files in the back of the room.

TRUDY
 Can I talk to Kurkon?

Margraff and Halas exchange a look.

MARGRAFF
 What'd you wanna talk to him for?

TRUDY
 (getting dressed)
 I don't know. He was a cop, right?
 He hired us.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARGRAFF

Hired you for what?

(no comment)

You think this is a game? Trudy,
every cop in the country is looking
for that boy. You'll be lucky if
you don't get the gas chamber.

Margraff slams he table. Trudy jumps.

MARGRAFF (CONT'D)

Goddamn it, you little fuck! We
know you have him! We got
witnesses that put you in that
fucking car. Where he?

TRUDY

I don't know! I swear. I don't know
where he is!

MARGRAFF

(pushin off)

He's gonna give me a goddamn heart
attack.

A look to Halas, then he blows out the door, steaming.

Beat. Trudy, scared. Almost dressed now, save for a BELT
coiled on the table.

Halas takes a seat before him.

HALAS

Kurkon's gone, Trudy. He took off
last of night.

TRUDY

Look man, this kid. We had him. I
did, but I left. It wasn't my idea,
you know. It all started with this
girl.

HALAS

What girl?

TRUDY

That Kurkon put us on to. It was a
while back. She had some pictures
or something. We were supposed to
rough her up, you know.

Halas lays down a photo. Ellen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TRUDY (CONT'D)

Yeah, that's her.

HALAS

So you were supposed to rough her up. What happened?

TRUDY

I just needed the money, man. I'd do jobs for Ron from time to time. He called me, told me to find a friend. Some muscle, you know. To take care of this girl. They'd got a tip or something she was hiding out at the Plaza. But as soon as we got over there and he starts getting rough, she starts wailing and talking like a blue streak.

HALAS

You knew who Kurkon was working for?

TRUDY

Sure. I knew he sometimes worked for Cody, blackmail stuff caused he had me keep an eye out for nice dirt. Like an informant. You know.

HALAS

But Cody was dead?

TRUDY

Yeah, I know. Ron said he had a new guy. Look, we were there, she started balling. Telling us stuff that couldn't be true. Things you say when your, you know, to save yourself. Shit about the family. The Lake's. Vivian. Stuff they'd done. And man, that's how this all started. Robert, he got obsessed with this stuff. And Ellen. She was on her knees. Begging. Said, if we let her go, she'd tell us something we could make like a million, ten million bucks on. And that's when we let her go.

HALAS

What'd she tell you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Trudy, nothing. Halas places a folder before Trudy. Ellen's morgue shots.

TRUDY

We didn't...I didn't have nothing to do with that.

HALAS

Be cute. I'll climb over this table and knock your fucking teeth down your throat.

TRUDY

I didn't. I swear.

HALAS

What did she tell you? What'd you know? What'd Ellen tell you?

TRUDY

About the kid. That...that Vivian would pay us just to shut us up.

(Trudy begins to break)

Robert says it's perfect cause even if we get caught. Even if the kid died, god forbid, we'd be good because of what we knew. It'd be like...what's it called. A golden parachute. We were only going to keep him for a couple days. Things just got so complicated, you know. I mean, when we'd first got the kid, and we where out there in the woods. In the dead quiet, I remember, I just said to myself. Here we are. Here you are Trudy, with the most famous kid in the world and we had him, we had him right in our arms. Right out of his own bed, and it was just so easy. I just kept thinking, ain't this something.

(then)

I swear. It wasn't me. Cause Robert just went crazy. Said we needed to send 'em a message. So they knew we knew. And that's when...

Trudy begins to cry.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

HALAS

And you left him?
(yes)
Where is he, Trudy?

TRUDY

I swear. I swear to god I don't know. We were moving around so much.

HALAS

Is he still alive?

TRUDY

I think.
(pause)
I'm gonna fry for this, ain't I?
Maybe I could talk to the family.
Tell her I know what I done was wrong and...

Trudy, trying to find the words when the door opens.

VOICE

So this is our boy?

Commissioner Denihan comes up behind him.

DENIHAN

Trudy Little.
(to Halas)
So what is he, Detective? Hard or soft?

Off Halas' hands.

HALAS

Soft. With some hard spots.

Denihan looks to Trudy, who's fear has just ramped up a degree or two.

DENIHAN

Good work, Detective. I'm gonna want a word with you.
(to Trudy)
You know who I am, son?
(Trudy shakes his head)
Well I'm not the guy that makes threats. I'm the other guy. You understand?

Trudy nods.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

Good. Let us see if we can't come
to some understanding.

(a look to Halas)

Alone.

No fight. Halas leaves.

INT. OUTSIDE TRUDY'S CELL - THAT MOMENT

A swarm of police have gathered. Halas storms out.

The back of the room. Halas stands with Margraff, witnessing
their spoiled scene. In hushed tones...

MARGRAFF

I couldn't hold 'em off.

(then)

Is he alive?

HALAS

I don't know.

A moment. The door opens. Denihan bee lines for Halas.

VOICES

What'd he say?

DENIHAN

We're gonna have a little talk, you
and me.

No one sees Trudy in the window behind them, barricade the
door with his chair. Climb onto the table. Something in his
hand. A moment.

ANGLE ON HALAS - his eyes turn to see...

THE WINDOW - Trudy's feet on the table. A heartbeat. He steps
off, but doesn't fall. Suspended.

Halas is already breaking for the door. The knob won't turn.
He slams it. No give.

COP

He barricaded the door!

Now the crowd turns, *holy shit!* Trudy's feet suspended,
kicking off the ground.

The door. All rush to it with shoulders down as...

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - THAT MOMENT

Trudy's feet. The chair pinned under the door...breaks in pieces as the door bursts open and Cops topple in.

Halas goes right for him. Trudy, hanging from a pipe in the ceiling, the belt around his neck.

They all struggle to lift him up, to unstrap him. But it's a wasted effort. By the time he's laid on the desk, his face is white, breathless.

Halas stands over him, deflated. Denihan stands in the doorway. The men meet eyes.

EXT. DENIHAN CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

Rain casts down on the street. Inside the vast office floor, Campaign workers huddled around television sets in the midtown ground floor retail space, ala Taxi Driver.

INT. DENIHAN CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

In the back office, campaign paraphernalia all about, Halas is being reamed out by Denihan.

DENIHAN

You wanna be the lone wolf on this, kid. You put that boy in jeopardy today. Now I've had just about enough of this Sam Spade bullshit. You think I don't know what you've been up to? You're gonna tell me just what he told you in there and I want the god's honest truth. What did he tell you about that boy?

Mancuso and Hodges stand close by.

HALAS

Nothing.

DENIHAN

Nothing?

HALAS

He said he was sorry.

DENIHAN

(to his men)

The fucking balls on this guy.

(to Halas)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

You know, you're the worst kind of disappointment, Halas. Because you had all the tools, all the gifts and you still took the easy way out. You could have done something with your life. Done it on your own merit, but you didn't have the backbone to do the work. You didn't have the heart to slog through it. You thought, what? You're entitled to it.

Denihan turns to the window. Rain. The *gaslights* lit.

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

You know my father was a milkman, up and down Park Avenue. My mother worked the coat check at Bloomingdales. Gives an idea of how different things were. This city. So much of that charm is gone.

On the street, a CABDRIVER cleans mess from the seats of his car; a newspaper over his head to lessen the rain.

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

I worked my way up through the skin of my teeth without short cuts, or your privileges, but there is a limit to it. Arthur Cody allowed me to achieve things I couldn't have. He was not a populist but he cared about this city. He gave me clout.

Now turning back to Halas, a measured calm in face.

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

I bet you walked into that house, and thought you'd be pissing on ice for the rest of you life. Well don't think she didn't know it. Whatever guilt you carry around, this girl's got a reservoir that you can't even touch.

Denihan moves to the door. Opens it for Halas.

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

There're no more angles here. There're no more deals. There's no card to play. I'm sending you back to the D.A. and this time, you're gonna face what you've wrought.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

Stay away from her, Detective. You understand?

HALAS

(standing)

What about the boy?

DENIHAN

He's not your concern anymore. He's not any of ours. As far as were concerned, this case is closed.

(off Halas face)

That's the way she wants, so she gets it. Don't fuck with me, Halas. I'll slice you apart.

EXT. DENIHAN CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

Rain in a back alley. Halas, hands on his knees, retching. His wipes his mouth. Collar up against the rain. Heads off.

VIVIAN (V.O.)

It now appears evident that the immense attention, devoted to our son, well intentioned and otherwise, has hindered our ability to bring him home safely.

INT. HALAS APARTMENT/STAIRWAY - NIGHT

Halas struggles up the walk up. In the dim light, he looks dripping, broken. He reaches the clearing, leans against his door. Exhausted.

VIVIAN (V.O)

That is why tonight, we have asked to Police to suspend their investigation into the disappearance of our son and the men who have him.

Finally, he enters and shuts the door.

INT. HALAS APARTMENT - NIGHT

VIVIAN (FILTERED)

It is our belief that our best hope for Charles' safe return, is for all of us now to return to our daily lives and allow those men to contact us without fear of retribution from either the police or the media.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Vivian continues her press conference on TV as Halas, drink in hand, is back where we first met him. Once again regarding a packed bag. A chance to run.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

I know that in many ways my family has been blessed. Unfairly perhaps. We only ask that whatever grievances; however our extravagances and our mistakes have affected your life, that you understand, they are our own. Not our boys. We can not choose our family or the past. He is still an innocent, if we are not.

Halas, considering. He sets down his drink, looks to his bag.

FADE TO:

INT. PRECINCT - DAY

A CITY MAP. Dotted with thumb tacks. SIGHTINGS. LEADS. They cover the entire city. Though now, all unattended.

BRIAN LESPANE (FILTERED)

On the record, there is no longer an active investigation into his disappearance. But off the record, the search goes on in every street corner, bus stop, back alley of the country.

The ransom notes. The phone banks, the file center, abandoned. The precinct now quiet.

BRIAN LESPANE (FILTERED) (CONT'D)

100,000 man hours logged. Untold millions already spent. 4 weeks, 3 days passed and still no new signs of Charles Lake.

A few officers pantomime normal life. Some watching Denihan at a campaign stop on Television...

DENIHAN

My opponent seems to believe that if we help the very wealthy, it will trickle down to the rest of us. Well my friends, I say progress must begin on the streets and not in the boardrooms.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Mock applause from the cops in the precinct, though not from Halas. Absent. We must locate him...

EXT. MIDTOWN TUNNEL - MORNING

In a partolman's uniform, Halas idles in a Police Cruiser outside the tunnel, watching the trucks come and go.

A traffic cop.

INT. POLICE LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Halas changes out of his uniform, dressing in street clothes. Many other OFFICERS are here in friendly conversation...

OFFICER

He's ahead in the polls but that
don't mean shit till November.

... though not with Halas. He's silent. Alone with his thoughts. Focused on a picture, taped in his locker. We've seen it before, in his first apartment. Halas, as a boy. Pure and clean.

A last look. He shuts the door.

EXT. POLICE PRECINCT - DAY

Halas lights a cigarette, pockets Vivian's lighter, heads up the street when...

VOICE

Ryan. Ryan!

He turns. There, dourly disguised on the street, Vivian Lake, pulling down her sunglasses to reveal herself.

VIVIAN

I'm sorry. I didn't know how else
to find you. Is there somewhere we
can talk?

Off Vivian's face...

INT. HALAS APARTMENT - DAY

Halas, opening the door, allowing Vivian to enter. He follows.

HALAS

Can I get you a drink?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VIVIAN

What? No. Thank you. I'm fine.
I'm...John's staying in town at The
Plaza in case they contact. I can
only stay for a minute.

HALAS

(his hand on the bottle)
Mind if I?

Of course not. He pours himself a healthy glass. Sits.

HALAS (CONT'D)

Any word?
("no")
I didn't expect to see you again.

VIVIAN

Yes. Well it all happened so
suddenly, I...How are you? I read
about the indictments.

HALAS

I'm all right, I guess. Anyway, it
was a long time coming.

She manages a smile. She's frail, tired. Faded. A long
silence then...

HALAS (CONT'D)

You wanted to talk?

VIVIAN

You're still looking for her? Who
killed her?
(beat)
But you know, don't you?

HALAS

We worked together, Ron and I. For
five years in ad-vice. When I was
first on the force. I was just out
of school. I thought I had things
by the balls.

VIVIAN

On the Bowery?

HALAS

It was a free for all. Dope,
prostitutes. Nobody gave a shit.
Everybody was on the take.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HALAS (CONT'D)

The Commissioner practically encouraged it. Kept the neighborhood at his feet. Kurkon was like the fucking Mayor.

(then)

That's the first time I remember knowing it. Realizing. There was a difference. Money. Class.

VIVIAN

You were young.

(puts out her smoke)

It's not wrong to want those things.

HALAS

I'm 35 years old. At some point, you stop looking to play the angles and look in the mirror. "This is it." I'm gonna get up in the morning, and I'm gonna work, and I'm gonna do it to the day you die. You grow up, right? The bright lights -- You put away whatever that shit is.

(beat)

I should of put it away a long time ago.

She watches him, intent. A long moment.

VIVIAN

Could I have that drink now?

Halas goes into the kitchen. A moment later, he returns with a glass of Vodka.

HALAS

Sorry. There's no ice.

VIVIAN

It's all right.

She drinks.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

If I told you what happened to her, would that be enough? Could you stop?

(waits)

She came to us with those pictures. She wanted money. So we paid her.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

I asked Ron to make sure it was over. That's it.

HALAS

Did you know where he is? Ron.

VIVIAN

(shaking her head)

We just wanted to make sure...

HALAS

The ends were tied? Why do you stay with him? Why not just leave?

VIVIAN

I tried once, but not for a long time. I was in love once too, to a much older man. It was a long time ago. My father put an end to it. John was his idea. He was nothing when we were introduced. He was a state senator. My father made him a star. He created it. This family. In some ways, even Charles was his idea. I never wanted to be a mother.

Vivian drinks. The glass is empty. She sets it down.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

Anyway, I never handled those things. Our family secrets. My father did.

She fumbles for her cigarettes.

HALAS

You're a rich woman, Vivian. When you get him back, you can do whatever you like?

She scoffs. Lights.

VIVIAN

You didn't know my father, Ryan.

Halas watches her. She's exhausted. Emotionally.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

If my son's still out there, if he's still...I just...it doesn't matter. We're all responsible for our own decisions.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

No one makes them for us.

(then)

I doesn't matter if you believe me,
Ryan. It's the truth. Whatever else
I did to her, I didn't have her
killed. I don't think I could do
that. I wanted you to know that.

She puts her hand on Halas' and smokes. He watches. Silent.

INT. HALAS APARTMENT - LATER

A cigarette in hand, a single light on in the bedroom. Halas sits at the foot of the bed, regarding a well worn photograph. Ellen.

He flips it over in his hand. On the back, scrawled in Sean Harris hand. An INCIDENT NUMBER. #174182.

Halas considers it. Smokes.

INT. POLICE RECORDS ROOM - NIGHT

Middle of the night. Dead quiet. Halas waits at an unoccupied secretary's desk.

The SECRETARY returns, her face buried in a file.

SECRETARY

Ellen Graham?

(looks up to Halas)

There's a file on her, but not
under that number.

She hands it over to him.

HALAS' EYES ON THE FOLDER: "Ellen Graham"

SECRETARY (CONT'D)

Just some Juvenile Prostitution
bust. Looks like the court couldn't
locate her parents, and she chooses
spending three months in Juvey
rather than say who they are.

Halas flipping through the wrap sheet.

HALAS

(fingering the file)

She only serves 20 days of her
sentence. Someone must of signed
her release.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SECRETARY
Should be on there.

ANGLE ON THE SIGNATURE LINE: "R. DENIHAN."

Off Halas' face...

SECRETARY (CONT'D)
Now, what's strange...here's the
number you gave me.

Placing another file on the desk. #174182

SECRETARY (CONT'D)
It's not a incident report. It's a
call number. They correspond with
911 calls recorded by the routers.
They're transcripts.

Halas opens the file. Dates. Addresses. Halas flips the page.

HALAS
There's nothing here.

SECRETARY
Don't you think that's strange.
(as Halas figures)
I'm not a Detective but I read the
magazines, you know. Isn't that
where Arthur Cody lived?
(points to the address)
The Monroe Stahr.

Halas' eyes.

HALAS
This is the date?

Writing it down. July 14, 1987.

INSERT: FADING NEWSPAPER HEADLINES. MICROFICHE.

"Tragic Accident Claims DuPont's Life." The image of the
Porsche smashed against the stone wall.

"Twice a widower. Starlet daughter witness to bloody wreck."
A STUDIO PUBLICITY PHOTO of a young, ethereal VIVIAN LAKE.

All viewed by Halas in...

INT. NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY - NIGHT

Halas huddles in the mircrofiche booth.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The faximile of newspaper print scrolls across the screen. Pauses. Halas perks up.

"A CALAMITOUS YOUTH: Vivian Cody; a sad reminder of the pratfalls of life among the elite."

A variety of images illustrate Vivian's turbulent adolescence. The predominant themes; booze; drugs; sex.

Vivian at 14-15-16, on the arms and laps of famous and illustrious men. The Lolita of powerful men's hearts. The articles slow to reveal this image:

Nymphet Vivian exits a Hollywood party. She's coked to the gills, and clutches to the arm of a theatrical, artistic figure - 15 years her senior in sunglasses and tweed. A Bogdanavichish director perhaps. Or a writer. The caption...

"Vivian and playwright Adam Babbitt live the nightlife."

The blurring newsprint. Next:

"A Stern Warning: Grieving Father Lays Down Law."

Arthur Cody's return. Cody, with the help of a Security Guard, escorts a shaken Vivian, down the front steps of a house. Adam Babbitt watches from the porch.

Halas, inches from the screen. Pushing in on the face of that Security Guard. *Ray Denihan.*

"A Marriage for the Ages. Cody weds rising Political Star."

Vivian escorted down the aisle by John Lake.

"He's Here!"

In a hospital bed, Vivian and John present their baby to the world. Now held by his proud Grandfather; Arthur.

ANGLE ON HALAS

The next slide.

"911 Call evokes troubled pasts."

"Police respond to an emergency call placed from this address. 723 Riverside Drive. Home of John and Vivian Lake....Lake family deny the call was ever placed."

This time, the picture shows a single police cruiser parked before the Monroe Stahr.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The date. July 14, 1987. Hold.

EXT. NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY - NIGHT

Halas runs down the steps of the judicial building.

EXT. THE MAJESTIC - LATER

Police tape over the doors. Leanne, the prostitute, watches as Halas checks his surroundings, flicks a knife. Cuts the tape. His hand on the knob.

INT. THE MAJESTIC - JUST AFTER

The once packed theater is vacant. The lights out. The stage empty.

Halas and Leanne pass through it toward...

BACKSTAGE

Halas tries the door to Adam Babbitt's office. Locked. A moment. He steps back, unsheathes his gun...BAM!

The door splinters. Halas pushes it open...

INSIDE

Much as it was last scene. Files collecting dust. Leanne considers them reverentially. Halas pushes through them towards...the lockbox beneath the cot. Looks to Leanne.

She's opens a door in his desk. A bible. She opens the cover, a rip in the facing. Leanne removes a key. Off Halas face...

LEANNE

You figured God didn't exist in a place like this. Little miracles.

The key in hand, Halas tries the lock. The door pops open.

Cash. Drugs. Pictures. Halas reaches for the hidden stash, but removes only a single item. A cassette tape.

LEANNE (CONT'D)

What is it?

A moment. Halas hands her the stacks of cash.

HALAS

Get lost, all right.

She considers it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LEANNE

You're a decent guy, Halas.

HALAS

It ain't out of gallantry.

She flips through the cash.

LEANNE

It's really something, ain't it.

She smiles, and runs out. Halas, alone. Regarding the tape.

JUST LATER

The cassette in a tape deck. Halas presses the button. The wheels begin to turn. A voice sounds...

OPERATOR (FILTERED)

911...what's your emergency?

Sobbing.

OPERATOR (FILTERED) (CONT'D)

Sir...can you hear me?

MALE VOICE (FILTERED)

I think he's dead!

OPERATOR (FILTERED)

You think someone has died?

MALE VOICE

He's not breathing! Jesus christ
he's not breathing! Oh my god.
Please hurry!

OPERATOR (FILTERED)

All right, Sir. I'm sending someone
right away. Can you tell me who's
not breathing?

MALE VOICE (FILTERED)

It's our son. Please hurry. He's
bleeding very badly.

OPERATOR (FILTERED)

I'm going to get you help. Can you
tell me where you are? Can you tell
me your name?

MALE VOICE (FILTERED)

My name's John Lake.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

OPERATOR (FILTERED)
 Ok, Mr. Lake. And you at 782
 Riverside Drive? Is that correct?
 Sir...

JOHN (FILTERED)
 He---he fell. My wife...Please, for
 Christ sakes, hurry.

OPERATOR (FILTERED)
 John, I didn't understand you. Is
 that your address? 782 Riverside
 Drive?

Silence.

OPERATOR (CONT'D)
 Sir? Sir, is that your-

The line goes dead. Stop. Hold on Halas.

EXT. PEARL STREET THEATER - NIGHT

Halas hurries inside.

INT. PEARL STREET THEATER - NIGHT

...down the dark, vacant aisle.

HALAS
 (calling out)
 Sean! Sean, it's Ryan Halas--

He stops. Before him on the empty stage, Sean Harris is
 still. His wrists cut. Dead. Pooling blood.

For a long time, Halas is silent. A noise emanates from
 another room. Like the SOUND of a RECORD CLICKING, come to
 the end of it's reel.

DRESSING ROOM

Halas enters, wafts his nose. The smell of something rancid.

The sound is louder here. A bouquet of roses sit on the
 vanity. Ellen's pictures in memoriam. Halas locates the odors
 source. A wastebasket on the ground. It's contents burnt.
 Ashen.

Halas looks closer. Stacks and stacks of bills, Ellen's
 money, torched.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The CLICKING LOUDER. Halas finds that source. A reel to reel projector at the end of it's spool.

Halas presses rewind. The wheels spin back, the tape collects. Stops. Halas, presses play.

ON SCREEN:

Ellen Graham is on the stage at the Majestic. It's several years ago. She is young. She steadies herself, deep breath, bats her big does eyes directly into the lens and ...

ELLEN

"And of course she had a pool. Who didn't then? Mabel Normand and John Gilbert must have swum in it ten thousand midnights ago, and Vilma Banky and Rod La Roque. It was empty now...or was it?

(feigns looking into the distance)

It was all very queer, but queerer things were yet to come."

And then a MAN'S VOICE sounds out. Familiar. Sharp.

MAN (O.S.)

OK. You can stop there.

She stops and waits. Her heart pounding. Her eyes drift off screen to where the VOICE called out.

MAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Now where'd you say you were from again, honey?

ELLEN

Little bit of all over, I guess.

MAN (O.S.)

And your family?

(silence)

Your folks?

Ellen falls extremely shy. Silent.

MAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

That's all right. Do us a favor now. Just look right back into the camera and tell us your name again.

Ellen stares dead ahead. Tries a smile...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The tape cuts to static. The spools spinning, stop.

A moment. Halas recoils. Hits rewind.

EXT. PEARL STREET THEATER - NIGHT

Halas exits.

Before him, Tompkins Square is teeming. Tensions are mounting. Trouble in the air.

Halas heads for his car, while elsewhere in the park...

PAYPHONE

On the corner of 7th and A. A hand dials numbers scrawled on a napkin. The phone to his ear.

VOICE (FILTERED)
Hello?...Hello?

MAN
I need to speak to Vivian.

VOICE (SINCLAIR)
Who's calling please?

The booth is occupied by Robert Price.

ROBERT
I'm the man who has her son.

EXT. THE MONROE STAHR - NIGHT

The Chateau throws tremendous shadows across the estate. Head-lamps dark, Halas' car comes up the long drive toward the house.

As Halas exits the car, comes up the courtyard steps...

SINCLAIR
Mr. Halas. Are they expecting you?

Sinclair has stood up from preparing the Rolls for a drive.

HALAS
I don't think so.

As he cleans his hands, he gestures Halas toward the house.

SINCLAIR
Please, I tell them you've arrived.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HALAS

Tell her I'll see them out here.

Halas and Sinclair share a moment of understanding.

EXT. THE MONROE STAHR - JUST LATER

Halas waits where he first arrived at the house, months before. In the small grave site just off the Mansion. Considering the ancient stones. But this, much more so the single unnamed, undated marker. The small marble crucifix above the grave.

John and Vivian, stopping first to hand a large suitcase to Sinclair at the car, come now beside Halas.

HALAS

You're going somewhere?

VIVIAN

You haven't heard? They called.
We're meeting in an hour to make
the exchange. Ryan, it's over!
We're getting him back.

They look down at the gun, pointed from Halas' hand.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

Ryan?

HALAS

How'd it happen?

JOHN

What's he talking about?

HALAS

I'll make it easy on you. You never
wanted all this and Charles was,
what? One more thing holding you to
it. You wanted to leave. You were
angry at John. You were angry at
your father for your whole life.
And with the baby gone, there'd be
nothing holding you to it.

VIVIAN

What?

HALAS

I heard the tape. I've seen the
money you paid her.

(silence)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HALAS (CONT'D)

She came to Babbitt cause she
looked like you. And Denihan had
her booked, and your father cut her
a deal to let her go.

VIVIAN

Can't we -- let's talk in the car.
We're getting him back. Later.
We'll talk. I'll tell you
everything. But not now, Ryan.
Please. Later.

HALAS

He's not yours. He's not real.
(a look to the grave)
He was your child and you hid him
away like a...you replaced him like
he was...

VIVIAN

I won't listen to this anymore.
It's ridiculous. It's just-

BAM! All jump as Halas fires off a warning shot.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

You're crazy. You don't know what
you're talking about. We don't have
time.

And she starts purposefully toward the car.

JOHN

Vivian. Vivian! Please. It's all
right. We'll go.
(then, finally)
I know you don't understand,
Detective, but it's true. No one
could know.

Beat. Vivian slaps John in the face.

VIVIAN

Shut up!

JOHN

Shh. It's all right, Viv.

HALAS

She had nothing. She was a kid and
you took it from her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JOHN

He was better off with us.

HALAS

But she wanted him back. And you sent those men to shut her up. You sent me to finish it. But then she told them the truth and they used it against you. You wouldn't do the dirty work so you have Kurkon do it for you.

JOHN

I'm sorry. I know you wanted it to be one way, but it's not that way.

Now taking Vivian in his arms. She crumbles.

VIVIAN

It was just an accident, Ryan. It was just...bad luck.

HALAS

Was it? God, you're so careless.
(to Vivian)
You have everything and you don't understand it. People would give everything for this.

JOHN

Haven't we? You know Detective, it turns out the sacrifice is of a much more private part of yourself.
(then)
I'm sorry. You're a decent man, it seems. But now we have to go.
Please.

Approaching from the dark, a gun in Halas' back. Ron Kurkon.

John takes their coats.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. I know it isn't fair.
It's just the way it is.

And he escorts a broken Vivian to the car. Sinclair closes the doors as they climb inside and pulls away.

Halas and Kurkon alone. The gun between them. Looking down at the graves before the house.

EXT. SEAPORT - NIGHT

Ron leads Halas at gunpoint through the now familiar docks. Quiet. The water, black beneath the cliff.

HALAS

You don't have to do this.

KURKON

We can't run anymore, Ryan. I'm sorry. Just a little further now.

He leads him along. A dark corner just ahead.

OVERPASS

Halas stops his march beneath the overpass where he'd stood with Ellen so long ago. The river just before them. Their shadows throw long across the pavement.

KURKON (CONT'D)

This is it. Quiet now.

HALAS

Make it fast, all right?

The gun shakes in Kurkon's hands. Halas waits the final verdict. His finger trembles.

He can't do it. Kurkon lowers the gun.

Halas, puts out his hand.

HALAS (CONT'D)

Give it to me, Ron. It's all right. I know.

Kurkon, crying. He places the gun in Halas' hands.

Halas weighs it.

HALAS (CONT'D)

She never told me anything, Ron.

(then)

What'd you do with her? You took her here? Like old times?

KURKON

It was both of us, remember. You led me to her. It was for us.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HALAS

Where are they meeting him? Where's the drop?

KURKON

It's in...it's at Marble Cemetery. On Second Avenue.

HALAS

Downtown?

KURKON

I'm sorry, man. God, I'm just so...She didn't beg, Ryan. I was quick. I was really-

BAM! A flash in the tunnel. Kurkon's face alights. Stumbles back.

Blood spills from his mouth. He looks in Halas' eyes the gun is pulled away from his stomach, smoking.

Kurkon falls to his knees. Blood lets out around him.

For just a moment Halas watches his face go cold.

THE RIVER

Halas, walking quickly along the water. Wiping down the gun in his hand. A look around him. He pitches it into the river.

It hits quiet in the dark. Halas takes off running.

INT. DERELICT APARTMENT - NIGHT

A squalid, empty space. A single crumbling arm chair occupies its center, upon which "Charles Lake" sits. A bandage round his wrist.

Robert walks into the frame, approaches the child. Cloaks the baby's head in a ski mask. Exits.

Pull out from Charles, hooded, alone on his awkward throne.

EXT. WESTSIDE HIGHWAY - NIGHT

City lights passing along the windshield of Halas' Ford. Only the voice on the radio.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRIAN LESPANE

For months here, tensions between the residence of this neighborhood and a wealthy city spreading into it have mounted, and tonight they have come to a head.

He speeds south towards...

EXT. TOMPKINS SQUARE - NIGHT

Brian Lespane, reporting before an angry crowd.

BRIAN LESPANE

There is already an incredible police presence around the gates of the park as you can hear behind me, protestors are fervent. If you can't make it out, they are saying "CLASS WAR. CLASS WAR." It is quite a scene.

Tompkins Square, needle park. 500 starving artists, junkies, squatters occupy the park. Waving signs, bottles in hand. Camcorders documenting.

A bottle streams through the air, smashes at the feet of POLICE at the gates. They jump. All are hotblooded.

INT. 9TH PRECINCT - NIGHT

CLOSE ON A PA SPEAKER:

PA SPEAKER

All available personnel, assistance in need at 7th Street. Avenue A. Overtime has been approved for all officers volunteering to assist with the protest at Tompkins Square.

The full strength of the unit in RIOT GEAR. A great commotion under way.

EXT. EAST VILLAGE - NIGHT

Halas' Ford cruising down oddly vacant streets. Crossing an avenue. Halas stops.

A foreign sight. Cadence footsteps as the RIOT POLICE ARRIVE up the avenues heading to the park. POLICE LIGHTS in tow. A platoon of MOUNTED POLICE trot down Avenue B. Horse breath under streetlights.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

It's an incredible show of force. Of occupation.

Halas, a last look at the parade - he continues on.

Several hundred feet ahead, the car comes to a stop.

Halas parks before an unassuming iron gate in the middle of store fronts on 2nd Avenue. A small crest accounts its history. The New York Marble Cemetery.

INT. HALAS' FORD TEMPO - SAME

Halas opening the glove compartment. Removes his firearm. He loads the chamber. Steadies himself. Snaps it shut.

EXT. MARBLE CEMETERY - NIGHT

Cautiously, he enters. The gate leads Halas through a narrow passage way, cut between two buildings. Finally giving way to...

The graveyard is wrapped by stone walls, secluded from the city in the center of a block. Its tombs, mausoleums, monuments spread across an idyllic, rolling lawn. It is tranquil, and utterly withdrawn from the city around it.

At the far end of the pasture, SEVERAL DARKS FIGURES gather by a tomb.

Halas, hands on his gun. He creeps closer to hear...

VOICE

All right. That's good. Set it down right there.

He approaches the gathering. Vivian and John lay the money out before Robert Price.

The ransom conducted among impressive monuments, the text book names.

Halas, concealed behind a mausoleum, watches...

ROBERT, kneeling to examining the money.

ROBERT

It's all here?

VIVIAN

Yes. It's there. Where's our son?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBERT

All right. He's close by. A couple blocks from here...

But as Robert closes the bag and stands, John levels a gun at him.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

VIVIAN

John!

JOHN

I'm sorry. We can't let you go.

ROBERT

This is the deal. I haven't told anybody. I haven't...nobody knows. I kept my word.

But John steps closer.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

You're crazy, man. Think about the kid. What about...

John cocks the gun as...

HALAS

Don't move! Stop right there!

Halas steps out, gun trained.

VIVIAN

Ryan...

BAM! A shot fires.

Vivian SCREAMS. John holds the side of his face, stunned. He pulls his hand away, wet in the moonlight.

Robert's gun smokes. Shaking in his hands. Robert and Halas in a face off.

ROBERT

If I don't get back, that kid's as good as dead.

(picking up the money)

I'm walking out now.

(backing through the stones)

Nobody better follow.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ROBERT (CONT'D)

I swear to god, anyone comes, I'll
cut his face off.

Robert, at the gate with his bag of millions.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

No reason it had to be like this.

A last second, he bolts out the door.

JOHN, bleeding badly from his neck, finally stumbles. Falls
to his knees.

Vivian SCREAMS, runs to his side, trying to contain the
wound.

VIVIAN

(to Halas)

Please! He needs help. Call 911!

Halas watches in limbo. The sound of Robert's footsteps
escaping away.

VIVIAN (CONT'D)

Ryan...please. He needs an
ambulance. Please. He's all I have
left. Ryan, where are you...Ryan!
Ryan!

But Halas' turned, sprinting toward the gates after Robert,
disappeared into the night.

Vivian SCREAMING after him. John lying in her arms.

EXT. 2ND AVENUE - THAT MOMENT

A strange pulse on the street. Empty, though WILD SOUNDS are
heard in the distance. Far ahead, huge crowds are seen
tramping north up the city.

Halas searches. Nothing. Then, a shadow dashing beneath a
street lamp. Halas pulls his gun. Too late. Robert is gone.
Following the crowds.

Deep breath, Halas takes off. Sprinting after him toward...

EXT. TOMPKINS PARK - NIGHT

Illuminated by spotlights, crisscrossing the increasingly
drunk and agitated crowd. Ghattobirds hover overhead. The
junkies' VOICES rise in the air. The PATROLMEN at stiff
attention, hands on night sticks. Tensions at a breaking
point.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Protestors YELL obscenities. Finally, a hand comes flying. A BEER BOTTLE streams through the air. Smashes at a COPS feet. A horse nays, up on hind legs as...

The air now rains down with bottles and beer cans; crashing all around the COPS. Shields up. Deflecting the damage. A WHISTLE BLOWS. Time to break heads. Raising their night sticks, the police storm the park.

EXT. 2ND AVENUE - SAME

ANGLE ON ROBERT

Clutching the trunk in his arms, sprinting up 2nd Avenue where PROTESTORS stream in all directions, flooding the streets near the park.

He quickens his pace to join the mob, then enters it. Checks over his shoulder, then slows to the march of the crowd and blends in. Disappears.

ANGLE ON HALAS

Reaching the crowds at a sprint. A running COP'S RADIO SQUAWKS as he blurs past Halas.

DISPATCHER

...repeat. All available officers
in the vicinity of Alphabet City,
please respond. Riot in progress.
Repeat...

In the flowing streets, Halas searches the faces heading toward the park. Young and old, artists and junkies. No sign of Robert till...

A face looks furtively back. There he is, dipping out of the crowd into an alley and vanishes.

Halas pushes through the mob after Robert.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Robert, gripping the money to his chest, walks quickly beneath the dark fire escapes, where a group of KIDS prepare MOLITOV cocktails behind a dumpster.

HALAS, gun drawn, turns into the mouth of the alley. The parade of protestors passing behind.

Ahead, Halas sees the BOYS behind the dumpster, though no sign of Robert.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

 HALAS
 (to the boys)
 Which way?

They shrug. Though a wad of bills sticking from a LITTLE GUYS pocket betray their sincerity.

Halas moves deliberately ahead toward where the shadow of a doorway where...

ROBERT waits with out breathing. A gun clutched to his chest. Hands trembling as the shadow of Halas slides toward him along the alley way. Finger on the trigger. He waits.

HALAS, eyes caught up ahead at a glimpse of the teeming TOMPKINS PARK, steps now to the opening of the doorway when..

 VOICE
 What the - the fuck are you kids
 you doing?

Halas turns to see...

The MOLITOV kids, discovered by a group of PATROLMAN who now push them up against a wall.

 COPS
 You little shits.

And commence to WAILING AWAY at them. The kids are pummeled as a bottle drops off the dumpster, crashes to the crowd, and explodes. Sending a burst of flame, alighting the alley way.

For a moment, Halas is wide-eyed. Till he turns back toward the doorway and...it's empty.

ROBERT running toward the alley opening...

HALAS giving chase, as the two men come into full view of...

THE TOMPKINS SQUARE RIOT

The spotlights crisscrossing the park where a full scale riot is now underway. No barrier now. Police entangle with angry protestors. Cuffs are slapped on. Beatings are delivered.

We find Margraff, holding back, witnessing the fray. Bad vibes. Until a bottle cracks across his back. He staggers, stands. Breaks. Attacks the first thing he sees.

ANGLE ON HALAS, stopped mesmerized in the street. And...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Robert, his escape ground to a halt in the middle of the pavement as...a single HORSE, loose from his rider, tramples up the street in a spooked panic, gallops passed him up and turns a corner. Robert watches it go, transfixed then...

HALAS

Hold it, Robert. Don't move.

Halas, gun at his head, approaches. Robert is still. It's done. He drops the money down and raises his hands. Halas carefully approaches, removing his cuffs, as suddenly the CROWDS, storming from the avenues envelope them, filling a gap between the two men.

Robert, a chance at freedom. He looks to the money on the ground. Then to Halas. No choice, he takes off into the park.

Halas gives pursuit, into the storm.

EXT. TOMPKINS PARK - SAME

Halas, avoiding crashing objects, pushing through bodies swarming and bloody. Price's fleeing figure ahead of him. Finally through the gap...

ROBERT; hoping a fence, out of the park, taking off down 8th street.

HALAS; a beat behind. Hops the fence, tearing off after him. Right passed...

Denihan and his lieutenants, converging on the riot. As they watch Halas sprint by...

EXT. 8TH ST - NIGHT

Robert tearing up the street, against of the tide PEOPLE racing to the park. Sirens, screams all around. Halas at his heels.

A squalid brownstone up ahead. Robert leaps the steps, hits the door. Enters.

INT. EAST VILLAGE FLOPHOUSE - SAME

Robert, running up the stairs to an apartment, barreling past an ELDERLY NEIGHBOR on her door step...

EXT. EAST VILLAGE FLOPHOUSE - SAME

Halas, coming through the crowds to the flophouse door where Robert entered. He grips his gun. Pushes open the door. Peers into the lobby. Empty. Eyes on the staircase.

INT. EAST VILLAGE FLOPHOUSE / APARTMENT - SAME

The door pops open. Robert enters, slams it shut. Catching wind. Sweating. Panicked.

A STRUNG OUT YOUNG WOMEN enters from a side door, startled to see Robert, but quickly excited.

WOMAN

Where is it? Where's the money?

ROBERT

Get all your shit. Get the kid.

WOMAN

Where is it?

SIRENS sounding in the distance.

ROBERT

Get your shit, Kate. We gotta get the fuck out of here.

KATE (FROM HERE ON OUT)

Where's the money? Bob, let me see it. (then) You didn't get it?

ROBERT

If you wanna come, you've got 30 seconds to get your shit together and go. They're on their way now.

(SIRENS. She just stands there)

Kate!

KATE

What about him?

They look to corner. Masked in the chair where we last found him; Charles Lake.

KATE (CONT'D)

Robby, there's a million cops outside. We can't take him.

(beat)

What are we going to do?

Robert goes to the window. Far in the distance, the sounds and dim sights of the coming riot in the park. The flash of sirens all around.

Robert considers what lays before him. This girl. This baby. He breathes deep. Withdraws his gun.

INT. FLOPHOUSE / ENTRY WAY - NIGHT

Halas, gun drawn, creeps up the stairs. One floor. Two floors. Passing Robert's trembling neighbor on her stoop.

She points to an upstairs apartment. Halas nods. Coming round the banister.

INT. EAST VILLAGE FLOPHOUSE - SAME

KATE

What are you doing?

Robert's gun, trained tightly on Charles in the seat.

ROBERT

We can't do anything with him now.

KATE

But he's -- isn't there something else?

A heartbeat. Robert now turns the gun on her.

ROBERT

I just wanted something fresh,
Kate.

She weeps. Robert pivots the gun back to the now crying child. Back to the Kate. He slows his breath.

EXT. 8TH ST - THAT MOMENT

Denihan and his men following the scent toward the flophouse when...

BAM! BAM! Two gunshots fire in quick succession from a building above. They all freeze. Eyes to the door.

INT. FLOPHOUSE / ENTRY WAY - NIGHT

As does Halas on the stairs. The OLD WOMAN screams. A moment, then -

BOOM! The final shot rings out through the building. Then silence. Halas bounding up the stairs. To the door.

Slowly, gun in hand, he pushes it open.

HALAS

Don't move! Stay right there.

To the frightened OLD WOMAN beginning to creep up the stairs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

With a deliberate calm, Halas moves into the room.

EXT. FLOPHOUSE - THAT MOMENT

The crowds have turned now with the sounds of gun shots, and are descending upon the flophouse door. Among them...

MANCUSO

Back! Everyone clear the door! No one comes through this door.

As Denihan and his men prepare to enter.

INT. EAST VILLAGE FLOPHOUSE - SAME

In the stairway, Robert Price's ELDERLY NEIGHBOR tentatively scales the stair following Halas. The door ajar before her. With a trembling hand, she pushes it open.

Hold. Her knees go weak as she GASPS.

ANGLE ON HALAS, slowly witnessing the end.

On the empty flophouse floor, Kate lies in pooling blood. Several feet away, so does Robert. The final shot to own his head. And there in the corner, Charles' throne vacant, tossed side ways on the floor. The baby fallen to the ground.

The OLD WOMAN screams again. Halas silences her, and approaches the baby. He kneels before him, and picks him up.

A beat. The baby cries. Alive.

And Halas removes the mask from his face.

OLD WOMAN

My god!

The Eaglet is unharmed. As the woman puts a hand to her mouth...

DENIHAN

Is he all right?

Denihan and his men occupy the doorway.

OLD WOMAN

It's a miracle.

DENIHAN

I think so.

Halas stands. The child in his arms.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

There's no fight, son. We'll handle it. This is the way it needs to be done.

HALAS

The way you handled Ellen? You put me off her from the beginning. Why, what was in it for you? Just the future.

DENIHAN

There's no time, son. Everyone will be here in a minute.

(Sirens already begin to sound)

We all got well here, Ryan. People will know who you are. It's time to think about what you want.

(as voices in the halls now grow louder)

This here. It's got nothing to do with her. With any of them. It's just a natural thing. It's just the tide of the city. It's turning now, I think. Here...

(the crowds beginning to form)

You take him, Ryan. You've earned it. You bring him back to her.

Voices now climbing up the stairwell.

DENIHAN (CONT'D)

You either run now, or you own it, but you can't have both. The choice is yours, son, but you need to make it now.

Faces already crowding the open doorway. Openmouthed at the crime scene. Then at the baby. A flashbulb goes off.

MURMURS

Is that really...?

Many flashbulbs now.

DENIHAN

Well? What's it going to be? There won't be some other time.

As the voices grow louder up the stairs, hold on Halas.

INT. EAST VILLAGE FLOPHOUSE - NIGHT

In the stairwell, neighbors crowd the doorway as Police push up the stairs, "keep back! Everyone keep back."

They hardly notice Halas, as he squeezes from the room and heads down the crowded steps, alone.

EXT. EAST VILLAGE ALLEY - NIGHT

Pull out to the street, where ambulances and crowds from the park have converged, pushing into the building.

Passing through the pandemonium, moving against the tide, is Halas.

We pull out from him, a small figure in the massive swell of the city.

EXT. TOMPKINS PARK - LATE NIGHT

The park smolders, now vacant of protestors in the predawn light. The last few Police cross the debris of the park, escorting cuffed participants toward waiting ambulances, paddy wagons. Police Sirens pull off into the night.

Here we find Halas, sitting beside Margraff, polishing off a bottle of Jameson in the empty park. They laugh at something private.

MARGRAFF

And they know?

(Halas nods)

Save it for a rainy day.

(they laugh)

You can start over with me, any day
you choose.

HALAS

How far back can you take me?

They laugh. Margraff makes the sign of the cross.

MARGRAFF

My child, I do believe you are a
man.

With that, a last drop, and Margraff tosses the bottle shattering into the street, among a hundred others. Walks away. Halas, alone on the bench.

CONTINUED:

ARTHUR CODY (V.O.)

If the possibility of America is
alive today, and I believe it is,
then it owes its survival to this
city and these streets.

EXT. WESTSIDE HIGHWAY - NIGHT, LATER

Once again, break lights line the horizon up ahead. 92 Street
- Riverside Drive. Up on the hill, traffic, floodlights, a
spectacle illuminates the night.

ARTHUR CODY (V.O.)

For it's in this harbor where we've
anchored our most valued qualities.

EXT. THE MONROE STAHR - NIGHT

National media assembled outside the gates of "*the most
lavish home ever built on the Manhattan island.*"

A single POLICE SIREN cuts through the crowd.

ARTHUR CODY (V.O.)

From our shores, Walt Whitman
wrote, "*Other lands have their
vitality in a few, a class...*"

The gates to the mansion open. A lightning storm of
flashbulbs envelope the car, where...

I/E. POLICE CRUISER - SAME

Vivian cradles Charles in her lap. Cameras exploding all
around them in the windows.

ARTHUR CODY (V.O.)

"...*but we have it in the bulk of
our people.*"

The car pulls onto the drive, it passes Denihan, holding his
post at the entrance. A hand raised to the waiting press
line. Halas, not beside him.

The car pulls up to the house. The gate closes behind.

FADE TO:

ARTHUR CODY, THE SAME FOOTAGE WHERE WE WERE FIRST INTRODUCED.

ARTHUR CODY (FILTERED)

In the bleakest of times, I find
solace in that.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARTHUR CODY (FILTERED) (CONT'D)

We are all capable of spectacular
achievement. It takes only but the
heart and the will. And the mind.

We hear the opening notes of "*FIVE YEARS*" by *DAVID BOWIE* as
we...

FADE TO BLACK.