THE COVER

Pilot

"The Bike Thief"

Written by

Matt Michnovetz

Created by

Matt Michnovetz and Alex Hertzberg

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ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. KENMORE SQUARE BAR -- NIGHT

START ON A WATCH. Inexpensive. The time reads: 11:45pm. PULL BACK TO REVEAL it's on the arm of...

ZACH WEBER, early 20s, good-looking, toned with a medium build. He's got mature eyes that carry an acute wariness. He's sipping a beer at a crowded outdoor bar. The Sox won tonight and it's packed.

A Boston COLLEGE GIRL is squeezed next to him, chatting with her friends. Zach watches her get hit on by one guy after another. All of them shot down.

ZACH
Gotta give them credit for tryin'.

The college girl glances over at Zach.

COLLEGE GIRL
Do I?

She frowns. Zach grins and takes a sip of his beer.

ZACH
The odds are stacked against them.
Stiff competition.

COLLEGE GIRL
Too many boys. Not enough men.

She leers coldly at him but Zach's attention is focused on a uniformed POLICE OFFICER who is reading the riot act to a group of drunk Sox fans. His waiting POLICE MOTORCYCLE is parked nearby.

ZACH
It's all timing. Catching that one
moment, right time, right place.

Zach turns back to her, their eyes meet. He's got her attention.

COLLEGE GIRL
That's a new pick-up line.

She twists her hair playfully. Zach watches the motorcycle cop step away from his bike.

ZACH
Not a line.

COLLEGE GIRL
What is it then?

She's got attitude, but Zach is cool as ice.

ZACH
Somethin' you can tell your friends about.

He slams his beer and jumps over the patio fence, moving immediately for... The police motorcycle.

The girl watches, completely intrigued. Zach hops onto the bike, engine running, cop oblivious. The girl's jaw drops as Zach winks at her, everyone now watching.

The cop turns just as -- ZACH TAKES OFF ON THE POLICE MOTORCYCLE! Racing through...

EXT. KENMORE SQUARE -- NIGHT

Zach rockets away from the bar leaving the cop screaming bloody murder and the girl, her mind blown. He navigates through traffic, switching lanes, narrowly avoiding one collision after another as he guns it.

WE HEAR the POLICE RADIO hammering for units to respond to their stolen motorcycle.

EXT. STORROW DRIVE -- NIGHT

He's off! Tearing onto Storrow Drive, racing along the Charles River; the sleek Boston skyline shimmers behind him.

A POLICE CAR suddenly flies into frame right on his ass, lights FLASHING. Zach weaves around cars, cops in pursuit, barely outrunning them.

EXT. SOUTH BOSTON -- NIGHT

The police radio reports multiple units in the hunt. Zach steers off the highway, into the bowels of South Boston slums. He kills his lights and doubles back into the underpass, down darkened streets.

Suddenly, a POLICE CAR flies out of a side street and cuts him off! He turns sharply into an alley. The car follows.

EXT. ALLEY -- NIGHT

Zach tears down an alley, across a street and into adjacent alley as ANOTHER COP CAR has joined the pursuit.

He makes several quick turns, lights off, through the shadows. He's able to briefly lose his tail.

He spies an OPEN GARAGE DOOR on the rear of a building and yanks the bike over. Floodlights closing, in a split-second, he leaps off and races inside...

INT. MCGINTY'S -- NIGHT

Zach stumbles through the dark, finding himself in a kitchen. He hears VOICES and suddenly a FLASHLIGHT SHINES on him!

JAKE (O.S.)
Who the frig are you?

Busted, Zach looks up TO SEE: TWO DUDES in all black. Gas cans on the floor. They're soaking rags in gas and inserting them into the baseboards. Afterhours at a restaurant and these guys are clearly gettin' ready to burn down the joint.

ZACH
Whoa, whoa, wrong place. Sorry guys.

The main dude steps toward him clutching a Maglight. His name is JAKE NOLAN, muscular and tatted with jet-black hair. He's physically imposing, short fused and at the present, up to something illegal.

JAKE
You better believe you are. Not as sorry as you're gonna be.

Zach edges back slowly, but is instantly grabbed by another THUG behind him. He's pinned as Jake springs -- PUNCHING HIM in the gut and then the face!

The other thugs dive in, about to beat Zach to a pulp, when --

FLASHLIGHTS ILLUMINATE the room, catching them all in the act.

COP #1
DROP IT!

UNIFORMED POLICE storm in, weapons aimed. At least eight cops, guns out, cuffs ready as we go...

<u>OPENING TITLES</u>

A quick montage of images within our world and a song that we won't be able to get out of our heads. This is...

THE COVER

INT. SOUTH BOSTON PRECINCT, CELL -- MORNING

Zach is tossed into a lock-up cell with Jake and his crew.

JAKE
You know what you cost us, you stupid wank?

They're on him, about to give him the worst beating of his life when the duty officer steps over.

DUTY OFFICER
Nolan, you and your crew made bail.

Jake steps back, but still in Zach's face:

JAKE
You don't know who you're screwin' with.

ZACH
Do I care?

JAKE
They run this town and I'm connected. And when they get me out of here, we're gonna tear you apart.

The duty officer unlocks the cell.

DUTY OFFICER
Weber, you're out too.

They're escorted from lock-up. Zach taunts Jake on the way out.

ZACH
After tonight, you should be more worried about what they'll do to you.

Jake's expression shifts, caught off guard by this revelation. They're led into...

INT. SOUTH BOSTON PRECINCT, LOBBY -- MORNING

Zach is brought to a waiting area and seated. He watches Jake and his thugs greeted by their LAWYER and two guys in black leather jackets.

The leader is TOMMY MALLOY, early 20s. He's not big, but suave with a square jaw and wearing last night's clothes. A fierce intelligence going on behind his eyes.

Tommy is flanked by BRENDAN, his sidekick. He's not as articulate but he's big and if Tommy wants, he'll throw you a beating.

Jake and his thugs trade a grateful embrace with Tommy while their lawyer handles the bail. It's like a receiving line. They're about to leave, when Jake turns back toward Zach.

JAKE
We'll be seeing you again soon.

Tommy now regards Zach.

TOMMY
That the guy?

Jake and his thugs grin. Tommy takes note. Their focus turns as the doors open and a young woman enters.

She's MEGAN REYNOLDS, about the same age, tall, with red hair and strikingly beautiful for these parts. Zach spots her immediately.

She stares angrily at Jake, then at Tommy.

MEGAN
What happened?

JAKE
It's under control, babe.

TOMMY
I told you to wait outside.

The duty officer approaches Zach.

DUTY OFFICER
They're ready for you.

Zach's ushered to an office, passing Tommy's crew, who have him clocked the whole time.

Zach gazes right at Megan, taking in her tight-fitted Boston University Yardhouse shirt. Looks like the uniform of a local college bar. Then, balls of steel:

ZACH
(shitting on Jake)
Are you really with <u>this</u> guy?

Megan's floored. Zach keeps walking. Jake explodes toward Zach, going berserk, about to kill him. It takes Tommy and his crew to hold him back. The lawyer too.

TOMMY
(to Jake)
Not here, dumb ass.

INT. SOUTH BOSTON PRECINCT, OFFICE -- MORNING

Zach sits in front of CAPTAIN BARNES, a guy who looks like he'd give anything to be somewhere else. Barnes peruses Zach's rap sheet.

BARNES
(reading)
Vandalism. Disorderly. Insulting an officer. And that was just in Albany.

Zach grins and winks. Barnes eyeballs him. Intimidation is the only game he knows.

BARNES (CONT'D)
Well, you've upped the ante.
Police motorcycle.

ZACH
It needed a tune-up.

Barnes stands, despises smugness. Their tension is broken as Zach's FATHER enters...

CHRISTOPHER WEBER, 40s, bald with horn-rimmed glasses. He's a little muscular for a lawyer, mostly because he works too hard at everything he does.

BARNES
Mr. Weber?
(shaking hands)
Ray Barnes. Duty Captain.

Christopher glares down at Zach.

CHRISTOPHER
(to Zach)
What happened?

BARNES
(interrupting)
Your son’s got a thing for police motorcycles. Luckily no damage was done. I think we can get this to slide.

CHRISTOPHER
I apologize for my son, Captain Barnes. I don't know if you're aware, but we’re new to town and my wife recently passed...

BARNES
I'm sorry to hear that.

CHRISTOPHER
Thank you. It's been a difficult year... And with the new job...
(beat)
We're both doing our best to adjust.

Barnes shifts gears, playing it cool.

BARNES
I’m confident we’ll be able to sort through all of this. In the meantime, he’s clear to go. Just keep an eye on him.

CHRISTOPHER
Appreciated.

Christopher grabs Zach by the arm, yanking him out.

BARNES
I'm glad you were able to come down so we could meet face to face. Your schedule must be pretty hectic with the new job.
(then)
How's the DA here stack up to Albany?

CHRISTOPHER
Busier.

BARNES
I'm sure we'll talk again.
Southie's a small town.

He doesn't say anything more. Christopher ushers Zach out by the scruff of his neck...

EXT. ZACH & CHRISTOPHER'S APARTMENT BUILDING -- MORNING

A modern glass high-rise amidst a sea of brick and grey. Nothing fancy, but a step-up from the neighborhood.

INT. ZACH & CHRISTOPHER'S APARTMENT -- MORNING

Small two bedroom with partial ocean view. Boxes are everywhere. MOVING GUYS are delivering more.

As soon as Zach and Christopher enter, Christopher grabs Zach by the arm. He pulls him in close, levels a hard look on him.

CHRISTOPHER
What the hell is the matter with you?! You think you're cool, pulling a stunt like that?!

Zach jerks away, trading a look with one of the moving guys who's excessively TATTOOED with CELTIC TATS. Chris sees him and forces Zach into a room, half-closing the door.

CHRISTOPHER (CONT'D)
As long as you're living under my roof you need to respect me!

His tone is scathing. Zach turns away defiantly.

CHRISTOPHER (CONT'D)
I work for the DA and you're acting like a goddamn criminal. Are you doing this just to embarrass me?

ZACH
(quietly)
No.

Chris pushes Zach into a chair, towering over him:

CHRISTOPHER
What's that?!

ZACH
I said NO.

CHRISTOPHER
Then don’t screw this up for us! You pull another stunt like that and I WILL personally put your ass back in lock-up!

Zach shoves Christopher as he pushes past him.

CHRISTOPHER (CONT’D)
Forget it. You’re a lost cause. Your mother wouldn’t even recognize you.

His comment forces Zach to stop. He looks back at Chris, expression pained.

ZACH
You’re unbelievable.

Beat, as Chris tries to soften.

CHRISTOPHER
I know it’s been a bad year... But you gotta get over it. We’re in this together.

ZACH
Are we?

Zach exits, leaving Chris. Neither of them appear to notice the tattooed moving guy, who's been silently clocking the whole scene through the gap in the door...

INT. SHANNON'S CORNER -- NIGHT

A darkened Irish pub. One-hundred-year-old wood stained with Guinness, vomit and blood. Find Tommy, flanked by Brendan and Jake. There’s beers on the bar, and a few guns. Everyone turns as Tommy’s brother -- NICKY MADDEN, 29, enters from the back. He's a darker, older-brooding version of Tommy. An alcoholic with a temper -- and he may be insane. He has a few tough-looking guys with him -- HIS CREW.

He saddles up to the bar, his back to Jake.

NICKY
Get him out of here.

Jake gives Tommy a look.

TOMMY
Take off.

JAKE
What? You can't put this on me... It's not MY fault.

Brendan grabs Jake's arm as Tommy looks away. Jake shuts up, shrugs Brendan off and exits. When he's gone:

NICKY
Guy's become a liability. Charlie wants you to sideline him. For now.

Tommy nods.

TOMMY
Charlie still pissed?

NICKY
No, he's freakin' thrilled. Gonna throw you a party. Come on.

He yanks him toward the back room. They enter to find:

INT. SHANNON'S CORNER, BACK ROOM -- NIGHT

An office area with racks of booze and tables. Pacing the room is CHARLIE MALLOY, 50s with reddish-silvery hair. He's the boss, the patriarch of the crime family. He's on the phone and very animated.

Tommy waits with Nicky.

TOMMY
I don't know why we're wasting time with this kinda stuff. The insurance companies are bigger crooks than we are.

NICKY
You don't gotta know nothin'. Just do what we tell you.

Tommy goes quiet. He's smart enough to be nervous; Jake's operation was under his watch. Charlie wraps up his call and turns to his nephews.

CHARLIE
A million dollar policy down the drain.

Charlie refreshes his glass of whiskey.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
On top of that, I got arson units and insurance inspectors sniffing around. Not to mention, I'm stuck with a joint that reeks of gasoline.

TOMMY
Uncle Charlie, I'm so sorry. I got Jake gonna make it up.

CHARLIE
How's that screw-head gonna make up a million-large?
(off Tommy's silence)
Only way I see it is if he takes out a life insurance policy.

TOMMY
I got a few ideas how to make up for the loss. New ways to go. Ways we could modernize our approach.

CHARLIE
I told you, don't mess around with that computer shit.

Tommy looks away.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
I need you to stay on top of this kid who took the bike. His old man works for the District Attorney.

TOMMY
I can't imagine he's makin' his dad proud.

NICKY
You want me to send him a message?

Charlie sips his whiskey, in thought. He slowly closes in on Tommy, fatherly.

CHARLIE
No. I want Tommy to handle this.

Charlie savors his sip. Off Nicky's disappointment and Tommy's intrigue...

INT. B.U. YARDHOUSE -- NIGHT

Zach swaggers into a college sportsbar. Games on all the TVs. He spies Megan, Jake's girlfriend, serving beers. He takes a seat directly in front of her.

She glances over, does a double-take as she recognizes him.

MEGAN
You're the guy who stole that cop's bike.

Zach levels a modest grin at her.

MEGAN (CONT'D)
What are you doing here?

ZACH
I'm thirsty.

Megan leers apprehensively.

MEGAN
What do you want?

ZACH
What do <u>you</u> like?

She's deeply skeptical of him.

MEGAN
I like bourbon.

ZACH
I'll have that.

She pours while he watches her. As she slides it front of him:

ZACH (CONT'D)
I'm Zach...
(holding out his hand)
...by the way.

She looks at his hand, but doesn't shake.

MEGAN
People don't shake hands around here.

ZACH
Oh yeah. What do they do?

MEGAN
If you're trying to fit in, you're off to a bad start.

ZACH
You didn’t give me your name.

MEGAN
Megan. And I have a boyfriend...

ZACH
I know.

MEGAN
He's not the kind of guy you want to piss off.

ZACH
What is the kind of guy I'd want to piss off? I mean, just so I can spot one.

She stares, intrigued and slightly turned on by his attitude.

MEGAN
Are you always such a wise-ass?

Zach grins; sexy with confidence for days.

MEGAN (CONT’D)
That’ll get you killed around here.

ZACH
Some things are worth it.

His meaning is clear. He closes in, meeting her stare.

EXT. ALLEY/STREETS -- DAY

Zach walks briskly, his grin fades, expression riddled with something deeper. Down the alley, he makes it to another street. He crosses to...

A "T" STOP, Boston’s subway. He launches briskly down the steps...

INT. THE "T" - TERMINAL -- CONTINUOUS

Zach pokes through the crowd, fast -- now determined. He glances around, finally sees who he's looking for...

His dad... CHRISTOPHER. He's sitting on a bench, waiting for the "T".

Zach walks over and sits down next to him. A beat, as neither one looks at the other, then, Zach speaks:

ZACH
Hey.

CHRISTOPHER
How'd it all shake out?

Zach looks away. The tension between them appears heavy.

Suddenly, the train ROARS LOUDLY into the station. Zach turns back toward Christopher, leans over and speaks in HUSHED TONES:

ZACH
Lit the fuse on Jake.

CHRISTOPHER
Good. You're right where you're supposed to be.

For a second, they trade a look. Not very father-son-like. Then they continue:

CHRISTOPHER (CONT'D)
Nice touch with that Police motorcycle.

ZACH
Surveillance was right on. It was Irish lightning. Put a pinch on their insurance scam.

Beat. Zach's not who we think he is.

CHRISTOPHER
I'll inform Kramer that everything's on schedule.

A look between them. They're partners. And this is the real them, in contrast to the fight they acted out earlier.

ZACH
Keep him happy. We don't need some over-the-hill, ranking-agent-in-charge tellin' us to do things the way they did 'em back in the '80s.

Christopher holds back a smile. He's proud of his partner.

CHRISTOPHER
You're a credit to today's FBI. How do you feel?

ZACH
So far so good.

Another look. The T starts back up. Zach stands and hustles onto it just as the doors close. It pulls away as we go...

EXT. ZACH & CHRISTOPHER'S APARTMENT BUILDING -- DAY

As Zach heads toward his lobby, he hears:

TOMMY (O.S.)
You got some balls, amigo.

He turns to find Tommy at the bottom of the steps. Zach freezes.

ZACH
I know you?

TOMMY
I'm a friend of Jake's.

ZACH
Oh yeah? You an asshole too?

Zach turns, walking up the steps.

TOMMY
You need a ride.

ZACH
No. I'm good, thanks.

As Zach opens the door, Brendan appears in front of him.

TOMMY
It wasn't a question.

Brendan grabs Zach by the collar as Tommy holds his arms, pinning him...

-- And they carry him to a nearby Mustang.

ZACH
Get the hell off me!!!

Zach struggles, but it's no use. Tommy pops the trunk and Brendan THROWS Zach IN...

As Tommy SLAMS THE TRUNK CLOSED ON Zach...

SLAM TO BLACK:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. HARBOR, SOUTH BOSTON -- DAY

The Mustang flies down Harbor Street, passing dull and decrepit warehouses, one after another. They don't stop for signs or red lights.

EXT. SHANNON'S CORNER -- DAY

The Mustang pulls up in front of a shady dive. Shutters cover the windows. Tommy and Brendan hop out and walk to the trunk. Zach is BANGING hard from the inside.

TOMMY
Give it a rest.

The banging doesn't stop.

BRENDAN
This jerk-weed doesn't know when to quit.

TOMMY
Listen... I'm opening it. Just be cool. Okay?

No answer. The banging stops. Tommy opens it as... Zach springs up, ready to fight.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
Take it easy. We just wanna have a little talk. For your own protection.

Tommy offers his hand, to help him out of the trunk. Zach ignores it and climbs out on his own. They back away, giving Zach room.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
If we were gonna beat on you, we'd get to it. Trust me.

Zach stares, unsure. A stand-off.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
(to Brendan)
Some people don't know when you're tryin' to help em out.

ZACH
What do you want?

TOMMY
Come on. Buy ya a drink.

Tommy heads toward the dive bar. Brendan follows, leaving Zach. As he's about to head inside, Tommy turns...

TOMMY (CONT'D)
Well?

Zach's about to leave, but reconsiders, following them into...

INT. SHANNON'S CORNER -- DAY

Business hours, but it's dark inside, lit only by neon and two TVs -- a Keno game on both of 'em. All locals, drinking hard.

Zach looks around, studying everything. Tommy is already at the bar, chewing the BARTENDER'S ear.

TOMMY
(yelling)
What do you want?

ZACH
Guinness.

Tommy and the bartender smile. Good answer. Pints arrive. Tommy toasts:

TOMMY
(re: Zach)
That was some move with the cop bike.

Clink. A few locals stare from time to time.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
I'm Tommy. That's Brendan.

ZACH
Zach.

TOMMY
Where ya from Zach?

ZACH
Albany.

TOMMY
What brings ya here?

ZACH
My dad got a new job.

TOMMY
Doin' what?

ZACH
He works for the city.

Zach glossed over the details.

TOMMY
And now you're stuck with a bunch a Massholes.

Brendan keeps clocking the back door for some reason.

BRENDAN
(to Tommy)
Your bro's here.

Tommy slugs back his beer. The bartender immediately slides another one down. Tommy turns just as...

Nicky walks in. He heads over and grabs Tommy from behind, pinning him in a headlock.

NICKY
(squeezing Tommy's head)
Look what plopped in.

They struggle for a beat, then Tommy elbows his bro in the gut. Nicky flings him away.

TOMMY
You get stiff doin' that?

Everyone laughs, except Nicky. Zach tries to blend into the background.

NICKY
(re: Zach)
This the guy?

TOMMY
Yeah. Zach. My brother Nicky.

Zach's about to put out his hand, but thinks twice. He just nods, playing it cool. Nicky ignores him, pulling Tommy aside...

NICKY
(quietly)
You got this?

TOMMY
Yeah.
(off Nicky's skeptical look)
I'm handlin' it.

NICKY
Alright. I gotta deal with a thing in the east end.

TOMMY
Albanians?

NICKY
Yeah. They're crossing corners again.

Tommy nods. Nicky and his crew grab beers and retreat to the mysterious back of the bar. Zach watches them go.

As Nicky enters the back room, A MAN IN A BLACK LEATHER JACKET exits, giving Nicky a clink on his bottle. He's in his 40s, with grey thinning hair.

The man finishes his beer and leaves it on the bar. As he passes, Zach glimpses a GUN under his jacket. Tommy sees Zach watching him. The man exits the bar.

TOMMY
Don't worry. He's a cop.

Zach is not surprised.

ZACH
So why am I here?

Tommy studies Zach. He likes his directness.

TOMMY
Jake.

ZACH
Your boy?

TOMMY
Boy? He's more like my wrecking ball. You put a target on your back when you got him pinched.

Zach rolls his eyes and smirks.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
You don't look worried, but I think you're covering.
(MORE)

TOMMY (CONT'D)
I think you're smart. And if you are smart, you're worried.

Zach's smirk fades. Tommy hands him another beer, then leans over:

TOMMY (CONT'D)
We got Jake under control. For now. But you gotta get a few things straight. First... Nobody owe you nothin'. Be prepared to fight for everything. If you want it, take it. But watch who you try to take it from. Know the players.

Zach looks away, but he's listening.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
Second thing... The cops. They ain't your friend. They ain't here to serve you... Or protect you. So don't mess with them.

Zach nods, still taking it in without letting it get too serious.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
And most important... If somebody screws with you, you got a beef somewhere, or you get hung up with one of the first two things... You come to me. I can help. Got it?

Zach turns, looking him straight in the eye.

ZACH
Yeah. I got it.

Zach considers this -- what did he just get himself into? Beat, as they sip their drinks, then:

TOMMY
And one more thing, stay away from Jake's girl.

As we go...

EXT. B.U. YARDHOUSE -- NIGHT

Megan exits, slinging her jacket over her bar uniform.

ZACH (O.S.)
Megan...

She turns, catches Zach behind her. She keeps walking, barely acknowledging him.

MEGAN
Are you stalking me?

ZACH
Yeah.

He smiles, but it's not returned. He catches up, walking in step.

MEGAN
You need to get out of here. You stupid or somethin'?

ZACH
I'm thirsty. Let's get a drink.

MEGAN
Look, don't come around here. Jake will kill you.

ZACH
You care about what he does to me?

She glances at him, trading a look.

MEGAN
You're gonna get us <u>both</u> killed.

ZACH
One drink?

She stops walking and turns to him.

MEGAN
You for real?

ZACH
Let's do it.

MEGAN
No chance.

ZACH
You sure 'bout that?

MEGAN
Positive.

He smiles.

ZACH
Okay. See ya tomorrow.

He turns and walks away. She watches him go, A slight smile forming on her face...

EXT. DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE BUILDING -- DAY

Suits and civilians shuffle up and down the stone steps of a government rampart.

INT. DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE -- DAY

PAN THROUGH an office cluttered with outdated computers, electric typewriters and rickety filing cabinets. A few weathered paralegals slave at their desks.

FIND Christopher, in a conference room with TWO LAWYERS and District Attorney JOHN HALLORANN, 40s, good-looking but tired.

They're sifting piles of folders and photographs, including mugshots and crime scene photos -- some of which are extremely graphic.

CHRISTOPHER
We've hit a wall with ATF. They've got nothing on the source. Still waiting to hear back from Port Authority.

HALLORANN
You're wasting your time there, Chris. They're shipping parts and assembling here. No doubt with help from someone on the inside.

LAWYER #1
Interpol?

LAWYER #2
Like a vacuum. They'd rather deal with DOJ.

CHRISTOPHER
I don't mean to sound like the new guy, but where's the inter-agency cooperation we were promised?

The other lawyers smirk. Hallorann's expression is stern and genuinely concerned.

HALLORANN
I know it seems like a wall, but we're chiseling away, little by little. Every month we get a bite. Arms... Heroin... Human trafficking. We'll get there. We just have to be persistent.
(then)
We made a dent in the North End, we'll do the same to the Malloys. They're already losing their grip. Ten years ago they ran everyone into the ground, including the Italians. Now... There's nothing left to take.

LAWYER #1
Times are tough, even for criminals.

HALLORANN
This town's like quicksand; everybody sinking deeper. The families are desperate, climbing over each other to rise up.

CHRISTOPHER
Yeah -- the problem is that when things are desperate, that's when people get killed.

His words weigh heavy, leaving only a foreboding constant-CLICK of a typewriter in the b.g...

INT. SHANNON'S CORNER -- DAY

Tommy and Brendan swagger in. Brendan waits at the bar while Tommy continues to the back room...

INT. SHANNON'S CORNER, BACK ROOM -- DAY

Only a few key people are in here: CHARLIE, SOME OLDER MEN, NICKY, and SOME GUYS FROM NICKY'S CREW. Charlie speaks to the older men at the table, TALKING QUIETLY. Nicky and his guys stand nearby, listening and taking orders.

Tommy stops in front of the door, silent. Nicky sees him and hustles over.

NICKY
You talk to Jake?

TOMMY
He’s slippin’ away. I can’t control him.

NICKY
I hear he's flappin' his hole. He’s the perfect target for somebody to try to get him to talk.

TOMMY
He’s pissed. We put him on the sidelines. It don’t help that the new kid keeps coming around his girl.

NICKY
Megan? Kid’s got balls.

TOMMY
Yeah, ya never eat another guy’s lunch. Especially not that animal’s.

NICKY
Keep an eye on him. I don’t wanna tell Charlie. If he's gettin' turned, it's gonna be a one-way trip up to Revere.

Tommy gives him a look, he knows what it means. Charlie hears them, stops talking and steps over.

CHARLIE
Tommy, how are things with the bike thief?

TOMMY
I brought him in. We hung out. Had a few drinks. I think he listened.

CHARLIE
I want more than him listening. Give him a taste.

TOMMY
Like what?

CHARLIE
Whatever you gotta do. Get him to come around.

Charlie’s about to turn away, when Tommy steps up.

TOMMY
Charlie, I get things goin' with this guy, can we talk about my idea?

CHARLIE
Idea?

TOMMY
Yeah, doing that shakedown with the botnets.

Charlie rolls his eyes, temper briefly flares.

CHARLIE
Tommy, I'm not gonna tell you again. ENOUGH with that.

The room goes quiet, Tommy steps away, humbled.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Just take care of what I asked.

Tommy nods. Nicky watches, barely containing his smug grin...

EXT. LANSDOWNE STREET -- NIGHT

Neon, expensive cars and tight dresses; the epicenter of action. The line runs around the block. A black Escalade rolls up to the valet and Tommy jumps out with Zach and Brendan.

He leads them right to the front as the bouncer fist-bumps Tommy, sliding the rope for them to enter. VIP all the way. Some loser actually tries to ride their coattails in, but the bouncer shuts him down.

INT. CLUB ANGEL FIRE -- NIGHT

Swank and glitzy, this club is vibin' with college brats, scantilly-clad party girls and affluent businessmen. Into it, roll our boys, speaking loud enough to be heard over the blaring beats.

TOMMY
You been here yet?

ZACH
No.

TOMMY
Well, time to pop your cherry.

Tommy leads them past seductive ladies and jealous boyfriends, past another rope, to a table where Nicky is sprawled with a girl named AMY and few of his crew.

NICKY
Look at these ass-jobs...

Nicky stands and gives his bro a fist-bump, clearly hammered.

NICKY (CONT'D)
(stops Zach)
Zach, right?

ZACH
Yeah. Nicky, right?

Nicky nods, then gestures his crew out of the way so Tommy and Zach can sit. They squeeze in, great table, bottle service. Zach studies everyone and everything. The town is their oyster.

TOMMY
(re: their server)
Anything you need, just let her know.

The server winks at Tommy.

ZACH
I'm good, thanks.

TOMMY
Zach, don't be shy. We're gonna hang tonight. And I want you to relax and treat yourself.

ZACH
Is that why you invited me?

Zach shoots him a skeptical look. Tommy grins.

TOMMY
What? You don't wanna be here?

Brendan slaps a vodka-soda in Zach's hand and they clink. Zach grins back and enjoys.

ZACH
Thanks, Tommy.

Tommy smiles at some ladies and they're immediately seated. Everyone mingling.

Suddenly, JAKE SLAMS HIS WAY THROUGH THE CROWD, headed right for their table, eyes glued to Zach. He's a mad dog. Brendan spots him.

BRENDAN
Oh frig...

TOMMY
Get rid of him.

Brendan hustles toward Jake. They're both big guys, but Jake could overpower Brendan if he wants to. Whatever Brendan says to Jake, he's able to escort him away peacefully.

Zach catches everything, but his stare is immediately stolen by a stunning young woman with jet black hair and piercing blue eyes. This is CELESTE, 21 with tattoos and Jimmy Choos. She goes right for their table and gives Tommy a big kiss on the cheek.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
Zach Weber, this is my sister, Celeste.

Zach nods at Celeste. She checks him out hard, then holds out her hand for him to shake. He obliges.

CELESTE
The bike thief.

ZACH
Word gets around.

CELESTE
What kind of name is that?

ZACH
German-Irish.

Celeste closes in on Zach, has him radar locked.

CELESTE
That sounds dangerous.

TOMMY
Give it a rest, Celeste.

Tommy looks away, awkwardly avoiding his sister's flirtatious behavior.

CELESTE
Screw off, Tommy.
(to Zach)
(MORE)

CELESTE (CONT'D)
He’s always tryin’ to tell me what to do.
(to Tommy)
I ain’t your little sister anymore.

ZACH
So what kind of name is Celeste?

CELESTE
The kind that makes grown men ha-ad. (Southie for “hard”)

ZACH
Not there yet.

CELESTE
One way to be sure.

Zach looks away, all ice. Nicky arrives back at the table, sees Celeste.

NICKY
Is she here every frickin’ night?

TOMMY
Nicky, I gotta ask you somethin’.

Tommy pulls Nicky aside. Nicky keeps tabs on his girl, Amy, on the dance floor.

TOMMY (CONT’D)
Can you help push Charlie on that thing?

NICKY
What?

TOMMY
I told you. Botnets.

NICKY
The computer thing? Give it a rest. When you gonna learn?

TOMMY
Come on, Nicky. When’s the last time I asked for something? I carry my own.

Nicky spies an Albanian thug named LUFTAR dancing a little to close to Amy.

NICKY
Charlie don’t like it.

Nicky storms over and grabs Amy away. Tommy sighs, frustrated. Celeste whispers in Zach's ear.

CELESTE
You wanna party?

She taps her nose.

ZACH
I'm good, thanks.

CELESTE
I doubt that.

Zach does a double take at her brass balls.

CELESTE (CONT'D)
Don't be such a wuss-hole.

ZACH
Who says that?

He's just cocky enough to catch Celeste off-guard. She's not used to be turned down. Suddenly, there's an altercation between Nicky and Luftar over Amy.

NICKY
(to Luftar)
I said: take a screw!

Luftar shoves Nicky.

LUFTAR
Come on, tough guy.

Nicky goes wild, Tommy tries to hold him back.

TOMMY
Nicky, not here.

Nicky stabs a finger at Luftar and heads for the side door. Everyone follows..

EXT. CLUB ANGEL FIRE -- NIGHT

Zach and Tommy's crew are now on a side street, Nicky facing down Luftar and the Albanians. Nicky takes his shirt off, he's enraged.

TOMMY
Nicky, don't get crazy!

LUFTAR
Listen to your little boy.

NICKY
I'm gonna kill this Albanian scumbag...

Zach studies everyone. He notices one of Luftar's thugs slowly draw a .9mm BERETTA from his pocket and train it on Nicky.

ZACH
(calmly)
Nicky, look out!

The crew reacts, shouting; Nicky immediately draws his .45. EVERYONE REACHES FOR THEIR GUNS, taking it to the next level as we...

SLAM TO BLACK:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. CLUB ANGEL FIRE -- NIGHT

Right where we left them, in a stand-off. Guns on everyone. Zach in the middle, wishing he were packing right now. Nicky is breathing fire, .45 trained on Luftar's face, finger grasping the trigger.

ZACH
Everybody slow their roll.

TOMMY
Nicky, don't do anything stupid.

NICKY
Shut up, Tommy. I'm gonna end him.

LUFTAR
I-rash trash.

Nicky's ready to open fire. Tommy lowers his weapon and pleads with his bro.

TOMMY
This is bad for business. Think of Charlie, Nicky.

A tense beat, then Nicky's girl, Amy, gently touches his back.

AMY
Please, baby.

Nicky slowly backs down. Everyone exhales as they follow. Luftar and his crew step away; Nicky stumbles off with Amy, sliding his shirt back on. Situation defused. For now.

Tommy trades a frustrated look with Brendan.

TOMMY
Guy's got anger issues.

Zach starts to walk away.

ZACH
I'll text ya later.

TOMMY
Whoa, where you going?

ZACH
All this excitement gave me a headache.

TOMMY
Come on, we're just gettin' started.

But Zach's already out of there. Off Tommy, watching...

EXT. B.U. YARDHOUSE -- NIGHT

Late night. The bars are closed. Megan slings her jacket over her work uniform as she exits. She finds Zach waiting nearby.

MEGAN
You've got to be kidding me.

ZACH
How 'bout that drink?

Zach holds up a brown bag and slides the tip of a Maker's bottle out just enough to read the label. She smirks; bourbon, her fave.

MEGAN
Not here.

As we go...

EXT. HARBOR, SOUTH BOSTON -- NIGHT

Zach and Megan sit on a bench overlooking the water. His arm is draped behind her, but she keeps a slight distance as she takes a sip from the brown-bagged bottle.

MEGAN
(re: the bourbon)
Nice touch.

ZACH
Never would have pegged you for a bourbon girl.

MEGAN
Been awhile. Used to drink it before I moved here.

ZACH
And all this time I thought you were...
(puts his hands in quotes)
"A Southie".

MEGAN
Nope. Western Mass. Born and raised.

ZACH
How long you been here?

MEGAN
(thinking)
Almost six months.

ZACH
You don't seem that happy about your relationship with Jake.

She doesn't answer. The wind bites at them. Zach brings his arm around her shoulder to warm her and she leans into him.

MEGAN
I watched him smash in a guy's face who hit on me. I couldn't stop him. Guy never even pressed charges.

Zach seems unfazed.

ZACH
So why do you stay with him?

MEGAN
I don't know. I guess it's security... I feel safe.

Zach's cell phone RINGS. He fishes it out and glances at the caller ID... It's Tommy. He turns the ringer off.

MEGAN (CONT'D)
You have to get that?

ZACH
No.

MEGAN
Jake will kill you, Zach. Even if he's on the outs with Charlie, he don't care.

ZACH
I can handle myself.

MEGAN
You're gonna end up dead.

He doesn't answer. Megan touches his face, tracing his bruises. A brief moment between them, then she looks out over the water.

MEGAN (CONT'D)
Look, we can't do this, for your own good. Don't contact me. Don't come around the bar anymore.

She stands and starts to walk away -- then stops suddenly and turns around:

MEGAN (CONT'D)
And definitely don't be here tomorrow night at 11 o'clock.

Zach smiles. As she leaves, we ANGLE ON A VEHICLE in an adjacent parking lot...

INT. MYSTERY VEHICLE -- PARKED

ANGLE OVER THE DRIVER'S SHOULDER; someone watching them. We can't see who. Off this...

EXT. ZACH & CHRISTOPHER'S APARTMENT BUILDING -- DAY

Zach exits to meet Tommy's Mustang in front of his building. The window peels down as Zach leans in.

ZACH
What's up?

TOMMY
Road trip.

ZACH
Where to?

TOMMY
Revere. You been?

Zach shakes his head no.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
It's like Shrimp-Fest at Red Lobster, except with whores. You'll love it.

Tommy slings open the door. Zach considers his options.

ZACH
Okay.

Zach reluctantly gets in...

INT. TOMMY'S CAR -- MOVING

Just Tommy and Zach.

TOMMY
You get my call last night?

Zach thinks about his answer -- he was with Megan.

ZACH
(feigning ignorance)
When?

TOMMY
When I called.

ZACH
I was in bed. Why?

Tommy doesn't reply. His cell phone RINGS and he answers:

TOMMY
(into cell)
Yeah. We're on our way.

He hangs up.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
We gotta make a stop. Cool?

Zach doesn't answer. What's he gonna say anyway?

EXT. MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY (MIT) -- DAY

The sleepy campus of one of the world's most prestigious universities is shaken by the roar of Tommy 'stang. He parks in a "reserved" spot and hops out with Zach. Brendan is already there, clutching a baseball bat.

BRENDAN
I ain't questioning you, but didn't Charlie say "no go" on this?

TOMMY
Charlie ain't gonna know until we bring him his cut. And if he finds out, I'll take the heat.

Brendan leads them toward the dorms, bat in hand.

BRENDAN
What if Nicky finds out?

TOMMY
Let me worry about Nicky. He can't see the value in this. There's no money to be made lookin' down the barrel of a gun, Brendan.

Zach takes it all in as they enter...

INT. MIT DORMS -- DAY

They swagger quickly down a hall, past jeers from brainy academics. Tommy even knocks the books out of one of their hands like a high school bully.

Brendan leads them to a door, gives it a LOUD WRAP with the bat. No one answers. Tommy leans in:

TOMMY
We know you're in there. Open it or I'm gonna bash in the door and then your head.

The door opens and they storm in to find three students, GARY, LARRY and LENNY, all 20 years old, super nerds. Their room looks like a gross college dorm; dark and with more computer equipment than typical.

GARY
Hi Tommy.

TOMMY
Don't "Hi Tommy" me like I'm here to take your virginity. You get it done?

The nerds cower, stuttering and trading desperate looks.

GARY
We've had a problem.

Tommy and Brendan close in. Zach watches, curious. He spies something on their laptops that he recognizes.

TOMMY
I gave you friggin' eggheads two weeks. That's two weeks you owe me a hundred large for your degenerate gambling. I could slice your nuts for the vig alone. What's the hold up?

GARY
Well, Larry's been sick and...

LARRY
Don't pin this on me. I told Lenny we needed another server...

LENNY
(smart mouth)
We told you we needed front cash...

Without hesitation, Tommy sucker-punches him in the nose, causing it to bleed instantly! Tommy then nods to Brendan who swings the bat into their TV -- shattering it! The "eggheads" freak.

GARY
Tommy, we got it! We got it!

TOMMY
Let's see it.

The eggheads jump to their laptops and begin typing. Tommy and Zach lean closer.

GARY
It's not quite ready yet, though.

LARRY
It can't break a firewall.

Zach studies their screen.

ZACH
Virus?

LENNY
Botnet swarm.

ZACH
What kind of DDoS you runnin'?

GARY
(sheepish)
ICMP?

ZACH
What is this, the 90s? Why don't you do a SYN flood or teardrop attack?

The eggheads trade a look; busted. Tommy turns to Zach, impressed.

TOMMY
Never pegged you for an egghead.

ZACH
Sometimes I read.

TOMMY
(to the eggheads)
Don't screw with me.

Suddenly, Zach reacts to something in his pocket. He steps back, leaving Tommy and Brendan to deal with the eggheads. He removes his vibrating cell phone, checks the text.

CLOSE-ON ZACH'S CELL: a TEXT from Christopher reads, "Bring MILK home". 'Milk' in all caps.

Zach tries to hide his reaction.

ZACH
Be right back. Gotta call this bitch back.

Tommy nods, Brendan watches Zach step out.

EXT. MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY (MIT) -- DAY

Zach moves quickly around the back of the building, makes sure he's alone, then dials on his cell. A girl answers, MADDIE, 17, her voice sounds pained.

MADDIE'S VOICE
(on phone)
Hello...

ZACH
(into phone)
It's me.

Maddie pauses, is she sobbing?

ZACH (CONT'D)
Maddie, everything alright?

MADDIE'S VOICE
We got mom's results back.

She breaks down crying. Zach swallows, his face turns ashen like we've never seen. And we...

SLAM TO BLACK:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

EXT. MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY (MIT) -- DAY

Tommy exits with Brendan just as Zach hangs up and pockets the phone.

TOMMY
Nice work in there. Get your A-game on tonight, rock star. I'm picking you up at eight.

Zach tries to mask his dread, but he's pale.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
You okay?

Zach can only nod as we go...

EXT. SOUTH BOSTON -- DAY

Zach waits on a corner, his expression still frozen. Chris pulls up in his Prius. Zach tries to shake it as he climbs in.

INT. CHRIS'S CAR -- MOVING

Chris drives while Zach purges his cell.

CHRISTOPHER
You make the call?

ZACH
Yeah.

CHRISTOPHER
And?

ZACH
Tommy's got some guys at MIT into him for 100 grand. He's using them for a side project...

CHRISTOPHER
I meant about your family?

Zach looks out the window, silent.

ZACH
It's not important.

CHRISTOPHER
The bureau wouldn't have broken protocol.

Zach breathes.

ZACH
I don't feel like getting into it right now.

CHRISTOPHER
You have to deal with these problems head-on. You can't hide from them.

ZACH
I know. I'm handling it.

Zach stares out the window, listening.

CHRISTOPHER
When I recruited you for this assignment, you made me a promise. Do you remember that?

ZACH
Yeah.

CHRISTOPHER
You said you'd listen and learn. So listen, don't bottle this up. Talk to me. Otherwise they can creep out at times when you don't want them to. Turn things sideways.

ZACH
I know you're right. But I'm not ready to talk about it right now.

Zach shoots Chris a frustrated look. It's the "real" first tension we've seen between them.

INT. BOSTON GARDEN -- NIGHT

Packed house watchin' the Celtics kill it. Tommy enters with Zach, Brendan and a few of his crew. He takes them right down in front, great seats.

As they file in, Tommy whispers to Zach:

TOMMY
We're right behind the Councilman.

He smiles as COUNCILMAN DAVIS glances over, gives Tommy a dirty look. A conservative and judgemental man of 50, but a politician like all the others.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
That's his kid, Brett.

BRETT DAVIS, 21, sits right next to his old man, surrounded by a few of our players within the city's ranks, including the Mayor's son. Brett glances back, sees Tommy and trades a nod with him.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
They're both dickheads.

ZACH
(being ironic)
I'm shocked.

Zach studies the offspring of the powerful, then glances at his watch. Suddenly, Celeste arrives with a few of her friends. She forces them down so she can sit next to Zach.

CELESTE
Look who's at the gah-den.

Zach barely regards her, toying as she leans closer.

CELESTE (CONT'D)
You gay? You like boys?

ZACH
What?

CELESTE
The only guys who turn me down are either scared or gay.

ZACH
I'm neither.

CELESTE
You're gonna have to prove that.

The crowd CHEERS. As they talk, Brendan leans over to Tommy:

BRENDAN
The eggheads got the message. They're workin'.

TOMMY
Good. Tell 'em I wanna see it by end of week.

BRENDAN
You gonna tell Nicky?

Timeout for the other team. Brett climbs over to grab the empty seat next to Tommy, talking quietly:

BRETT
Heard your bro got into it with the Albanians the other night.

TOMMY
Wasn't nuthin'. Dumb-ass Albanians need our business.

BRETT
Things are quiet with the Ginzos. The DA sent half of them away.

Zach is trying to listen in, but Celeste blocks him.

CELESTE
Come with me.

ZACH
Where?

CELESTE
Walk me to the restroom.

Game's back. Crowd cheers. Brett slinks back to his seat as his father leans over to him:

COUNCILMAN DAVIS
Give it a rest with the Malloy kid. You're on the floor of the goddamn garden.

He glances around, knows eyes are on them. Celtics score again. The crowd CHEERS; the game's basically over. Zach checks his watch again as Celeste grabs his arm.

ZACH
Not right now.

CELESTE
Yeah, right now. I ain't playin'.
(off his grin)
You think I won't get psycho?

Zach thinks about it, then leans close to her, super cool:

ZACH
I'm counting on it. I wanna see what you got.

Celeste stares him down, then smiles.

CELESTE
I'm not gonna let you play me. I do the playin' baby.

She grabs her purse and stands.

CELESTE (CONT'D)
You're going to be here when I get back, right?

ZACH
Of course.

CELESTE
You promise?

ZACH
Yeah.

CELESTE
Good. You and I are hanging out. I got a fun night for us.

She leaves, walking up the stairs. As soon as she's gone, Zach gets up, climbing out the other direction.

ZACH
Tommy, I'll call you later.

TOMMY
Where you goin'?

ZACH
Got a late dinner with my old man.

And he's gone. So simple, yet honest, Tommy buys it.

EXT. HARBOR, SOUTH BOSTON -- NIGHT

Megan's Miata faces the harbor under a hard rain.

INT. MEGAN'S CAR -- NIGHT

She sits behind the wheel listening to drops pelt her windows. There's a KNOCK, startling her. She opens the door to reveal, Zach, soaked. He jumps in.

ZACH
You look good.

MEGAN
Thanks. I wasn't sure I was gonna come tonight.

ZACH
Second thoughts?

MEGAN
Things are moving too fast.

The rain hits in gusts. He checks her out.

ZACH
I just want to talk.

MEGAN
You do? Okay.

ZACH
How well do you know Tommy Madden?

Megan studies him.

MEGAN
Well. Jake works with him.

ZACH
Do you know who they work for?

MEGAN
Yeah.

ZACH
Who?

MEGAN
Tommy's uncle. A man named Charlie Malloy.

Zach knew that.

ZACH
Are you okay with what they do?

MEGAN
I try not to think about it.

ZACH
Well maybe you should start.

Megan shrugs.

MEGAN
Why do you care?

Zach considers his answer.

ZACH
I feel like I’m getting pulled into something and I don’t know how I feel about it. I need somebody to talk to about this. I’m not sure if you’re that person.

Megan listens, absorbs what he’s saying. She looks around, then:

MEGAN
Let’s get out of the rain. I know someplace we can go and talk.

She puts it in drive and they're out of there...

EXT. MEGAN’S APARTMENT BUILDING -- NIGHT

The rain is still coming down. Megan's Miata pulls up in front of a brick building.

INT. MEGAN'S CAR -- NIGHT

Zach looks out the window, figures out where they are.

ZACH
Your place?

She smiles. Suddenly, HEADLIGHTS wash over them. A truck pulls in behind.

-- IT'S JAKE.

MEGAN
(terrified)
Oh Christ!

Zach sees Jake park and leap out. Uh-oh. Zach steps out...

EXT. MEGAN’S APARTMENT BUILDING -- NIGHT

Zach faces Jake in the downpour. Megan gets out, racing over.

MEGAN
JAKE -- NO!!!

JAKE
I’m done taking this!

ZACH
(so nice -- it's cocky)
Jake, let’s start over. Hi, I’m Zach.

Zach puts out his hand to shake -- in a very wise-ass move. He knows what's going to happen next...

Jake gives him a shove that sends Zach to the ground. Megan quick-draws her cell phone, tapping a button on speed-dial:

MEGAN
(into cell)
Tommy, you need to get over here right now!

Zach leaps up, standing before Jake, about to finally get slaughtered by the guy he sabotaged...

SLAM TO BLACK:

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

EXT. MEGAN’S APARTMENT BUILDING -- NIGHT

Zach HITS Jake a few times, but it only unleashes the fury...

Jake PULVERIZES him -- leveling a volley of hard-knuckle grenades at Zach everywhere. Zach doesn't run, he takes it head-on, trying to fight back. He knows that offense is the only way to survive.

The Zach attack doesn't last long and in seconds, he’s getting the shit kicked out of him. If anything, he’s resilient.

HEADLIGHTS appear in the rain. Tommy’s Mustang. It pulls up, shining high beams on the fight as Tommy hops out.

TOMMY
Get off him, Jake.

But Megan is the only one who hears it. Jake is in a frenzy, feeding shots into his prey. Tommy pulls a Glock .22 out of his pocket and FIRES INTO THE AIR!

Jake freezes.

TOMMY (CONT’D)
I said -- GET OFF HIM!

Tommy steadies the pistol at Jake.

JAKE
What the hell are you doing, Tommy?

Zach crawls from the mud, using Megan's Miata to stand.

TOMMY
Zach's with us now.

Megan looks at Zach, who holds her stare.

TOMMY (CONT’D)
(to Zach)
Right?

Zach knows it's "yes" or he’s dead. He nods. Megan looks away. She sees Jake, scowling like the animal that he is, but powerless.

MEGAN
I'm sorry Jake. This isn't how I wanted things to end with us.

Jake's too mad to care.

JAKE
Tommy, you dumb jerkoff...

Tommy keeps the Glock trained on Jake.

TOMMY
Jake, don't be stupid. You're already in the screw. Go home.

Jake can't stop bullets. He gets into his truck and starts it up. Through the window, he stares daggers at Zach: this isn't over. He drives away, leaving them in the rain.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
Don't lie to me again, Zach.
(pocketing the gun)
Come on.

Megan helps Zach stand.

ZACH
I don't want your protection.

TOMMY
It's too late. You just took it.

Megan steps away, leaving Zach with Tommy.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
Get in. It's time for you to meet Charlie.

Zach stares at Megan, considering his options, as we go...

INT. SHANNON'S CORNER -- NIGHT

Tommy yanks Zach into the bar, after hours. Zach can hear his heart beating -- we can hear ours, as they step into...

INT. SHANNON'S CORNER, BACK ROOM -- NIGHT

They enter to find Nicky and some of his crew. They're all facing Charlie who stands at the table, his back to them. He's talking to...

THE COP IN THE LEATHER JACKET from Act 2.

CHARLIE
So this is the famous bike thief everyone's talkin' about. You got a lot a heart, the question is whether or not you got a brain?

Charlie turns as Tommy shoves Zach toward him.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
I'm Charlie Malloy.

Charlie holds out his hand, offering a shake. He's almost charming, but Zach doesn't move.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
I know you're not going to be rude to me.

Zach reluctantly shakes.

ZACH
So what do you want?

CHARLIE
I'm offering you a job, kid. Maybe we can help each other out with some things.

ZACH
Like what?

Charlie just smiles, then shuffles to a counter and pours himself a Jameson.

CHARLIE
You want a drink, Zach?

No answer.

ZACH
Why me?

CHARLIE
First of all, you got balls -- and we need guys with balls. It's just good business sense to have a guy like you on our side. Second of all, there's a case against us right now and you would be in a position to give us a little information from time to time.

ZACH
With the DA? You want me to betray my father?

CHARLIE
No one's asking anyone to betray their father. What kind of people you think we are?
(MORE)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
I respect loyalty. But -- it ain't no secret that you and your old man don't exactly see eye to eye.
(to the cop)
Play the tape.

The cop in the leather jacket activates a small device, playing a digital surveillance recording...

Zach HEARS THE ARGUMENT between he and Christopher the day he was arrested. Chris scolding Zach when he grabbed his neck.

CHRISTOPHER'S VOICE
(on recording)
Forget it. You're a lost cause. Your mother wouldn't even recognize you.

Click. Charlie takes a sip of his drink.

CHARLIE
So suffice to say, maybe your old man doesn't have your best interests at heart.

He grins.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
And lastly, you need us right now. You got an animal out there named Jake who's lookin' to put your dead carcass in a box. Be sma-at. In this town, if you don't got somebody, you're nobody.

Charlie winks at his friend in the leather jacket then takes a slow sip of his whiskey, still grinning.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
So what do ya say?

Zach looks around the room... At Tommy and Nicky, their crew, the cop in the leather jacket... And finally Charlie -- all formidable. As he weighs the heavy choice before him. He takes a breath, then:

ZACH
Let me think about it.

Beat. Tommy swallows as Zach stands his ground. Charlie closes in, his smile slowly warps to a bloodthirsty scowl. He eye-fucks Zach long and hard as he finishes his whiskey, then puts the glass down and leans in.

CHARLIE
(almost a whisper)
This city’s dangerous. Don’t think too long.

Off the tension, thick as cement shoes...

INT. MEGAN’S APARTMENT -- MORNING

Zach enters the vestibule, searches the directory. He presses the buzzer, but it's broke. He tries the door, it's unlocked. He enters.

Upstairs, he finds the apartment he's looking for and KNOCKS. Megan slowly answers, groggy.

MEGAN
You shouldn't be here. Jake's been calling, if he comes back...

ZACH
Can I come in?

She's about to say no, but senses he needs her.

MEGAN
Alright.

Inside, she locks the door while Zach looks around. It's very simple, a struggling family lives here.

MEGAN (CONT’D)
You're bleeding again.

ZACH
Yeah -- I know.

She shakes her head and walks into the bathroom. A second later, she returns with a towel.

MEGAN
You talk to Charlie?

ZACH
Yeah. He offered me a job. Wants me to join their crew.

MEGAN
What did you say?

ZACH
Need to think about it.

She sits, listening.

ZACH (CONT'D)
I'm not one of these people. I don't know that I should get mixed up with them.

MEGAN
It's too late for that. We're all mixed up.

ZACH
You think I should do it?

MEGAN
I'm just sayin', you should think hard about his offer. Most people I know would kill to have guys like Tommy on their side.

ZACH
Do I seem like "most people"?

MEGAN
I know you're tough, but you're not the only one who needs protection. You put me in danger too. Jake's got my number now and I could end up in Revere.

Zach hears the fear in her voice. He's bothered by it.

ZACH
I didn't bring that on you. You chose to go out with that maniac.

Megan rolls her eyes, making him angry.

ZACH (CONT'D)
What is it with you Megan, you got a thing for gangstas? Does that turn you on?

She stands, offended.

ZACH (CONT'D)
You want me to be more like Jake?

MEGAN
Get outta here.

ZACH
I don't know why I thought you could talk to you about this. You're one of them.

MEGAN
You're a lot more like them than you realize.

He lets out a sigh, then exits.

EXT. SOUTH BOSTON -- DAY

Zach walks swiftly through the congested streets. He looks stressed, weighing all options. He descends into...

INT. THE "T" - TERMINAL -- CONTINUOUS

He cuts between passengers, meeting Christopher on their usual bench. As the LOUD ENGINE of the train approaches, Zach's expression shifts to confidence.

CHRISTOPHER
What did you tell him?

ZACH
I told him I'd think about it. I don't wanna be too easy.

CHRISTOPHER
Watch your back with these guys.

ZACH
Having a dad with the DA worked perfectly. I never could have gotten in with them faster. Malloy even played me a recording of us arguing.

CHRISTOPHER
That means there's a second bug in the bedroom.

They disguise their devious grins.

ZACH
You better make sure the meetings you mentioned are in the DA's book, just in case they've got a plant there.

CHRISTOPHER
And the girl?

ZACH
She wants me to do it. We can use her.

CHRISTOPHER
But we can't trust her.

Zach's look registers this possibility.

ZACH
I need her. She's been around the players. She knows the community... And the family.

CHRISTOPHER
Okay. Just one thing...
(off Zach's look)
Take it easy on the beer. Not good for a runner.

Zach stands, meeting over.

ZACH
Ya know, on that recording... You really sounded like my old man.
(then)
You'll have to meet him someday.

He considers his words, thinking of his real family back home. Christopher lets it sink in -- his own family on his mind. It's a brief moment, then:

CHRISTOPHER
Watch out for Jake. He’s got your number.

ZACH
I'm taking care of that.

CHRISTOPHER
Do it quickly. We can't afford any X-factors. Charlie's got something big planned.
(beat)
He's desperate, he's got tensions with the Albanians -- and he's consolidating operations.

The gravity of this settles in.

ZACH
People are going to get hit.

CHRISTOPHER
Yes they are.

SLAM TO BLACK:

END OF ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

EXT. HARBOR, SOUTH BOSTON -- DAY

Everyone enjoying the beautiful weather and scenic charm. Zach sits with Megan overlooking the water.

ZACH
I didn't mean to be a jerk.

She nods.

ZACH (CONT'D)
I decided to take Charlie's offer.

Beat. She takes his hand. Her expression is fearful.

ZACH (CONT'D)
What's the matter? Isn't this what you wanted?

MEGAN
Just so you know, I talked to Jake. I made sure he knew it was over. He didn't take it so well.

ZACH
Strikes me as a bit of a sore loser.

MEGAN
Yeah, well we ain't done with him. Talk to your new friends. Make sure he isn't a problem for us. He friggin' scares me.

ZACH
I'll take care of it. You got nothing to worry about.

He gently touches her face. She smiles.

MEGAN
How 'bout that drink?

ZACH
I thought we already had it.

MEGAN
Then how 'bout this?

She leans in and kisses him. It's brief, but sweet. And he's off. Megan watches. When he's gone, she digs out her cell and taps a button on speed-dial.

MEGAN (CONT'D)
(into cell)
I have to see you.

EXT. ZACH & CHRISTOPHER'S APARTMENT BUILDING -- NIGHT

Zach walks toward his apartment. As he passes a side street, he notices a familiar vehicle parked --

Jake's truck.

He approaches carefully, finds it empty. He hustles back across the street and enters the building.

INT. ZACH & CHRISTOPHER'S APARTMENT BUILDING, LOBBY -- NIGHT

He stalks toward the elevator, presses the button and waits. Someone races down the stairs. Zach retreats around the corner, ready for anything --

It's just a neighbor. They exit. Suddenly, The elevator DINGS and opens. A SHAPE LEAPS OUT FOR ZACH!

IT'S NICKY. He reaches for Zach, who dives out of the way at the last second.

ZACH
Whoa, Nicky...

Zach falls backward into Nicky's THUGS.

NICKY
Dickhead.

ZACH
What do you want?

NICKY
You owe Charlie an answer.

ZACH
I've got one.

Zach starts to walk, but Nicky's crew blocks him.

NICKY
Too late. He's gonna give YOU one.

Zach eyeballs the thugs -- too many and too big. He relents.

EXT. REAR OF MCGINTY'S -- NIGHT

Nicky's SUV pulls up in an alley and his crew pushes Zach out. They strut to the back door of the restaurant and enter...

INT. MCGINTY'S -- NIGHT

Back in the kitchen, where we started. Charlie is there with Tommy and the whole crew. Nicky shoves Zach toward them.

ZACH
Place smells like gas.

CHARLIE
Funny guy.

Charlie stares, studying Zach. Stand-off. Who's gonna speak first.

ZACH
I'm gonna take your offer.

CHARLIE
Welcome aboard. I got somethin' for ya.
(to Tommy)
Bring it out.

Tommy and his guys move off, leaving Zach wondering.

ZACH
What is it? We gonna have a circle jerk?

Nobody laughs. Charlie keeps staring as Zach grows slightly uncomfortable.

ZACH (CONT'D)
I'm supposed to meet my old man. I don't want him to know that anything's up. Whatever this is, can we move it along?

Zach hears Tommy's guys dragging something HEAVY from the other room.

They pull a LARGE FOOT LOCKER across the floor and drop it in the center of the room.

CHARLIE
For now stop worrying about whether your old man trusts you and start worrying about whether I trust you.

Nicky yanks Zach over to the box. He hears a faint and MUFFLED MOANING from inside.

ZACH
What the hell is this?!

CHARLIE
Nobody gets in without getting their hands dirty.

Nicky pulls his .22 from his jacket and checks the chamber.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
A little insurance on your loyalty.

Zach starts to sweat.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Think of it as us helping each other with the same problem.

Zach doesn't take the gun.

ZACH
If I refuse?

Charlie nods to Nicky who opens the box, revealing...

<u>JAKE!</u>

Beaten, bloody, gagged, tied and painfully contorted. He looks up at Zach with pleading eyes.

CHARLIE
Then <u>you</u> go in the box.

Nicky shoves the gun into Zach's hands. Beat.

WE'RE TIGHT ON THE GUN. Back to ZACH'S EYES. Then the gun, CLOSE-ON the muzzle. Zach's HAND SQUEEZES the grip.

The whole crew watches. Tommy and Nicky share a glance. Charlie watches Zach.

Off Zach, struggling to make a decision with a life in the balance...

EXT. ALLEY -- NIGHT

Megan shuffles down a quiet alley, alone, bathed in shadow. She's focused on her cell phone, engaged in thought, when -- A FIGURE APPROACHES her!

She turns at the last second:

MEGAN
Daniels.

Caught off guard, but she knows him.

DANIELS
Sorry, had to make sure you weren't followed.

This is DANIELS, 40s, tall with short grey hair and a weathered face. If he looks familiar, it's because he was sitting in Megan's section at her bar.

DANIELS (CONT'D)
Too many eyes around here.

He keeps looking around, ushering her into the darkness.

DANIELS (CONT'D)
Got your message. What happened?

MEGAN
Jake is out and Zach is in.

DANIELS
You sure?

MEGAN
Yes. Charlie wants Zach to bring him information on his father's case for the District Attorney.

Daniels considers this.

DANIELS
Can you use him?

MEGAN
Yeah.

Megan tries to hide it, but Daniels can sense her hesitation.

DANIELS
Okay. But be careful. The last undercover Boston PD that didn't check her emotions ended up dead.

That's right, MEGAN'S A COP. She looks away.

MEGAN
I'm being careful.

DANIELS
There's something else.

He takes her cell phone and begins typing on it.

DANIELS (CONT'D)
I'm giving you an emergency number, in case we need to break protocol again.

She senses his fear.

MEGAN
You're worried. What's the matter? This isn't like you.

DANIELS
Someone's been pulling files on active undercover investigations -- including yours.
(off her shock)
It's comin' from the inside.

MEGAN
One of ours?

Beat.

DANIELS
Yeah.

Daniels rests his arm on Megan's shoulder, meets her stare as she just breathes. Off this revelation...

SLAM TO BLACK:

END OF SHOW