EXT. QUEENS COLLEGE, FLUSHING QUEENS - DAY

Establish.

INT. CLASSROOM, QUEENS COLLEGE, QUEENS NY - DAY

25 students, seated facing a green blackboard (subject written there - INTERMEDIATE STATISTICS) as the PROFESSOR walks the aisles passing out graded exams.

These kids are from the U.S., Asia, Eastern Europe, the Middle East, all young and open-faced; working/middle class sons and daughters of immigrants, light on irony.

No one seems too happy about their grades.

INT. STUDENT CENTER, QUEENS COLLEGE - DAY

Around a messy table in the food court area, sit four kids from the class - NASIR (NAZ) KHAN (19), AMIR FARIK (19), ANYA STOLPER (18) and HENRY POWELL (20) 2 Pakistanis, a Russian-Jew and a Trinidadian black.

They hold their exams like poker hands - all but Naz.

AMIR
(dropping his on table)
74.

HENRY
(doing the same)
72.

ANYA
(same)
76.

NAZ
Nah, I don't want to show you guys up.

INT. QUEENS COLLEGE BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

The Varsity team - the DUTCHMEN - (average height 6'3") - predominately black with a sprinkling of white and Hispanic - are drilling, working through plays, the squitter and squeak of sneakers on the hardwood.

A player almost goes down on a wet spot and Naz, in gym shorts and a tee shirt, races out onto the court with a dry sponge mop to clean it up. Taking advantage of the time out, Amir also comes racing out with an armload of face towels.

The 5'9" equipment managers, Amir and Naz, look Lilliputian compared to the heavily breathing varsity players.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

As the players shower and change, Naz and Amir collect towels and jerseys, once again dwarfed by their charges.

ROLAND
(22, Af-Am point guard; to Naz and Amir)
You guys want to party with us tonight? We're going over to my ex-fiance's crib in the city, gonna be bookoo females.

ON NAZ - Holy cow.

HECTOR
(21, Latino, power forward, eyes rolling)
Roland, man...

ON AMIR - catching Hector's expression - gets it: they're not really wanted.

ROLAND
Naw, man, there gonna be plenty for everybody.
(to Naz)
I'll write you the address.

EXT. QUEENS - LATE DAY

Amir and Naz's turn to play - neighborhood court - both teams mostly Pakistani and black. Rag-tag compared to the Dutchmen. Amateur hour - just for fun - no one on either team better than Playground Good.

THE BACKBOARD - both teams going up for a rebound -

Naz muscles under the boards. He's a bit over-aggressive; a little too much elbow and bulling, but he comes down with the ball, passes to Amir, who drops it in for 2.

THE BLEACHERS - a few girlfriends and parents there going crazy, including SALIM KHAN (46, Naz's father) and HASAN (13, Naz's brother).

The other team taking it out, coming downcourt when a Pak-Man (MAHMOUD, 18) intercepts a pass -

Naz takes a blindingly quick, practiced hit of asthma spray, and yells for the ball -

NAZ
Yo! Yo!

HASAN
(shouting from the bleachers)
Moud! Kick it back! Kick it back!

Mahmoud fires a pass to Naz at the line - Naz going up against a taller guy for a jump shot - the ball arcing then circling the rim, messing with everybody's head for a second before dropping in.

Cheers from the bleachers -

EXT. STREET - QUEENS - LATE DAY

Players going home, Naz walking with his father and younger brother to a cab, calling out to Amir walking to his own car.

NAZ
Pick me up at nine, OK?

AMIR
(doesn't really want to go)
I don't know, Naz. I'm not [sure] -

NAZ
Amir. It's Friday <u>night</u>.

Salim glances at Naz, but doesn't ask him where he intends to go with Amir, though he'd like to.

EXT/INT. TAXI - NORTHERN BLVD - QUEENS - LATE DAY

Salim driving (it's his cab), Naz shotgun, Hasan relegated to the back seat.

NAZ
80's not bad.

SALIM
Not bad isn't good.

NAZ
Baba, it's Statistics 2 - you have any idea how hard that is - 80's [good] -

SALIM
80s is Dean's List? No.

NAZ
Sophomore slump, I'll be back on next term.

SALIM
You should drive this thing for a week -
(this taxi)
That'll get you back on overnight.

HASAN
I'll drive it for a week. I'll drive it now.

NAZ's POV out the window of Jackson Heights -

Row after row of small modest houses like crowded teeth, heavy third world, his families world, American Dreamers for the most part, hustlers all. Naz smiles, he likes it here.

EXT. KURTA PALACE - 74TH STREET, JACKSON HEIGHTS - LATE DAY

A small Indo-Pak women's clothing store on the main commercial drag of the Heights - the windows filled with traditional wear - Kurtas [tunics] Salwars [loose pants], Dupattas [scarves].

Salim's taxi pulls up in front. Naz gets out.

NAZ
Don't worry so much.

He heads inside.

INT. KURTA PALACE - CONTINUOUS

Cramped store, the walls lined with shelves of the stuff featured in the window plus more western wear; jeans, bras, sunglasses, etc.

There are a half dozen women in here, older, maternal; hard to tell who's a customer, who's working, including SAFAR (44) - Naz's mother. The air is a lilting aviary of dialects and languages - Urdu, Pashto, Punjabi, Sindh, English. As soon as Naz enters, the deadpan teasing commences:

WOMAN
Look, it's bachelor number one.

WOMAN 2
Nasir, Miss Lahore came in this morning looking for you. When we told her you were still in school she left in tears.

SAFAR
(good-naturedly)
Leave him alone.

WOMAN 3
Look, he's blushing...

Naz kisses his mother (who's not the most demonstrative woman with her kids) then immediately and familiarly joins her in folding up whatever stock still needs to be returned to the shelves, so she can get out of there.

SAFAR
Your father and brother - ?

NAZ
Outside.

As Safar starts gathering up various small plastic bags from behind the counter -

WOMAN 4
Nasir, my nephew from Karachi is coming to the city next week. Could you show him around?

NAZ
Sure.

WOMAN 2
His name is Maryam.

More laughter.

EXT. STREET - LATE DAY

Naz carries his mother's plastic bags to the taxi.

NAZ
You should have seen it, Ami [Mom]. We won at the buzzer.

SAFAR
Won what?

INT. TAXI - MOVING - QUEENS - LATE DAY

The whole family in the cab now, headed home. As Salim drives, Safar takes one of two other hack drivers' permits from the glove compartment to exchange for her husband's - some kind of routine.

SALIM
No. Tariq's sick again.
(she glances at him)
Just the flu.

As she puts Tariq's ID back in the glove box -

SAFAR
It's not normal getting the flu this much. He really needs to see a doctor.

The boys, in the back seat, aren't listening; both texting on their cells. Safar takes another driver's permit out of the glove box.

SALIM
No. Yousef says he's too tired. I already called him ... He's the one should see a doctor.

She puts the second ID back into the box and closes it.

EXT. KHAN HOME - EVENING

The taxi, parked in the narrow driveway of a narrow house, next to other beat-up but house-proud homes facing Northern Blvd, more a highway than a boulevard, which gives the houses an extra layer of vulnerability and fragility.

INT. KHAN HOME - EVENING

It's cramped but tidy; a little gaudy in its décor -

Brightly colored velour couch and easy chairs; small chandeliers; family photos in gold and silver frames everywhere;

and one photo of the Kaaba, the Holy Shrine in Mecca, on the wall, an adjoining arrow indicating the direction in which it stands vis a vis this house.

INT. DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Naz, Salim, Safar, and Hasan eating dinner. Another mini-chandelier over the table, more framed family photos on the walls.

SALIM
Where are you going with Amir?

NAZ
Team party downtown.

SALIM
The Pak-Men?

NAZ
(proudly)
Nope. The Dutchmen.

SAFAR
(not liking this)
The Dutchmen...

A look to her husband asks which of us will say what we think of that. He will.

SALIM
I don't like you going to Manhattan.

NAZ
Baba, we go to Manhattan all the time.

SALIM
It's Friday night. People are crazy.

NAZ
It's a full moon too.

HASAN
Is it?

NAZ
I have no idea.

SAFAR
When do you hear about the summer internship?

NAZ
Before the summer I hope.

SAFAR
What kind of answer is that?

NAZ
Ami, it's March.

SAFAR
Go to the internship office first thing Monday morning. Stay on top of it.

Naz shrugs a kind of 'okay, no sweat.'

INT. NAZ AND HASAN'S SHARED BEDROOM - ABOUT 8:30 - NIGHT

Walls plastered with NBA basketball stars. Hasan watching a Knicks game on a small TV, the sound competing with hip-hop blasting on a speaker-mounted iPhone.

Naz, in a great mood, kind of dances as he dresses for the party. Shirtless he looks younger than his nineteen years - xylophone ribbed as if everything he eats instantly converts to energy.

Wincing a bit at the volume of the music and TV, Salim appears at the bedroom door just as a Knick hits a three-pointer on the TV.

NAZ/HASAN
Oh! Oh!

Salim regards his sons unnoticed. He's proud of both of them. Still -

SALIM
Nasir ... Do your mother a favor.

NAZ
(into the game)
What?

SALIM
The internship people. Monday, OK?

NAZ
Yeah. I said I would.

SALIM
You didn't actually. You shrugged.

Naz shrugs again. It doesn't annoy his father. His son is good and he knows it. He's a lucky man.

SALIM
We nag and worry. It's our job.

NAZ
I know. I'll do it.

SALIM
Thank you.

Another Knicks three pointer on the TV -

HASAN
Yes! Yes!

Salim stands there looking at his man-child Nasir cheering the Knicks with Hasan - something eating at him but he can't figure out what it is.

EXT. KHAN HOME - ABOUT 9:00 PM - NIGHT

Naz dressed for the evening in dry-cleaned jeans, crisp shirt, leather jacket, waiting at the curb for Amir's car. He takes out his cell. Calls him.

NAZ
Where are you.
(pause)
You're kidding me.
(pause)
So borrow your brother's car.
(pause)
No, there won't be any other parties. This is the last party on earth.
(pause)
No, I don't want to come over and watch the Khalid fight ... Because it's Friday <u>night</u>. Come on, don't be a punk.
(dejected beat)
All right, all right, all right. See you tomorrow.

Naz hangs up, disappointed - all dressed up and no place to go. He begins to head back inside, then stops -

He regards father's taxi in the driveway ... glances up to flickering TV lights against sheers in his parent's bedroom ... then to the stream of cars of Northern Blvd, all heading into the city ... then back to the parked taxi.

INT. KHAN HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Naz cat-creeps up the stairs to the door of his parent's bedroom. Peers in on them through a crack - barefoot, in pajamas, sprawled on the bed watching a Bollywood DVD, his father smoking, his mother eating pistachios.

He lingers unseen, taking them in like memorizing a photograph ...

INT. NAZ'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

He furtively observes his younger brother in the other bedroom, watching a horror movie while playing a handheld video game. Again, Naz lingers long, looking in at him.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Naz takes a spare set keys from a junk drawer.

As he leaves, quietly closing the front door behind him, we stay inside drifting back to regard the unremarkable tableaux of the living room - somehow sensing it might be the last time:

The brightly-colored throw on the sofa -

A cluster of family photographs on a table -

The picture of the Holy Shrine in Mecca -

Rolled-up prayer rugs -

EXT/INT. SALIM'S TAXI ON NORTHERN BLVD - NIGHT

Street light washes over Salim's face on his taxi ID.

Radio set to a hip-hop r'n'b station, Naz is at the wheel, a little bouncy, happy, part of the great city-bound Friday night stream.

He has the scrawled address from the varsity Dutchman on the passenger seat. Reaches to it and glances at it, wandering a little out of his lane, and gets honked.

EXT/INT. NAZ'S TAXI - MIDTOWN TUNNEL - NIGHT

As Naz reaches the front of an EZ-Pass lane, the arm lifts [and - somewhere - records the taxi's ID].

EXT/INT. NAZ'S TAXI - - MIDTOWN TUNNEL - NIGHT

In the tunnel now, the overhead lights stretch off like arrows pointing to freedom.

EXT/INT. NAZ'S TAXI - MIDTOWN TUNNEL - NIGHT

An NYPD barrier narrows the incoming traffic so anti-terrorist cops can peer into the vehicles as they enter the city.

NAZ'S POV - a few SUVs and trucks, pulled over to the side, being searched.

A black NYPD COP staring in hard at Naz's Pakistani face as he inches past the barrier; eyes into eyes. But he isn't stopped; breathes easier as he clears the checkpoint.

EXT/INT. NAZ'S TAXI - MOVING - MANHATTAN - NIGHT

NAZ at the wheel, headed downtown. It starts to rain.

Not sure at first where the wipers are, he eventually finds them and turns them on.

EXT/INT. TAXI - HOUSTON - NIGHT

Stopped at a light, Naz sees in his rearview mirror four people hurrying in the rain toward him, gesticulating wildly. At first startled, he remembers he's driving a taxi. A bit flustered, he pulls away from them.

In the mirror - all four of them, getting rained on, give him the finger. Naz laughs.

NAZ
Sorry, man.

EXT. DELANCEY STREET - LOWER EAST SIDE - NIGHT

Naz driving in the rain, looking for the address, people still trying to flag him down which is both freaky and funny to him. One of them yells -

SHUNNED PASSENGER
Then turn on your off-duty light, asshole!

EXT. ELDRIDGE STREET - NIGHT

A tenement three blocks away. Dead quiet for a beat, then the front door opens and a young, light-skinned black woman (ANDREA, 22) comes out onto the street.

As she walks away from the building, she glances back at it once, then disappears into the crowds.

EXT. ATTORNEY STREET - L.E.S. - NIGHT

Naz pulls to the curb. Climbs out, looks at the unlit Off-Duty light on the roof of the cab, leans back in, plays with switches trying to figure out how to turn it on. Comes back out to find it still unlit as two drunk yuppies climb in back.

YUPPIE
64th and Madison.

NAZ
I can't. It's not my -

YUPPIE 2
What?

NAZ
I'm not a - this isn't my -

YUPPIE 2
What? What are we waiting for, let's go.

Another car pulls abreast. Four anti-crime cops inside. All big white guys in sweatshirts and flat-tops.

ON NAZ - spooked by the potential shit he's getting into.

ANTI-CRIMER
What's up there, Captain Bubba.

NAZ
(holding his breath)
I'm off-duty and these guys won't get out.

ANTI-CRIMER
So turn off your light.

NAZ
There's a problem with it.

ANTI-CRIMER
(bored, sighing, then to passengers)
Alright gents, subway time.

YUPPIE
What the fuck.

ANTI-CRIMER
(waving plastic cuffs)
Subway time or overtime. I could use the money.

As the two drunks stumble out of the cab, back into the rain, Naz gets back inside the cab.

NAZ
Officer, where's Stanton Street?

ANTI-CRIMER
You're driving a cab downtown and you don't know where Stanton Street is?

NAZ'S POV - his father's hack license in plain sight - so obvious this cab isn't his if the cop would bother to look.

NAZ
(sweating)
It's my first week.

ANTI-CRIMER
Turn yourself around, go two blocks north.

INT/EXT. TAXI - ESSEX STREET, L.E.S. - NIGHT

The rain coming down hard as Naz drives north now, people still trying to flag him down. Though they can't hear him -

NAZ
I'm off-<u>duty</u>.

He stops at a light. Somebody gets in back. Fed up, he slowly turns to give them the boot and sees -

ANDREA - so pretty that his heart stops.

But she's not looking at him. She's just sitting in back, dripping wet, distracted it seems by something, glancing back through the rear window. Naz faces front again.

NAZ
I'm - uh -

He doesn't finish and she's not really listening.

ANDREA
(finally)
What?

NAZ
I'm - off-duty.

ANDREA
You are? Your light isn't on.

NAZ
I know. I don't know where it is.
It's not my cab - just filling in.

ANDREA
(pause)
You're gonna make me get out?

He adjusts the rear view mirror slightly to frame her in it. A silence before he makes the decision -

NAZ
Where do you want to go?

ANDREA
What do you mean?

NAZ
You just got in my cab. Where you want me to take you?

Coming back to earth, she considers the question as she regards his face in the rear view mirror regarding hers. She smiles.

ANDREA
The beach.
(leaning forward, so beautiful)
Seriously.

NAZ
(never happened to him before)
(MORE)

NAZ (CONT'D)
We're in Manhattan. How about a river?

ANDREA
A river would be fine.
(then quickly, darker)
But not around here. Go uptown.

NAZ
Yes ma'am.

ANDREA
(amused)
Yes ma'am ...

NAZ
(nervous)
Look, the meter's off, so - you want to sit up front?

ANDREA
Not yet.

Naz grins/blushes - the promise of 'not yet.'

ANDREA
But I really would like to get going.

INT/EXT. TAXI - WEST SIDE HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Naz driving uptown now. Andrea in the back. Not talking. He keeps stealing glances at her in the rear view; she seems placid one moment then drops briefly into darkness. When she catches him looking at her, though, she just smiles, which only makes him feel younger than he is.

NAZ
How far we going.

ANDREA
That depends, doesn't it.

NAZ
How far uptown.

ANDREA
(thinks)
Far.

She lights up a cigarette. Naz's impulse is to tell her to put it out, his father will smell it tomorrow, but he lets it go.

ANDREA
I'm thirsty.

EXT. GAS STATION, WEST HARLEM - NIGHT

A security camera view of the pumps. Just two cars there. The taxi and a hearse, of all things. An unattended nozzle fills the cab's tank. It has stopped raining.

Andrea rolls down the backseat window just long enough to toss out a lit cigarette butt.

The hearse driver, a jet-black man in a black suit, turtle-waxed dome and giant sunglasses, just watches it burn on the dry cement under the station canopy as he fills his tank.

INT. GAS STATION MINI-MART - SAME TIME - NIGHT

Naz ponders a refrigerated beverage case, pondering the beer. Takes a tall Colt 45 and a bottle of water to the register, setting them next to a sign on the counter -

If you were born after March 1991,
you <u>cannot</u> purchase alcoholic beverages

NAZ
And the gas.

The clerk scans the drinks, bags them, adds the gas, makes change for Naz's cash without ever bothering to look at him.

NAZ
Thanks. Restroom?

The clerk slides him a key on a giant key ring and points off. As Naz heads for the back of the place, he leaves one quadrant of a security monitor, appears in another, then disappears into the restroom.

EXT. GAS STATION - SAME TIME - NIGHT

A sharp rap on the back window of the cab startles Andrea. She looks up at -

THE BLACK HEARSE DRIVER -

- ebonite skull - unreadable eyes behind his oversized shades - holding up her smoldering cigarette butt in his long slender fingers, twirling it slowly to say, *roll down the window*. She cracks it an inch.

HEARSE DRIVER
You want to be my next passenger?

He calmly taps the lit butt against her reflection on the glass to put it out.

Walks back to his hearse as Naz emerges from the mini-mart with the bag in his hand.

As Naz crosses to the cab with his drinks bag, the hearse driver slides across his field of vision like an apparition of doom, staring at him.

Naz returns the nozzle to the pump and climbs in behind the wheel of the cab with the bag, unsettled by the guy.

NAZ
What's with him?

Andrea doesn't turn to look at the guy, but Naz does.

NAZ
Why's he just standing there?

ANDREA
Search me.

INT. TAXI - MOVING - WEST SIDE HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Naz checks his rear view mirror - not to look at Andrea again - to see if the hearse is following. He can't tell.

She's drinking from the Colt 45 can. He's got the bottle of water.

ANDREA
So whose is it?

NAZ
What?

ANDREA
You said the cab isn't yours when I got in.

NAZ
I didn't think you heard anything I said.

ANDREA
I don't miss much.

NAZ
It's my father's. Actually one third my father's. He owns it with two other guys.

ANDREA
Three men own one taxi.

NAZ
An owner's medallion costs like - I don't know, 300 thousand dollars.

ANDREA
And you just use it whenever?

NAZ
Yeah ... Well, no. Just this once.

ANDREA
Without telling him.

NAZ
Just this once.

ANDREA
(pause)
Why tonight?

NAZ
There was a party I didn't want to miss.

ANDREA
Was.

NAZ
Is.

ANDREA
Now.

NAZ
Yeah.

ANDREA
So you're missing it.

NAZ
Yeah.

ANDREA
Because of me.

NAZ
(looking at her in the mirror)
Yeah.

EXT. RIVER SIDE - NIGHT

They sit on a concrete embankment overlooking the Hudson, the raw Palisades of New Jersey directly across from them, the delicately elliptical lights of the George Washington bridge directly north.

She, with her Colt 45 can. He, with his water.

ANDREA
Are you close to him?

NAZ
Who. My dad? Pretty much.

ANDREA
He's a good dad?

NAZ
Yeah. Yours?

ANDREA
He was okay. He's dead.

NAZ
I'm sorry.

ANDREA
Long time.

NAZ
Still. Your mom?

ANDREA
Her, too.

NAZ
You know, I think I'm just going to stop talking.

ANDREA
It's okay with me.

The sit in silence; Naz afraid to ask anything else. Sips at his water. Eventually -

ANDREA
Friday night. Full moon. The river. This is pretty wonderful.

NAZ
Yeah. I feel pretty good.

ANDREA
You say it like you don't always.

NAZ
No, well, yeah, I mean, usually I just feel, you know, like, just do what you have to do, what everybody wants you to do and everything will be OK, mainly OK...

ANDREA
(amused)
OK.

NAZ
But tonight's - I don't know - different. It feels different.

ANDREA
(flirting)
And you have no idea why.

Naz can't believe his luck. Andrea rummages through her purse -

ANDREA
The thing about wonderful? There's wonderful, and there's *wonderful*. Me, I prefer *wonderful*. Open your hand.

He does, and she sets on it a little tablet etched with a smiley face.

NAZ
No, thanks.

ANDREA
Yes, please.

NAZ
I have to *drive*.

She downs her own pill with her Colt 45 and tries to hand him the can.

NAZ
I really shouldn't -

ANDREA
Did you ever wish you could just transport yourself? Something bad happens here - but then suddenly you're over there.

Over there, across the river, are the prehistoric-looking Palisades.

ANDREA
I can't be alone tonight.

She looks at him. It's hard for him to look at her as steadily. He feels like a kid in her presence.

She offers him the can of beer again, but instead he quickly washes down the pill with his water.

ANDREA
Oh, that's gonna make a big difference.

She laughs. So does he, but he's scared, feeling like he just swallowed a time bomb, and the clock begins ticking now.

NAZ
We should go.

ANGLE - THE TWO OF THEM IN SILHOUETTE

- against the distant elliptical lights of the George Washington Bridge, walking back the way they came. She takes his hand.

INT. TAXI - MOVING - UPPER WEST SIDE - NIGHT

She's in front now with him now, dreamily gazing at the lights tracking across the windshield like a light show. He, on the other hand, is trying to ignore them as he drives down Central Park West.

ANDREA
Here.

He turns onto 87th Street and looks for a place to park. Carefully pulls to the curb, half-in a red zone.

EXT. BROWNSTONE ROW - 87TH STREET - NIGHT

More relaxed now that he's not driving, Naz walks with her hip-to-hip, gently knocking into each other in their mellow high.

As they come to 140 W 87th St., two young black men, TREVOR (21) and DUANE (26), come past walking the other way.

TREVOR
See, brothers dyin' in Afghanistan and shit, sister-girl here still goes for the terror-head type.

Naz stops in his tracks, turns to them.

ANDREA
(to Naz)
Don't.

TREVOR
(to Naz, challenging)
What.

But Naz is no fighter, and barely manages as he turns away again -

NAZ
I'm as American as you.

TREVOR
What you say?

ANDREA
(to Naz)
Come on.

She has her keys out and tries to hustle Naz up the exterior steps of the brownstone.

TREVOR
I said, what you say?

ANDREA
Give it a rest.

TREVOR
No, no, no. *We're* having a conversation here, me and him, not you.

The brownstone door closes them inside. Trevor smirks as he starts walking again, but Duane, who hasn't said a word, just stands there staring at the closed door.

TREVOR
Let's go.

INT. BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

Naz wandering the main - 2nd - floor of Andrea's home.

It's nicer than any house he's ever been in. Art on the walls. Antique rugs on the floor. Furniture that looks like it's been here forever.

NAZ
This is *your* house?

She glances over at him, nodding as she gathers some things from the living room bar. Tequila, shot glasses, lime, salt, and a bar knife from a drawer.

NAZ
Uh-oh.

ANDREA
What.

A long-haired cat curled up a chair, stares at him. He takes his inhaler from his jacket pocket, holding it up for her to see.

EXT. REAR GARDEN OF BROWNSTONE - MOMENTS LATER

The ground floor rear kitchen door opens briefly as Andrea tosses the cat out, the door closing again.

INT. BROWNSTONE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Andrea and Naz sit at a round art-book table decorated with the tequila bottle, shot glasses, salt. His jacket is draped on the back of his chair. As she cuts up the lime -

NAZ
Can I ask you something personal?
(she doesn't say no)
What's your name?

ANDREA
I didn't tell you?

She didn't. And she doesn't now. Eventually -

NAZ
You want to know mine?

ANDREA
Does that happen to you a lot?

NAZ
What.

ANDREA
Those two guys out there.

NAZ
(shrugging)
Now and then.

She pours shots. They knock them back, bite into lime wedges, grimace.

ANDREA
You got a girlfriend?

NAZ
No.
(joking)
Do you?

ANDREA
Would that turn you on?

NAZ
(yes)
No.

ANDREA
Sure I have girlfriends.

Another shot. Lime. Grimace. Then -

ANDREA
Watch this.

She takes the bar knife and suddenly, blindly, brings its blade down between her fingers splayed on table. Naz can do nothing more than stare for a long moment.

ANDREA
Now you.

NAZ
Are you kidding?

ANDREA
No.

He shakes his head no. She pushes another full shot across to him.

NAZ
No even with that.

ANDREA
Come on. I did it. Look.

She holds up her hands and flips them around. No wounds.

NAZ
No.

ANDREA
Yes.

NAZ
No, no.

ANDREA
Yes, yes.

He becomes acutely aware of her flashing, maddeningly beautiful eyes, and the feeling from the tequila and whatever that pill was she gave him ... [ecstasy]

ANDREA
Don't you do what everyone tells you to do? That's what you said.

Naz throws back the shot, grabs the knife and, bellowing, brings the blade down between his own splayed fingers. The tip just missing his fingers at it sinks into the tabletop.

ANDREA
You did it!

He laughs, anarchy taking over his soul.

NAZ
Am I really here?

She nods that he is as she takes another pill from her pocket - no smiley face on it - breaks it in half and sets his half on the table before him.

He shakes his head no. She nods her head yes. Pours shots and downs her half.

ANDREA
Come on. This is the party you missed.

He finally picks up the pill and downs it with the shot.

ANDREA
There you go.

They smile at each other.

ANDREA
Now ...

She pushes the knife across to him and splays her hand on the table, daring him to plunge the blade between her fingers - the next escalation. He stares at her hand and the knife.

NAZ
No. That I won't do.

ANDREA
(soft)
Yes.
(softer)
Yes.
(softly erotic)
Yes.

Naz, overcome, hypnotized by her and the drugs and alcohol, suddenly grabs the knife and brings it blindly down hard -

Dead silence.

They stare at each other in astonishment.

They both look down.

The blade has gone through the middle of the back of her hand, pinning it to the table.

She smiles. He stares at the blood beginning to seep from underneath her hand.

She pulls the knife out and tosses it aside -

Grabs him and kisses him, her bleeding hand caressing his face -

Trying to undress him and herself as they tumble like a two-headed wounded beast to the sofa, her hand bloodying it now, too -

They fumble furiously to get at least partly naked. She manages to get his shirt off and her own clothes down to her underwear, pulls him on top of her, yanking at his pants, clawing his back -

Naz is a stumbly puppy of a lover, unsure what to do except let her lead, and she does, even as she loses herself in her own urgency.

In the flailing, she knocks a lamp to the floor and the room is reduced to moonlight.

INT. BROWNSTONE - BASEMENT KITCHEN - 2:00 AM - NIGHT

A shadowy statue sits at a kitchen table, head resting on crossed arms next to a half-empty glass of water.

Naz wakes at a faint sound and slowly takes in the dark kitchen, having no recollection of coming down here.

With only his underwear on, he seems younger than his 19 years - a skinned chicken - stoned, drunk, fucked, with an astonishingly throbbing head.

He manages to get to his feet. Looks for a door anywhere. Sees one leading to a staircase. Climbs it in a kind of quiet he's never heard in New York City.

INT. BROWNSTONE - 2ND-FLOOR LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

He reaches the landing. Considers the dark room. Can just make out the outlines of those now-revolting shot glasses and almost-empty bottle of tequila on the table.

He doesn't see her anywhere. Glances up at the next flight of stairs leading to the third floor. Speaks to it in a half-whisper -

NAZ
Hello?

No 'hello' back from up there. He glances to the darkened living room again. Sees his pants and t-shirt rumpled on the floor.

His socked-feet pad across the Persian rug to his clothes, and now he sees her on the floor asleep. He wants to at once wake her and not wake her, and so half-whispers again -

NAZ
(putting on his shirt)
Hey, I have to go.
(pulling up his pants)
I think it's - like really late.

He pushes his feet into his sneakers. Regards the lamp on the floor, broken during their frantic session. Moves towards the sleeping figure.

NAZ
I have to get back home.

No response. Sensing something's wrong, he switches on a table lamp, its light suddenly illuminating -

ANDREA - in her underwear, deep stab wounds between her breasts, eyes staring off lifeless, blood pooled around her like a dark round frame.

Staggering backwards, he knocks the table lamp over and Andrea is swallowed by the darkness.

He stares in shock, gasping, shivering, wheezing asthmatically, scrabbling through his clothes, feeling for his asthma spray, no luck.

Turning in place, not knowing what to do, he suddenly bolts down the stairs in his unlaced sneakers.

EXT. BROWNSTONE - 87TH STREET - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

He bursts out into the street, almost mowing down a nocturnal dog walker -

DOG WALKER
Whoa, whoa!

Naz runs down the block to his parked taxi, now with a parking ticket on the windshield. Stops. Tries to think.

Is this what he wants to do? Run from the scene of a crime? Or has he forgotten something?

He waits for the dog walker to get further on, then hurries back to the brownstone, up the exterior steps, tries the door - locked now. He smashes the glass door pane with his elbow, reaches inside, cutting himself, turns the lock, goes back inside -

A NEIGHBOR ACROSS THE STREET

drawn by the sound of the breaking glass, comes to a window just as Naz disappears inside.

INT. BROWNSTONE LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Naz grabs his jacket from the back of the chair, daring a glance at the dark figure on the floor as he slips his arms into the sleeves. Then he just stands there ... thinking ... where are his fingerprints?

He grabs a stack of cocktail napkins from the wet bar and frantically starts wiping at things - the tequila bottle, his shot glass, the tabletop -

He feels something wet on his hand. Sees blood on it and the napkins - blood from Andrea's hand wound on the table. Wipes at it, spreading it around more than eliminating it.

He moves to the sofa, wipes at the blood there. Kneels in the pool of blood around Andrea, and tries to wipe it up, the napkins becoming quickly soaked and dripping.

He stares at them and briefly breaks down. Tosses them aside, then gathers up some of them and stuffs them in his jacket pockets.

He starts to leave, then remembers something else. Looks at the table top, then under it. Sees the bar knife. Grabs it and hurries down the stairs again -

EXT. BROWNSTONE - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

He bolts out the front door, closing it behind him, leaving bloody prints on the handle.

ANGLE - THE NEIGHBOR

peering out the window across the street.

Naz sprinting toward his cab, stumbling on his still-unlaced sneakers.

Grabs the parking ticket off the windshield [blood].

Unlocks the car door, pulls on the handle [blood].

Tosses the knife on the dashboard [blood].

Throws the ticket on the passenger seat.

Shakes the key into the ignition [blood], fires it up and roars out of the space, cutting off a car, the driver blaring his horn.

EXT/INT. TAXI / 87TH & BROADWAY - NIGHT

Driving and near-weeping, Naz comes to a red light at Broadway. The cut-off car pulls abreast.

DRIVER
You got a fucking death wish?
Don't take me with you, asshole!

Naz can't look at him. The light changes. The other car roars off. Naz waits. Then turns north onto Broadway.

EXT/INT. TAXI / BROADWAY - NIGHT

Naz, trying to relax and drive carefully, stops at a light on Broadway.

A patrol car pulls up alongside, the cops looking straight ahead, Naz fighting to do the same.

His eyes settle on the bloody knife in plain view on top of the dashboard ...

Aghast, he steals a glance at the cops at the same moment one of them - the one shotgun - glances lazily at him.

As the cop looks forward again, Naz slowly slides the knife out of view, into his lap. The light changes and the patrol car moves on.

Naz stays where he is, almost hyperventilating, stows the knife inside his jacket. A taxi behind him blasts its horn, making him levitate out of his seat.

Naz takes off fast. Glances at the next numbered street sign - 91st Street - and realizes he's going further uptown, which isn't what he wants.

He makes a quick U-turn, and heads back down, but in a moment, his back window is filled with flashing blue misery lights.

Terrified, Naz pulls to the curb in a no-parking zone.

He sits upright as two uniformed cops, one Latino male (MALDONADO, 25) other Af-Am female (WIGGINS, 27) approach from either side of the cab.

A Mag-lite flashlight blinds him.

WIGGINS
So let me ask you, in your own
words ... what does No U-Turn mean?

NAZ
I'm sorry ... I must've -

WIGGINS
Step out of the car.

The time-stamped patrol car cam records a video of Naz carefully sliding out of the cab onto the street. Blinkered, disoriented, he tries to gather his wits.

WIGGINS
How much you drink tonight?

NAZ
What? Nothing.

WIGGINS
No? I'm getting high just conversating with you. License.

Naz hands it over. Wiggins hands it off to Maldonado who takes it back to the patrol car to run it.

Wiggins produces a portable Breathalyzer, which looks like a cross between a harmonica and an ocarina.

WIGGINS
How about you play me maybe two bars of Little Brown Jug.

NAZ
What? No, do I have to?

WIGGINS
See, that right there is a mistake.

Naz regards the Breathalyzer in Wiggins' hand ...

WIGGINS
Let me explain this, since I can see you are confused. Yes, you may politely refuse -

NAZ
I can?

WIGGINS
I'm not done. You refuse, it's a separate offense. And what does refusal legally show? - 'Consciousness of guilt' - guaranteeing the DWI. So now you're looking at two charges. Now I'm done.

She holds out the Breathalyzer -

MALDONADO
Cass -

Maldonado waves her over to him, and, like a pitcher and manager on the mound, cover their microphones -

MALDONADO
Nothing comes up on him; what do you say, reckless driving instead. Less paperwork.

Wiggins thinks about it. Regards the scared, young man. As she heads back to him, Maldonado receives a transmission -

SGT. MILANO RADIO
Where are you guys?

MALDONADO
Broadway uptown. In the 90s.

Wiggins reaching Naz.

WIGGINS
You know what this is? Your lucky night.

NAZ
I can go?

WIGGINS
Did I say that? Give me the registration.

As Naz crawls back into the front seat of the cab to look for it, Maldonado approaches Wiggins.

MALDONADO
Break-in three blocks down. We got to go.

WIGGINS
What about Davis and [Michaels] -

MALDONADO
Uh-uh. Family smackdown in the Tafts [public houses].

Naz climbs back out of the cab with the registration. As if he isn't there -

WIGGINS
What about Cheech and Chong here?

MALDONADO
(shrugs)
I don't know, cut him loose?

Wiggins regards Naz, perhaps trying to decide if he's too drunk to drive.

MALDONADO
Bring him with us?

NAZ
No!

WIGGINS
Excuse me?

NAZ
I can't just leave my father's cab here.

WIGGINS
Your who? Your -

She shines her Maglite at the hack license on the dash. Salim's sober photo stares back.

WIGGINS
Call him to come get it, else it's gonna get towed. Let's go.

NAZ
I can't ...

WIGGINS
In the back.

MALDONADO
Cuffs?

WIGGINS
No, I don't think so.

Naz is steered uncuffed into the backseat of the cruiser by Maldonado.

INT. POLICE CAR TURNING ONTO 87TH STREET - NIGHT

To Naz, every Upper West Side street looks the same, but this one is close enough that it could be Andrea's.

NAZ
What street is this?

The cops ignore him. Up ahead, the neighbor who called it, stands on the sidewalk, raising his hand like he's in class.

NAZ
Who's that?

MALDONADO
What are you, Jimmy Olsen?

EXT/INT. 140 WEST 87TH / POLICE CAR - CONTINUOUS

The cruiser double-parks. Wiggins and Maldonado exiting, Naz trembling in back.

WIGGINS
Sit tight.

Naz's POV from the back seat as the cops approach the neighbor. They begin speaking with him. He points to the brownstone - then down the street as he describes some scenario. There -

WIGGINS
How about race?

NEIGHBOR
Could have been light-skinned black, or Latino. I don't really ... I just saw him from the back.

WIGGINS
Not Caucasian though.

NEIGHBOR
Could've been. Sure, why not.

WIGGINS
Clothes?

NEIGHBOR
Yeah, he wore clothes..
(off the cops' looks)
Dark maybe. I'm sorry.

WIGGINS
And he took a cab.

NEIGHBOR
Yeah, a cab.

FROM NAZ'S POV AGAIN, the neighbor/witness stays out on the street as the cops climb the steps of the brownstone. They regard the door with the broken pane on it but don't go in.

The neighbor glances over to the patrol car - Naz slouches down a bit - the neighbor glances back to the brownstone and the two cops outside it who are noting the blood on the door handle.

Headlights briefly light up the interior of the cop car Naz is in as another one pulls up behind it.

PATROL SGT. KLEIN (41) and driver, BILL DENNEHY (36) step out. They come past the other patrol car, notice the figure inside, think nothing of it, and continue on as Wiggins and Maldonado come down the steps of the brownstone to meet them on the sidewalk.

KLEIN
What you got.

WIGGINS
Break-in, one eye wit.
(points to the neighbor)
Sees a male, undetermined race, smash the glass pane in the door, comes out few minutes later, runs down the street, gets in a cab.

KLEIN
Anyone inside?

WIGGINS
Waitin' on you.

Klein, glancing back at the trapped animal in the back of Wiggins' and Maldonado's patrol car.

KLEIN
Who's that?

WIGGINS
No one. Had him with us when the call came in. Intoxica -

MALDONADO
Reckless driving.

KLEIN
Well, which is it.
(neither says anything)
He blew or he didn't?

WIGGINS
Not yet. The call came in, like I said, just before we -

MALDONADO
He isn't drunk. I can *see* that.
Just driving like a fuckin' idiot.

Klein glances from one of them to the other. What the fuck are they talking about? Whatever it is, fuck it.

KLEIN
Fine, let's go.

WIGGINS
Sir, we're off-shift ten minutes ago, can we just take him in?

KLEIN
Let's go inside.

FROM NAZ'S POV AGAIN -

as all four of the cops go up the brownstone steps.

Holding, not wearing, a latex glove, Klein opens the door with it and all but Dennehy disappear inside.

The dog walker Naz bumped into, without the dog now, appears, and starts talking to the neighbor.

Dennehy lights a cigarette.

Naz, slouching in the cop car, becomes aware of his own hands, the now-dried blood on them.

He watches as Dennehy comes down the steps to talk to the dog walker. The man indicates to him how some guy came out of the brownstone, ran into him, then ran down the street.

The neighbor nods - yeah, that's the direction he saw the guy run, too.

As more neighbors and passersby begin to assemble, Naz glances down at the patrol car's door handle.

His hand settles on it.

He waits until everyone seems to be looking elsewhere, and pulls at the handle.

Locked.

EXT. 87TH STREET - LATER - NIGHT

Klein, Wiggins, and Maldonado come out of the brownstone, Maldonado gagging.

KLEIN
(on his radio to the precinct Duty Sergeant)
Gerry, Teddy Klein. I'm at that break-in on 87th? Need additional units, Night Watch, CSU, M.E. -
(to Maldonado)
Are you puking? Tell me your not puking.

MALDONADO
I'm gagging, not puking.

KLEIN
For fuck's sake, do it the trunk of your car, you're gonna do that.

As another cruiser pulls up, Klein glances over at the figure in the back seat of Wiggins' and Maldonado's.

KLEIN
Is this guy still here?

WIGGINS
We're still here, where's he gonna go. We're happy to *not* be here, that's what you want.

Klein ignores her. To the arriving officers -

KLEIN
Tape me off a perimeter.

ARRIVING OFFICER
Where to where?

KLEIN
Half the block, from tree to tree across the street.

DENNEHY
This guy saw something.

He indicates the dog-walker to Klein.

KLEIN
(to Wiggins)
Talk to him.

WIGGINS
Me?

KLEIN
(to Maldonado, still looking sick)
You all right?

Maldonado nods, but isn't.

INT. 20TH PRECINCT - 3:00 AM - NIGHT

DUTY SERGEANT GERRY MILANO (39) on the phone to Night Watch, the standing detective pool of eight, who cover all felonies in the borough of Manhattan til 8am.

MILANO
Yeah, hey, it's Sargeant Milano in the two-two, we got a suspicious DOA at 140 West 87th ... inside ... What's suspicious about it?

INT. NYPD NIGHT WATCH OFFICE - SAME TIME - INTERCUT

A DISPATCHER on the phone - aka THE WHEEL - Af-Am, sedentary, obese - taking down the info he gets from Milano -

WHEEL
Knife wounds. Heart. Fatal.
(beat)
So like no way could this wait for the day tour, huh?

EXT. 87TH STREET - NIGHT

More people on the street now behind the police tape, including a modern 'media' presence - teenagers filming with their iPhones - be up on YouTube before sunrise.

Watching one of the 'reporters,' Naz remembers his own cell phone, takes it out of a pocket and scrolls to the contact - 'HOME' - but then can't bring himself to press 'call.'

He glances out the window of the patrol car again, sees two golden eyes - Andrea's cat - free from the backyard - staring at him.

INT. NIGHT WATCH OFFICE - SAME TIME - NIGHT

Windowless office of LT. DANNY LING, (44) - supervisor of the unit. The Dispatcher - Wheel - knocks, enters.

WHEEL
Stabbing homicide, female, early 20s in the 2-0.

LING
(wincing)
Indoors or out.

WHEEL
In. West 87th Street brownstone.

LING
Brownstone. Is it a circus?

WHEEL
(shrugging)
Will be if it ain't already.

LING
Who's here.

WHEEL
You.
(off Ling's look)
Everybody else's up at Harlem Hospital or over at the three-two. Those Agg-Assaults off the gang beef.

LING
Pull Mason and Sheehan off that for this. And I don't want to hear any shit about life is cheap above 96th Street.

WHEEL
We're cool. The vic on this is black, too.

Ling rises, pulls on his sports jacket, takes his service piece from a drawer, a steno pad, heads for the door, then hesitates.

LING
You know what? Don't call them.

He unholsters his cell phone, scrolls through the numbers -

WHEEL
Box?
(Ling nods as he hits 'call')
I was gonna say.

INT. DARKENED BEDROOM - NIGHT - INTERCUT

HOMICIDE DETECTIVE SERGEANT DENNIS BOX [60's], asleep in bed alone, no wife, stirs at the sound of his cell vibrating on his night stand. He picks it up -

BOX
Box.

LING O/S
Hey Dennis, Danny. Sorry to wake you, but thought you might want to get in on this from the jump.

BOX
What you got?

INT. BOX'S CAR - MOVING - NIGHT

Box drives along the almost deserted pre-dawn streets, his radio tuned to the classical station, WQXR. He and the city seem at peace - until he pulls onto 87th Street -

EXT. 87TH STREET - CONTINUOUS

The crowd has grown. The police presence, too. Wiggins, Maldonado, Klein, Dennehy, Ling, and half a dozen more cops and their cars, light from the risers flashing at the trees.

Out of a blue-and-white Crime Scene Unit SUV, emerge two forensics detectives - TURLEY, (44) and MARTIN (45), carrying their aluminum forensic kits.

Naz, still in the back of the cruiser, watches the CSU guys climb the steps to the brownstone, showing their shields to a uniform. As Turley goes in -

MARTIN
I'll get the door before ten more people touch it, be up in a minute.

Box's anonymous-looking car slows, pulls in behind the patrol cars. He climbs out - takes in the municipal block party - the tree lined sidewalks - the well-kept townhouses.

Professionals, these people. Taxpayers. Which means, a media-magnet crime.

As he makes his way past the police cars, he's at once calm and alert, and as sober as he's dressed.

Passing Wiggins/Maldonado's cruiser, he can't help but notice the figure in the backseat, but that's all - just notes it to himself as he continues on.

He heads for Ling, but is intercepted at the yellow-tape perimeter by a young cop who mistakes him for a citizen.

COP 1
Where you think you're [going] -

BOX
Detective Sergeant Box, son, Manhattan North Homicide.

Holds up his shield.

COP 1
Oh, sorry, boss.

The cop lifts the tape so the detective doesn't have to limbo under it. Box continues to Ling and Klein standing at the foot of the brownstone steps. At the top of them, Martin is photographing the broken door pane and shards of glass.

BOX
Who made the call?

LING
Neighbor over there.

Box regards the neighbor, who's now talking to some of the other neighbors.

BOX
Anybody else see anything?

LING
Some guy walking his dog. Not much.

BOX
Cameras?

LING
One up the street, not sure it's working. We're pulling the film.

BOX
Who's that?

He gestures to the police car Naz is in. Ling squints.

LING
There's someone in there?

WIGGINS
He's ours. Suspicion of drunk -

MALDONADO
Reckless driving.

Box regards Wiggins and Maldonado the way Klein did. Then -

BOX
You picked him up and brought him here? What for?

WIGGINS
We'd just pulled him over when the call comes in. We responded to the [call] -

BOX
Well, I don't want him here. Get a unit to take him to the house or cut him loose.

WIGGINS
We'll take him in. We're off-duty an hour [ago] -

BOX
Not you. You stay.

Wiggins and Maldonado exchange a tired look: *Is this night ever going to end?*

BOX
(to Klein)
Get the neighbor and the dog-walker over to the house, too - they're famous enough out here already.

Ling follows after Box up the steps of the brownstone where Martin is now lifting bloody prints from the door handle -

MARTIN
Boss.

He moves his stuff aside so Box and Ling can enter.

EXT. 87TH STREET - NIGHT

Naz watches Maldonado approach the patrol car he's in. The cop unlocks it. Pulls open the back door.

MALDONADO
All right, let's go.

NAZ
(fearing he means the brownstone)
Where.

MALDONADO
Just get out of the car.

Naz climbs out. Maldonado escorts him away from the brownstone, and for a moment Naz thinks he's being let go ... But Maldonado just leads him to another cruiser, opens its rear door and deposits Naz in back. Closing it -

MALDONADO
(to the cops inside)
Thanks.

INT. BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

Box enters the living room with Ling.

It's as we've never seen it before - more brightly-lit.

Box takes it in as the physical examination of the scene gets underway, CSU Turley beginning to set out numbered cones next to items he'll want to photograph and dust.

Box regards the table, bottle, shot glasses, sofa, broken lamp, a couple of bloody napkins strewn about in the clumsy attempt to clean up - and the body lying sightless in underwear on the floor in the pool of blood ...

Box stares down at her/it, at once somehow both dispassionate and empathetic.

LING
Nice-looking kid.
(Box looks at Ling)
Her face, I'm saying.

Box nods to himself. Kneels outside the pool of blood, his study of her drifting from the large collection of chest stab wounds, to several on her hands.

BOX
Make sure they bag her hands.

EXT/INT. PATROL CAR - MOVING - NIGHT

The two cops transporting Naz to the 2-0, talking as if he isn't there.

COP 2
What'd he do.

COP 3
Who.

COP 2
(Naz in back)
Him.

COP 3
Witness, isn't he?

His partner doesn't know any more than he does. To Naz, sitting frozen in back -

COP 3
What'd you see?

NAZ
Nothing.

COP 3
Fine witness you're gonna make.

The cops exchange a grin and drive in silence. Then -

NAZ
Is she dead?

COP 3
Oh, I think that's safe to say.

COP 2
(losing interest)
You hear Dennehy say Maldonado upchucked in his trunk?

COP 3
In his *trunk*?

EXT. 87TH STREET - NIGHT

An M.E van pulls up. Two men - HARRY CHESTER [50s] and an ASST. MEDICAL EXAMINER - climb out with kits.

INT. BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

CSU Detective Martin, done with the front door, works with Turley in the living room now -

Before getting into the details, they start with the big picture - sketching and photographing the layout - placement of the body, the broken lamp, noting blood spatter, etc.

- while Box, wearing latex gloves now, examines the contents of the victim's purse -

Nothing extraordinary in it, no drugs or weapons anyway. He jots down her name from her driver's license on a little note pad, picks up her cell phone and begins scrolling through the contacts.

CHESTER
Knock knock.

The Medical Examiners come in with their kits. The senior one - Chester - is bespectacled, unkempt, as if he knows the dead don't care.

BOX
She's over here, Harry.

Chester comes over. Stands just outside the blood pool perimeter. Has a cursory look at the body.

CHESTER
All I can say, Miss, is you're too young.

He pulls a camera from his shoulder bag and takes his first pictures of her which - with the flash - make them appear all the more lurid - like tabloid photos.

INT. 20TH PRECINCT - 4:00 AM - NIGHT

Beneath fluorescent overheads, the ground floor is a large open area - the muster room with folding chairs, some vending machines, and bowling alley-style plastic chairs for visitors and supplicants.

This grim Monsanto-tiled indoor wasteland faces a high wooden desk running the length of the room, behind which hangs a massive American flag bordered by bas relief plaques of cops who have died in the line of duty from to the present, including three from 9/11.

To the side of the barren center space is an even grimmer prisoners' holding pen lined with hip-high restraining bars like ballet barres; separated from the rest of the room by a floor to ceiling filmy Plexiglas partition.

As Naz is being ushered in the back door off the parking area and into the barren middle space by his transporters -

MILANO
(skippering the desk)
Did Maldonado really puke at the scene?

COP 1
Must've been bad clams.
(laughter, then to Naz)
Cop a squat.
(not sure what he means)
Sit.

Naz sits on one of the chairs, his back to the filmy Plexiglas wall, behind which three cuffed prisoners pace. His transporters start toward the street door -

COP 2
And we're out of here.

Suddenly, the back door blows open as a powerfully-built, handcuffed LATINO trailing Taser streamers like a gored bull, is muscled inside by three plainclothes anti-crimers, the guy cursing and roaring.

ON NAZ - eyes the size of silver dollars -

as the anti-crimers wrestle the guy belly down in the middle of the room and plastic-tie his ankles like steer wranglers.

MILANO
(irritated, yet calm)
Tweakin or E.D.?

ANTI-CRIMER
Dustin'. Blast from the past.

MILANO
Dust? Where the hell am I supposed to park him? Get his ass to St. Luke's.

ON NAZ again, watching the cops haul the Tweaker back out the way they came - then reflexively turning to the prisoners behind the Plexiglas until one notices him staring. He quickly turns back around.

His asthma returning, he pats himself down for his inhaler, It's gone, but his hands feel the outline of the knife in his jacket breast pocket and he almost keels over in horror at the realization.

Milao picks up a ringing phone -

MILANO
Milano ... I was doing all right, then I answered the phone ... how much you give me to check ...

As Milano looks over some paperwork, Naz, uncuffed and invisible, for the moment at least, takes his cell phone from a jeans pocket and with trembling fingers dials home.

MILANO O/S
I have a Pauline Rodriguez, will that do?

INT. KHAN LIVINGROOM - INTERCUT - NIGHT

Dead quiet at this hour. A landline phone rings once. No more. No one wakes.

BACK TO NAZ IN THE STATION -

killing the call, shrinking into himself. He turns to the Plexiglas again just as the prisoner who caught his eye RAMS the glass with his forehead.

INT. BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

Turley and Martin begin photographing the items in the room they intend to dust for prints.

Chester hovers over the body taking its temperature, notes it, takes the temperature of the room, then begins measuring the widths of the knife wounds on the victim's chest.

CHESTER
One and a half by, I'm gonna say about five, until I get her on the table and probe.

BOX
Serrated or no?

CHESTER
Looks like.

BOX
I'll be back.

TURLEY
Oh, we'll be here.

EXT. BROWNSTONE - 87TH STREET - NIGHT

Ling and Box exit into the increasingly crowded scene outside. As Box heads to a pair of freshly-arrived, still half-asleep LOCAL DETECTIVES from the 2-0, he stops in his tracks when he hears -

MALE O/S
What happen, he kill her or something?

It's Trevor, one of the two young black guys who earlier hassled Andrea and Naz on the street, saying it to a cop who ignores him. His silent friend is no longer with him.

Box slowly turns to regard him ...

INT. 20TH PRECINCT - NIGHT

Naz still on his platic chair. Things have quieted down.

Two cops and a civilian wander out of the reception area and into the street.

Duty Sergeant Milano, having clearly lost interest in him, works at a Times crossword.

It would be so easy to get up and leave, but just as Naz summons the will and gets up -

The dog-walker and neighbor witnesses are escorted into the station house.

COP 4
Have a seat, gentlemen, someone will be right with you.

Naz sits back down as the men are steered to the plastic chairs opposite him, regard him briefly without recognition.

INT. THE KHAN HOME - NIGHT

Naz's little brother Hasan, asleep on his feet, pees in toilet, then returns to his room, and only then realizes his older brother's bed is empty. Where is he?

INT. SALIM AND SAFAR'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Hasan enters, stares at his sleeping parents.

HASAN
(quietly)
Hey.

SALIM
(waking, in Punjabi)
What is it?

EXT. BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

Box walks over to Trevor, regards him calmly.

BOX
Who are you?

TREVOR
(red-eyed high)
Who are you?

Box shows him his shield, and Trevor looks like he wishes he'd kept his mouth shut.

BOX
Who's "he?"

TREVOR
Who's 'he' in the sentence, 'he kill her or something.'

TREVOR
I'm just saying.

BOX
I don't know what the fuck you're saying.

TREVOR
Some Arab dude.

BOX
Describe him.

TREVOR
Arab dude, you know.

BOX
No, I don't.

TREVOR
Look like he work in a deli or sumshit.

BOX
Try harder.

TREVOR
Short skinny Puerto Rican lookin' but with them beanie little eyes.

BOX
How do you know he wasn't Puerto Rican? Was he wearing anything Arabic?

TREVOR
Nah, man, just Friday night go out and party shit but ... I tried to warn her too, know what I'm sayin'?

BOX
Yeah? How'd you go about doing that?

TREVOR
Just called him out to his face, you know?

BOX
But you didn't know him.

TREVOR
Nope.

BOX
Never saw him before.

TREVOR
Nope, nope.

BOX
You know the girl?

TREVOR
Uh-uh, not per se, you know what I'm sayin'.

BOX
No. I don't.

TREVOR
I seen her like, in passing, you know, on the block, but it's more like, I knew her type.

BOX
And what type is that?

TREVOR
(nervous laugh)
Nah, see, this ain't coming out right.

BOX
What's your name?

TREVOR
(entre nous)
Hey look, man, just give me your card or something, I'll bang you on this later.

BOX
My card?
(leans towards Trevor)
If I turn you upside down, how much weed is going to fall out?

TREVOR
Oh, that's how you do? Yeah, see?
(clucking)
No good deed goes unturned.

Box gestures for a detective to take Trevor into (at least) witness custody.

INT. 20TH PRECINCT - NIGHT

Two of the prisoners behind the Plexiglas are arguing basketball.

PRISONER 1
Fuck Lebron, he can shit MVP out his ass year in year out, he ain't never gonna deliver the rings like Kobe.

PRISONER 2
Kobe ain't got no heart, man. He ain't got no team in him.

ON NAZ - all this NBA jawing, his passion, now feels hellishly perverse.

His cell phone VIBRATES, making him jump. He looks at the screen - HOME - but can't bear to answer it.

INT. AMIR'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dark. Naz's friend Amir's cell phone shatters the stillness. His hand fumbles to find it, pulls it under the covers.

AMIR
Who the hell is this ...
(shooting upright)
Mister Khan...

INT. KHAN HOME - DOWNSTAIRS - INTERCUT

Hasan sits next to his father who's on the phone, speaking quietly to not wake his wife -

SALIM
Is he with you, Amir?
(pause)
Then where is he? You didn't see him at all?
(pause)
Where was this party?

INT. AMIR'S BEDROOM - INTERCUT

Amir is pacing in his shorts now -

AMIR
Sir, I have no idea. He had the address, not me.

INT. KHAN HOME - INTERCUT

Salim's wife comes down the stairs as he's hanging up.

SAFAR
(in Punjabi)
What's going on?

SALIM
Nothing, nothing.

INT. 20TH PRECINCT - NIGHT

Summoning up the courage to try to walk out, Naz rises, walks slowly toward the door as Milano does his crossword ...

Naz is almost to the door - three or four more steps and he's free - when it suddenly opens and in come Box, Maldonado and Wiggins, returning from the crime scene mid-conversation -

BOX
I don't know what you're doing here.

MALDONADO
We followed you. You're [here] -

BOX
I have witnesses to interview, do you? Go back out there.

Naz sits back down on his bench. Maldonado and Wiggins follow Box to the room-length desk, Sergeant Milano setting aside his crossword to meet them on the other side.

MALDONADO
Sarge, you got ten thousand gold shields on the scene, why do we get stuck with -

BOX
It's called chain of custody, didn't you go to the academy like the other kids? Or were you out that day.

Naz's cell phone vibrates again. He pulls it out of his pocket enough to read - HOME - but again doesn't answer it.

BOX
(to Wiggins, mainly)
And when you log it all remember, blood stays with blood, hair with hair, photos with photos.

MILANO
(to all)
Can I ask you guys something? Who's my friend over there's been staring at me like Bambi last two hours.

MALDONADO
(sees Naz)
Oh shit. He's ours.

MILANO
(to Naz, come here)
You, sir.

Naz rises to join them, trembling with fear of the inevitable discovery.

BOX
(ignoring Naz, to Wiggins)
And be careful with the inventory vouchers.

As Box steps aside to make room for Naz at the counter, he notices the dog walker and neighbor on the plastic chairs.

BOX
Be with you in a minute.

Box takes out his little steno pad to refer to his notes.

MILANO
(re: Naz)
What is he, DWI?

MALDONADO
Reckless.

MILANO
Reckless, huh? What'd he blow?

MALDONADO
He was supposed to get tested in the house. Didn't he get -
(to Wiggins)
Who'd we tell to test?

WIGGINS
We told, uh - whatshisname.

Milano isn't buying, knows what this is all about.

MILANO
What's the matter, you don't you like overtime? Who doesn't like overtime?

MALDONADO
We're into golden time, not that anybody gives a shit. We're never getting out of here. You want, I'll test him now.

MILANO
Now you're gonna test him? How many hours later? Test what, it's gone if it was ever there.
(to Naz)
You just ducked a bullet here, kid.
(MORE)

MILANO (CONT'D)
(to Maldonado, Wiggins)
Get his pedigree, search him, clear him of warrants and kick him free.

Naz isn't out of the woods yet, but is hopeful. Milano slides over to Box.

MILANO
DCPI called. I'm like totally in the dark here, can you help me out?

BOX
I will do my best, Gerry.
(from his steno pad)
Victim's name is Andrea Cornish -

As Wiggins slips on gloves to pat Naz down, Maldonado takes a form from a box to fill out -

MALDONADO
Name.

Naz isn't sure Maldonado means him.

MALDONADO
You, I'm talking to you, what's your name.

NAZ
Nasir Khan.

BOX
22 years old, African American slash Caucasian descent -

MALDONADO
Spell it.

NAZ
N-A-S-I-R -

BOX
Stabbing homicide -

NAZ
K-H-A-N -

Wiggins takes Naz's keys from his pocket, sets them on the counter -

BOX
Found on the floor at 140 West 87th Street -

MALDONADO
D.O.B.

NAZ
October 12th, 1993.

Wiggins takes Naz's wallet from his back pocket, sets it on the counter.

MALDONADO
Here, gimme that.

Wiggins pushes the wallet over to him. To Milano, who's writing it down -

BOX
Suspect is a male, unknown race, unknown age -

Wiggins removes Naz's cell phone. Sets it on the counter.

MALDONADO
(on his license)
This your current address, in Queens?

Naz's phone vibrates, backlighting a small smudge of blood on the word HOME, no one but him noticing it.

NAZ
Yes.

BOX
Seen leaving the scene at approximately oh-three-thirty, hailing a taxi -

NEIGHBOR/WITNESS O/S
I didn't say he hailed a taxi.

Box glances over to the guy on the bench with a 'who asked you' sort of look.

WITNESS
I said he left *in* a taxi.

BOX
That's what I said.

WITNESS
His taxi.

ON WIGGINS, the only one - other than Naz - registering the comment. Naz tries not to look at her.

BOX
Fine.
(to Milano, a little annoyed with the guy)
Is this what we do, dump our witnesses here? Somebody escort the gentlemen to the squad room.

MALDONADO
Occupation.

NAZ
Student.

MILANO
(calling off to someone)
Frank? You mind?

ANOTHER DETECTIVE
I got it.
(to the witnesses)
This way.

Wiggins pats up Naz's pants, starting at the cuffs.

BOX
Where's the other guy?

WIGGINS
What other guy.

BOX
I was talking to. Who I said, bring in. The one reeking weed.

No one knows who he's talking about. To Naz -

MALDONADO
Where.

NAZ
What?

MALDONADO
Where are you a student.

MILANO
How many times stabbed, Sarge?

NAZ
(near tears)
Queens College.

BOX
I didn't count. A lot. Get it from Harry.

MILANO
Weapon recovered?

ON NAZ - A SLOW-MOTION NIGHTMARE - as Wiggins works her way up his legs to his waist.

BOX
Not as yet. ESU doing a toss of the house, street, dumpsters, grates, drains...

Reaching Naz's jacket, Wiggins feels something hard in its inside breast pocket, locks eyes with Naz.

BOX
What we're looking for is an approximately 5-inch long, one and a half wide - possibly serrated -

Wiggins delicately lifts out the 5-inch serrated knife from Naz's jacket pocket, Box staring at it distractedly.

BOX
- knife.

Naz is openly weeping now as Box calmly regards him and the bloodied knife Wiggins is holding by her fingertips.

MALDONADO
(oblivious, writing)
Social Security number?

Milano matter-of-factly holds open an evidence bag. Wiggins drops the knife into it.

BOX
(almost dreamily to Wiggins, re: Naz)
You picked him up for what again?

WIGGINS
Reckless driving.

BOX
(staring at Naz)
Where?

WIGGINS
90th and Broadway.

NAZ
(weeping)
No, wait. Wait.

The sense of what's going on starts to go around the big room. As all the cops in it slowly gravitate toward him, his confiscated cell starts vibrating again on the counter. Everyone ignores it.

BOX
(staring at Naz)
What time approximately?

WIGGINS
O-two-hundred.

NAZ
(eyes tear-swollen, nearly shut)
I didn't do it. I swear.

BOX
Didn't do what.

Naz can't bring himself to answer.

BOX
(moving closer, gently)
What's your name, son?

NAZ
(shaking his head no)
Naz ... Nasir ... but you don't understand ...

BOX
That's why we're going to talk. Okay, son? So I will understand. Just you and me. Let's go over [here] -

Naz, near blind from weeping, suddenly pushes away from Wiggins and Box. The encircling uniforms rush to restrain him.

NAZ
Let me go, I didn't do anything. Please ... *please* ... I have to get home ...

INT. KHAN HOME - SAME TIME - NIGHT

Salim listening to the ringing cell phone on his end -

SAFAR
(in Punjabi)
We should call the police.

INT. 20TH PRECINCT - SAME TIME - NIGHT

As Naz is being wrestled to the floor, Trevor is escorted into the precinct by detectives. He sees Naz struggling with the cops.

TREVOR
(shouting, pointing)
There! That dude right there! That's what I'm saying. Right, right, there! Hah! That's him!

Box remains aloof from the chaos, his eyes never leaving Naz's tortured face.

ON NAZ'S CELL PHONE - vibrating on the counter: *HOME* ...

INT. 20TH PRECINCT - INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT

A security camera view from a ceiling corner of Naz sitting alone in the small stark room ...

INT. 20TH PRECINCT - SAME TIME - NIGHT

Box, Milano, Wiggins, Maldonado and the two cops who transported Naz here watch the video image on a monitor. Box studies the boy in a way the others don't. He's also the only one not sipping coffee.

COP 3
(to his partner)
Remember what he said in the car?
(his partner doesn't)
'Is she dead?'

Box glances from the monitor to the cop, but doesn't question or comment.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - 20TH PRECINCT - NIGHT

Box comes in with an easy attitude and friendly face, clipboard in hand with Naz's driver's license on it.

BOX
We didn't formally meet out there. I'm Detective Sergeant Dennis Box.

He offers his hand. Naz shakes it. The detective can see the smeared dried blood on Naz's.

BOX
So. Nasir. Is that what you like to be called? Or -

NAZ
Naz.

BOX
Naz. Okay. That's easy.

Box pulls the only other chair in the room closer to Naz, sits almost knee-to-knee with him.

BOX
So what happened tonight, Naz?

Naz doesn't know where to begin, or if he even should.

BOX
You know Andrea well or just meet her?
(Naz seems confused)
You didn't know her name? Just someone who got in your cab?

NAZ
My dad's cab.

Box is pleased that the first words out of Naz's mouth aren't '*I want a lawyer.*'

BOX
Your dad's cab, all right. You picked her up in the cab - where.

NAZ
I don't know. Downtown. I was lost.

BOX
Okay. Then ...
(nothing from Naz)
Where she say she wanted to go?

NAZ
The beach.

BOX
The what? The beach?

Naz nods, but doesn't elaborate, doesn't seem able to.

BOX
She say anything, or do anything, or behave in some way to upset you?

NAZ
No. She was nice.

BOX
She must've said something. Or done something to you.

NAZ
No. She ...

Box waits for more but it doesn't come.

BOX
Naz ... you said out there I didn't understand and you're right. I don't. That's what I'm doing to do here. That's why I'm here. To try to understand. To hear it from you. I don't have to do that, by the way. I want to.

Naz's breathing is getting a little shorter.

BOX
What *you* need to understand is that what you say to me here is very important. For you, not me. It can help you. I'm trying to help you. Help me help you.

NAZ
I can't breathe.

BOX
(backing off a little)
Okay. That's okay. Not uncommon. Just relax.

NAZ
No. I mean I have asthma.

BOX
Oh ... You got something to help you with that?

NAZ
No.

BOX
You want to go to the hospital?

NAZ
I want to go home.

INT. KHAN HOME - NIGHT

Naz's little brother Hasan watches from a doorway:

His parents, the last people on earth to use the Yellow Pages, huddled over the fat book and a landline phone in the living room.

SAFAR
Did they hang up?

SALIM
I think I'm still on hold.

SAFAR
Where is this hospital?

SALIM
It's here. What do you think?

SAFAR
Didn't he say he was going into Manhattan?

That's right. He did. Salim hangs up and turns the pages of the Yellow Pages ...

INT. 20TH PRECINCT - INTERVIEW ROOM - CONTINUED

Box regards Naz in a silence as the boy stares down at his lap, at dried blood on his pants. Eventually -

BOX
Is she dead?

NAZ
What?

BOX
That's what you asked the officers in the car that brought you here, 'Is she dead?' You don't remember saying that?
(Naz doesn't, or doesn't say)
They hadn't said anything about her. Hadn't said it was a she or a he, let alone, dead. Nobody had.

Nothing from Naz.

BOX
So you're at her place, can we agree on that? You have a couple drinks. Maybe a kiss. You have a couple more drinks and - and she's pretty - I know that, I saw her. What'd she do, say no?

NAZ
No.

BOX
Fought you?

NAZ
No.

BOX
Then what happened, Naz.

NAZ
I don't *know*. I fell asleep. When I woke up, she - she was -
(can't finish it)

BOX
She was dead.
(Naz nods)
And you - what did you do.

NAZ
I ran. I was scared.

BOX
By what you'd done.

NAZ
No.

Box calmly regards him. Then -

BOX
When we're done here, what we're going to do - so you know - is go upstairs and run some tests. You know why?
(Naz doesn't)
Because you're a crime scene, Nasir. Just like the house and the cab and Andrea. And it's our job to collect everything we can from a crime scene.
(MORE)

BOX (CONT'D)
And here's what we're going to find, if you ask me: Her in the cab, the cab on her. You in the house, the house on you. You on her, her on you. Her on the knife, the knife on you.

NAZ
I didn't *kill* her -

BOX
Then help me. Help me understand this.

Nothing from Naz.

BOX
You had sex with her.

NAZ
Yes. But it wasn't - I didn't force her.

BOX
I didn't say you did -

NAZ
She's the 2nd girl in my whole <u>life</u> I've had - I've slept with. She was - nice. I liked her.

Silence. Box waits but no more comes.

BOX
I'm gonna be straight with you, Naz. Because what I'm looking at - the evidence already, the eyewitnesses - is so strong, you really need to start telling me the truth - for your sake.

NAZ
I am.

BOX
(points up)
You see that, right?
(the camera, which Naz hadn't until now)
That's recording us and it *will* be played in court. How you think that's gonna come off - 'she was nice - I liked her - but I killed her anyway' -

NAZ
I didn't. I told you - I don't remember *anything* after - after -

He tries to remember what he last remembers, and can't.

BOX
I have to tell you that's not gonna play any better. Judges and juries? - they don't like 'I don't remember.' They like honesty. They like remorse. They like that a lot. That counts for something to them - and even more to you - in years. Honesty and remorse can shave a lot of years off. So you may want to revise that. And now's the time.

It's all Naz can to do just not cry. Box waits, but the young man says nothing more.

BOX
All right. Let's go upstairs so we can do what we have to do. We can talk again later.

He gets up. Naz doesn't.

BOX
(gently)
Come on.

INT. 20TH PRECINCT - UPSTAIRS SQUADROOM - SMALL CELL - NIGHT

Naz's face pressed into a cinder block wall by a latex-gloved hand - great panic/struggle -

COP 4 O/C
Don't look at me. Do not look at me.

NAZ
I can't breathe!

COP 4 O/C
If you're talkin' you're breathin.'

As Naz is forcibly stripped of his clothes by two cops wearing latex gloves, Box calmly observes from a distance.

Naz's sneakers are swiftly stuffed in one of an orderly line of evidence bags. Socks in another.

As he tries to keep his limbs together, they wrestle him down onto a narrow cot and yank at his pants. Naz is hyperventilating, near-hysterical, pathetic in his struggles.

COP 5
Jesus Christ, kid, man up a little, will you?

COP 4
Make it easier here.

Belly down, they pull off his boxers and gingerly deposit them into an evidence bag.

Naked now, Naz sits up, knees to chin, shivering, sniffling, facing away from them.

Box regards scratch marks on Naz's back as the cops exit with the bags, then solicitously hands Naz a clean pair of hospital scrubs.

BOX
Sorry about that. You can put these on.

Naz stays in his fetal crouch, staring wretchedly into the middle distance.

INT. 20TH PRECINCT - INTERVIEW ROOM 1 - NIGHT

High-angle video image of the neighbor-witness, alone in the room, waiting to be interviewed.

INT. 20TH PRECINCT - INTERVIEW ROOM 2 - NIGHT

Video image of the dog walker witness, sitting alone in another interview room, waiting.

INT. 20TH PRECINCT - INTERVIEW ROOM 3 - NIGHT

Video image of Trevor sitting alone in another interview room, fidgeting at the table. He glances up at the camera, gets up, and, irritated, addresses it -

TREVOR
How long I'm supposed to sit here? I got things to do.

EXT. 20TH PRECINCT - NIGHT

The blue and white Crime Scene Unit SUV pulls up, Turley and Martin climbing out with their forensics kits.

INT. 20TH PRECINCT - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

The CSU detectives approach Milano at the desk.

MILANO
Gentlemen, how's the scene?

TURLEY
Battle of Gettysburg, we'll be there all day, where's the birthday boy?

INT. 20TH PRECINCT - MEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Back-dropped by filthy white tile, Naz stands full-frontal naked - arms outstretched, trembling head to toe - as Martin photographs him with a camera clearly marked *Property of NYPD Crime Scene Unit* - and Turley fills out some paperwork -

TURLEY
You catch the cut on the hand?

MARTIN
What do you think?
(to Naz)
Turn around.

Naz does.

TURLEY
Make sure to get nice close-ups on those back scratches.

MARTIN
What are you, my mother?

TURLEY
I'm just saying.

INT. 20TH PRECINCT - BOOKING STATION - NIGHT

Naz, back in the scrubs, trembles so badly he smears the fingerprint Turley's trying to take.

TURLEY
Uh - that's no good, we gotta start over.

NAZ
Sorry.

They're in a bland room with the fingerprint table, Xerox machine, and mug shot set-up against a cinder block wall, all aligned directly opposite four small holding cells. Martin's filling out some paperwork now -

TURLEY
Relax.

Turley takes the finger again, rolls it in the ink, gets a clean print on the fingerprint form.

TURLEY
K, stand over there.

As Naz moves against the cinder block wall -

His eyes are drawn by the slap of shoes - rather sandals - against the linoleum floor. Instead of socks, the man's feet are wrapped in gauze, Naz sees.

JACK STONE (50), startlingly disheveled in a cheap suit, tie askew from the worn messenger bag slung over his shoulder, in desperate need of a shave and a hair cut, passes by escorted by a uniform towards one of the holding cells.

The flash of Turley's camera taking Naz's mug shot draws a glance from Stone just before he's is put in a cell, the door locked behind him - another arrestee, Naz assumes. Turley takes his profile shot.

TURLEY
Okay, we're done here.

MARTIN
Box wanted palm prints too.

TURLEY
I didn't hear him say that.

MARTIN
Then don't do it.

Turley decides he'd rather do it than risk Box's wrath, takes hold of one of Naz's hands.

TURLEY
Try not to shake.
(to Martin)
This is going to be fun.

NAZ
(abruptly, tentatively)
I want a lawyer.

MARTIN
Oh yeah? Why?

NAZ
Why?

MARTIN
You know what kind of message that sends, don't you?

Naz doesn't, and looks embarrassed, like maybe he said the wrong thing, but Turley smiles as he takes the palm prints.

TURLEY
Hey, what do we know, we're just Crime Scene Unit guys, so why don't you wait for the squad detectives to come back around before you get into all that.

MARTIN
But seriously, kid? Look before you leap is what I say.

TURLEY
(handing Naz a paper towel)
Done here.

INT. 20TH PRECINCT - ANOTHER ROOM - NIGHT

Naz, in his scrubs, sits in what looks like a cut-rate doctor's examination room. As a tech readies scrapers, swabs and vials -

BOX
I'd like to take a little scrape of the blood off your hands, little swipe under your nails, little bit off those scratches on your back, and a cheek swab. Okay if I do that?

NAZ
(confused)
Is it okay?

BOX
I need your consent, Naz. If you don't give it, I'll have to get a court order, which'll take about 45 minutes, so that won't be a problem - except for you. Refusing looks bad to a jury, and I really don't want you disadvantaged. But it's up to you. You can say no.

NAZ
(weak from having said it so many times)
I didn't do it.

BOX
Well, there you have it, you got nothing to fear. Should we get on with it then? Your call.
(Naz nods his assent)
Say the words for me, Naz.

NAZ
Yes. OK.

The tech approaches with a long Q-tip.

TECH
Open your mouth.

Naz does, and the guy quickly swabs at the inside of his cheek. To Naz -

BOX
Oh. One more thing. I'm gonna need a penile swab, too. Okay if we do that while we're at it?

Naz tries to imagine how they're going do that, and can't.

BOX
Yes?

NAZ
Okay.

TECH
Lie down. On your side.

Looking over at Box like a kid looks to a parent at the pediatrician's office, Naz lies down on a regular table.

BOX
(fatherly)
Do you want me to stay?

NAZ
Will it hurt?

BOX
Oh, yes.

INT. KHAN HOME - NIGHT

Hasan has joined his parents in the living room, sits with his mother as his father talks to someone at some hospital -

SALIM
No. Not a C. Khan. K.H.A.N.
(listens)
Please don't put me on hold again -

They put him on hold. He almost hammers the phone - Hasan cringing - but catches himself before it strikes the table.

INT. 20TH PRECINCT - HOLDING CELLS - NIGHT

Naz sits mute in his holding cell. Hears a cell door down the line open, and in a moment Stone reappears in his view -

In Stone's vacated cell, an incarcerated TRANNY (27), makeup smeared from the night before, calls out.

TRANNY
Jack, will you take a check?

Stone, momentarily standing in front of Naz's cell -

STONE
Would you, Paul?

TRANNY
Pauline, Jack. How many times I got to say it.

Stone regards Naz, sitting in his cell looking like - well, like Milano said - Bambi. They momentarily lock eyes through the bars before Stone, apparently a lawyer, walks away, his slapping sandals and voice fading down the corridor ...

STONE O/S
Cashiers check only, Paul.

EXT. 20TH PRECINCT - MAIN ENTRANCE - NIGHT

One of the detectives who wrestled Naz to the floor - LIEBERMAN - is outside having a cigarette. Just a touch of light in the pre-dawn sky as Stone comes out and stands next to him.

STONE
What's with Gunga Din in there?

LIEBERMAN
Who?

STONE
The big-eyed kid.

LIEBERMAN
The kid ... oh, you mean Travis Bickle?

STONE
What are you talking about?

LIEBERMAN
Chopped up a girl on 87th.

STONE
Who did.

Lieberman takes a long look at the cut-rate attorney.

LIEBERMAN
They're called razors, Stone, you should invest. Experiment. Worse comes to worse, it all grows back.

Lieberman drops his cigarette on the ground, grinds it out, returns inside.

Stone stands there a few moments. Then starts off, headed west to get the 1 Train to take him home to get some sleep.

He slows. Stops. Stands there under the trees on the rain-slick sidewalk. Scratches at one of his feet with the sandal-sole of the other.

Then, against his better judgment - what does he know about murder? - heads back to the 2-0.