

NICKY PREVOST

Version 1.2.3
an original screenplay by

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FADE IN:

INT. TACKY MANSION - DAY

NICKY, late 30's, is scrubbing the marble floors of a lavish, rococo foyer. She works methodically, mindlessly.

CLICKING heels break her trance. She shifts her eyes to see -

A WOMAN IN A FUR COAT counting money while descending the enormous staircase. Nicky looks back to the floor.

The woman crosses the foyer and stops right in front of Nicky.

WOMAN IN FUR COAT

And I thought my gig was shitty. At least I get to lay down. What'd you do wrong to end up on your knees?

NICKY

Nothing.

The woman catches Nicky's rag with a long high heel.

WOMAN IN FUR COAT

Girl like you, scrubbing floors. Must have been something bad.

Nicky doesn't answer, just tries to get back to work.

WOMAN IN FUR COAT (CONT'D)

Work release?

Nicky nods.

NICKY

Almost out.

WOMAN IN FUR COAT

What'd you do?

NICKY

Killed someone. Accidentally but that doesn't matter.

A couple of bills float to the floor and land in front of her.

WOMAN IN FUR COAT

Well, keep it up, girl. Someone's gotta do it.

The Woman clicks off to the front door and leaves. Nicky pockets the money.

Moments later, an OVERWEIGHT MAN in nothing but a towel waddles down the stairs. His bare feet slap on the wet floor.

He passes Nicky without noticing her. His feet leave dirty prints where she has just cleaned.

EXT. PAROLE OFFICE - DAY

Nicky pauses at the bottom of the stairs to this dim, granite monolith.

INT. PAROLE OFFICE, MAIN DESK - DAY

Nicky enters. It's a grim office that looks like it smells bad.

She puts her hand on a glass pad and it scans her palm. The GUARD at the desk nods for her to proceed.

INT. PAROLE OFFICE, STEVE'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Nicky enters. STEVE Seaford, a career parole officer, is at his desk typing away at a dirty computer in a windowless room.

Nicky casually takes a seat. He pretends to still be working on something more important. They've done this many times.

STEVE
How's it goin', Nicky?

NICKY
Same as always.

STEVE
How's your son?

NICKY
Fine.

STEVE
How's the job?

NICKY
I want a transfer.

STEVE
Like I told you before, you're lucky to have this one. The only other thing open right now is shoveling shit at the refugee camp. Ya don't want that, now do ya?

Nicky stares blankly back.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Ok. Let's get to it.

He turns a screen toward her. She shifts to face it.

He passes her a wristband that is connected by a wire to a terminal.

She puts it on her wrist and takes a calming breath.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Tell me when you feel angry.

NICKY
I never feel angry.

STEVE
Ah ah ah. Let the test be the judge.

ON THE SCREEN - A series of images...

LAMBS IN A FIELD

NICKY
No.

GIRLS AT THE MALL

NICKY (CONT'D)
No.

MONEY BEING COUNTED

NICKY (CONT'D)
No.

AN AIRPLANE TAKING OFF

NICKY (CONT'D)
No.

A MAN POINTING A GUN

NICKY (CONT'D)
No.

GIRLS AT THE MALL

NICKY (CONT'D)
I already said no.

A BOWL OF PASTA

NICKY (CONT'D)
 (little laugh)
 Makes me hungry but not angry.

STEVE
 Just yes or no.

NICKY
 No.

CHILDREN IN A CLASSROOM

NICKY (CONT'D)
 (shifting in seat)
 No.

BOXERS IN A RING

Nicky pauses.

STEVE
 Does this make you angry?

NICKY
 No.

GIRLS AT THE MALL

NICKY (CONT'D)
 Why do you keep showing this one to
 me? I've said no twice.

STEVE
 Just stick to the test.

NICKY
 No.

POOR HUDDLED MASSES AT THE BORDER

STEVE
 Angry or not angry?

NICKY
 This is a trick question.

STEVE
 There are no trick questions.

NICKY
 (with misgivings)
 No.

SOMEONE BEING ARRESTED

NICKY (CONT'D)

No.

GIRLS AT THE MALL

NICKY (CONT'D)

(angry)

Why the fuck do you keep showing me
this? I said NO and I mean NO.

The computer BEEPS loudly. Steve quiets it and makes some notes. He stops the test.

Nicky catches herself. She's embarrassed.

STEVE

Nicky, you've still got some work to do.

NICKY

I don't know why that got me going.
It's just some chicks shopping at a mall.

STEVE

They look happy. Yes? Maybe you're angry at happiness.

NICKY

That's silly.

STEVE

Look. You've been coming to me for eight years. You're so close to being done here and finally getting a social status promotion. But you have to pass the test.

NICKY

I'm trying.

STEVE

It's not about effort. It's about fundamentally changing who you are. Rehabilitation. You need to rid yourself of the demon that put you here.

This makes her quietly angry.

STEVE (CONT'D)

I have a new program that I think will help.

NICKY
Shock therapy?

STEVE
Smile Therapy.

NICKY
What?

He smiles broadly, showing yellowed, unpleasant teeth.

STEVE
(still smiling)
Studies have proved that the act of smiling actually changes your brain chemistry. That's what you need. To literally alter your brain. Let's try it.

He motions for her to smile.

NICKY
Do I have to?

He nods while smiling.

Nicky reluctantly smiles.

STEVE
Don't resist. Let it take over.

She tries to let it take over.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Feeling angry?

NICKY
(smiling)
Yes. Very.

EXT. SIDEWALK, BUSY CITY STREET - EVENING

Exhausted, Nicky heads for the subway entrance.

She rubs lotion into her red, cracked hands. Her eyes have a thousand yard stare.

A SCUFFLE up ahead snaps her out of it. Two COPS cuff a THIN MIDDLE AGED MAN. The Man yells to all who will listen:

THIN MIDDLE AGED MAN
Someone call my wife! Please! 585-4334. Someone call or she'll never know what happened to me!

And with that he is thrown into a windowless van. Nicky turns away and disappears down into the subway station.

INT. SUBWAY PLATFORM - MOMENTS LATER

Nicky is agitated. She looks to her phone. It's already dialed to 585-4334. All she has to do is hit "send."

But she doesn't. When the train arrives, she puts the phone away and tries to smile.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - DUSK

Nicky is in the window seat, falling asleep.

A blistering digital ad above her head wakes her. Bright, loud, obnoxious - it pushes a cheap lawyer promising upgrades to your social status.

The train emerges from the tunnel into the dwindling daylight.

Nicky watches the world pass by and the City skyline grow faint and distant.

The train stops at Church Street. Nicky gets out.

EXT. SUBWAY PLATFORM, CHURCH STREET - NIGHT

Immediately, we get the sense that this is a dangerous, duntrodden place.

The platform is empty except for a few SHIFTY FIGURES. SIRENS fade in and out somewhere nearby.

EXT. NICKY'S NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

Nicky makes her way home. Her body language says she's ready to fight.

INT. NICKY'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

A dreary, underlit place in desperate need of fresh paint.

Nicky drags herself up four flights of stairs.

She stops at **APARTMENT 411** and knocks softly on the door. PHILLIP, late 20's, opens the door.

Beyond him we see CAM, 10, practicing with NUNCHUCKS.

Cam lights up when he sees his mother. Phillip lets her in.

INT. PHILLIP'S APARTMENT 411 - CONTINUOUS

Phillip's apartment is just a small room with a bed and a kitchenette. He speaks with a foreign accent.

NICKY
(re: nunchucks)
Those look dangerous.

PHILLIP
Only to himself right now.

CAM
Phillip has a sword too!

NICKY
Please don't let him use a sword.

Phillip takes the nunchucks from Cam.

PHILLIP
Cam has done all his homework.

NICKY
Thank you, Phillip. Again. C'mon
Cam.

Phillip hands her two sandwiches.

NICKY (CONT'D)
Aw, really? I owe you, like, a
hundred loaves of bread.

PHILLIP
I'm still paying back the world.

CAM
One sandwich at a time.

PHILLIP
If that's what it takes.

NICKY
Thank you.

PHILLIP
Have a good night.

Nicky leads Cam out. They walk down the hall to the next apartment, **NUMBER 409**.

INT. NICKY'S APARTMENT 409 - CONTINUOUS

Nicky and Cam enter their small, basic one-bedroom.

There's a little kitchenette that overlooks a dining/livingroom and a short hall that leads to a bathroom and the bedroom. They don't have much furniture.

She tosses her stuff on the floor and kicks off her shoes.

Cam gets plates for their sandwiches and sets up the coffee table for dinner.

She passes a bookcase displaying a bevy of dust-covered TROPHIES AND MEDALS and heads to the only window in the room, a bay that overlooks the street.

At the window, she finds a CHESS GAME set up on a small table.

She analyses it.

CAM

In school today we started learning about asymmetric game theory.

NICKY

What's that?

CAM

It's like the opposite of chess. In chess you start with the exact same pieces and have the same goal. Each player does basically the same thing.

She makes her move.

CAM (CONT'D)

In an asymmetric game, the players have different goals, and like, different pieces, so to speak.

She flops on the couch and Cam takes his turn at chess.

CAM (CONT'D)

Our class is broken up into three teams and we each have a different win condition.

He plays, then joins her on the couch.

CAM (CONT'D)

My team is the detectives and we have to find the thieves who are trying to find victims before they report suspicious activities to us. So every time one of us succeeds, it changes the options for the other teams.

She is barely listening.

CAM (CONT'D)

Mom.

NICKY

Sorry, Cam. I'm just so beat. Sounds very cool, but can we just watch TV? It's all I have energy left to do.

He nods sympathetically. He turns on the TV with the remote.

LATER

They are snuggled on the couch watching a gameshow called "Your Wildest Dreams." A CONTESTANT is vying for a chance to win anything she wants.

CAM

What would you want if you won this show? Remember, can't be money.

NICKY

My own private island.

CAM

Would I be allowed there?

NICKY

Of course! No one else though.

CAM

Not even Dad?

NICKY

Maybe. If he wanted to be there. What would you want?

CAM

A horse.

NICKY

Where would we put a horse?

CAM

Right. Well how about a private island full of horses?

The CONTESTANT is close to winning. Cam and Nicky get excited, they root for her. She wins! They cheer.

The Contestant chooses her high school sweetheart for her prize, which provokes BOOS from the audience as well as Cam and Nicky.

She's hit with a random CREAM PIE from the audience.

The show wraps up with balloons and confetti and the HOST telling everyone to tune in tomorrow.

NICKY

Well that was disappointing. Time for bed.

Cam runs up to the TV and puts on a home video.

NICKY (CONT'D)

Oh no.

CAM

Oh yes.

NICKY

Again?

CAM

Again.

The video is a mixed martial arts fight. Nicky is in the ring facing a tough looking OPPONENT.

The CROWD is electrified.

The Emcee vamps.

Cam mimics his mother's on-screen moves. He's seen this a thousand times and loves it. He mimics the Emcee's calls.

CAM (CONT'D)

Nicky "The Heartbreaker" Prevost is dominating this fight. You're watching a new champion in the making, folks.

On-screen Nicky scores a few good jabs and her opponent(MAD DOG BURRIS) wobbles.

CAM (CONT'D)

Mad Dog Burris is not looking good. This could be it for him. Prevost is on her way to being crowned.

A kick to the face and Mad Dog Burris falls back to the mat. He's out cold.

The crowd goes wild. Cam throws his hands up and falls to his knees, as his mother does on screen.

CAM (CONT'D)
(mimicking Emcee)
It's a done deal, ladies and gentlemen. Nicky Prevost is the world's greatest fighter!

Nicky's reaction is mixed. She's delighted by Cam's enthusiasm, but the past makes her sad.

NICKY
Okay. Now it really is time for bed.

CAM
Who could go to sleep after that?

NICKY
After that, I slept for two days.

She ushers him to the bathroom to brush his teeth. While he brushes, she props herself up against the door jam, eyes falling shut.

CAM
(through brushing)
Can we find my dad tomorrow?

NICKY
No.

CAM
Why not?

NICKY
As I've said many times he doesn't want to be found. I don't know where he is. I'm sorry.

CAM
It's not your fault.

NICKY
I just always have bad news.

CAM
I asked for it.

NICKY
No, you didn't.

INT. NICKY'S APARTMENT 409, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Nicky tucks Cam into their shared bed. The room is windowless, oppressive.

NICKY
Hey, I got some extra money today.

CAM
How?

NICKY
Someone gave it to me.

CAM
For what?

NICKY
Just... right time right place I
guess.

She sets his alarm clock.

CAM
There's always a catch.

NICKY
Maybe not this time. Anyway, I'll
get us a hot dinner tomorrow. Special
treat. What do you want?

CAM
Fried chicken.

NICKY
Mmmm. Yes. With mashed potatoes.

CAM
And orange soda.

NICKY
Let's live it up.

She kisses him on the head.

NICKY (CONT'D)
I'll be gone by dawn. See you tomorrow
night.

CAM
Love you.

NICKY
Love you too.

She closes the door on her way out.

INT. NICKY'S APARTMENT 409 - CONTINUOUS

Nicky opens the fridge. Not much in there. But there is one beer.

She takes it. Cracks it open. Enjoys the first sip immensely.

From behind the dusty trophies on the bookshelf, she finds her gold CHAMPIONSHIP BELT.

She sets her beer down and wraps the belt around her waist. It's a little ... tight.

She moves to the television. The image is paused on her epic win. *She is in the middle of the ring holding the belt up high. Her face is alive with accomplishment.*

Nicky switches the video. Different day, different fight.

She mutes the sound.

This battle is not as heroic, not as controlled. She's off-balance and outmatched.

Frankly, she's getting her ass kicked.

Nicky tenses as she watches herself take blows, like she can still feel them.

Watching: her desperation mounts as she is backed into a corner fending off body blows. She lashes back.

The two tangle and Nicky gets him on the mat. She wraps her legs around his neck and he writhes to get out from under her.

The CROWD CHEERS.

A switch flips within her. She goes from heroic to destructive in an instant.

She grabs hold of his head and - PAUSE.

She can't watch the rest. She takes the belt off, sucks down her beer.

At the bay window, she looks out to the dark street. A cop car blows by.

In front of her is the chess game. She crouches to examine it. She makes her move: rook takes pawn.

INT. NICKY'S APARTMENT 409 - MORNING

Cam brushes his teeth.

He packs his backpack.

He checks in on the chess game, shakes his head. He easily takes the rook his mother played.

He scribbles a NOTE and leaves it under his triumphant piece, then leaves the apartment.

INT. MANSION - DAY

Nicky dusts dozens of her employer's awards, dedications, and commemorations.

She scrubs pots and pans.

She vacuums.

She sucks on a pouch of food in the pantry.

She gets her bag and clocks out.

INT. CHICKEN ON THE RUN - EVENING

Nicky orders dinner at the take-out counter.

EXT. SIDEWALK, BUSY CITY STREET - EVENING

Against a throng of COMMUTERS Nicky jockeys to get into the subway station. She gets shoved into a BALD GUY and drops her bag of dinner.

The Bald Guy explodes at her.

NICKY
(picking up bag)
Sorry. Sorry.

BALD GUY
How sorry are you? Huh? How sorry?

He kicks the bag out of her hand and chicken goes flying.

A COP nearby takes notice of the ruckus.

NICKY
It wasn't my fault. I got -

BALD GUY
(mocking)
It wasn't my fault. Look at you.
(MORE)

BALD GUY (CONT'D)
 Worthless. Your whole lousy life is
 your fault.

And he SPITS on her.

That switch flips in Nicky. The part of her that apologizes
 is turned off. The angry part of her flips on.

With one quick, almost silent hit, the Bald Guy flies back.

People clear out.

The COP rushes over.

The Bald Guy is out cold. Blood oozes from his head.

The Cop hones on Nicky, who snaps out of it and realizes
 what she just did.

Before she can run, the Cop slaps her to the ground and cuffs
 her.

INT. HOLDING CELL

Nicky sits on a bench. She can see a clock on the wall
 between the bars. It's 7:15 pm.

She calls out to a GUARD.

NICKY
 Hey, I need to call my son, let him
 know where I am.

She's ignored.

Then, a GUARD unlocks the cell door. He motions for her to
 come. She does.

But he's not taking her to a phone. He leads her down a
 hall into -

INT. SMALL ROOM

A JUDGE and STENOGRAPHER await Nicky in a drab, small room.
 Standing near the door is a BAILIFF.

The Guard seats Nicky in a metal chair in front of the Judge.

JUDGE
 Nicola Prevost. Age thirty eight.
 On probation for second degree murder.

NICKY

Should have been manslaughter. If anything.

JUDGE

And here now for aggravated assault. Primal urges. Intent to do harm. Initiating a confrontation with a social superior. How do you plead?

NICKY

Not guilty.

JUDGE

So you didn't crack that guy's skull?

NICKY

I... don't... No I didn't.

JUDGE

Hospital report shows otherwise. Camera footage shows otherwise. Witnesses definitely say otherwise.

He flips a screen up that shows the altercation in its entirety.

JUDGE (CONT'D)

You wanted to kill this guy.

NICKY

No. He spat on me. I reacted.

JUDGE

So he should go to the hospital? With a split cranium? Did he deserve that?

NICKY

Maybe.

JUDGE

Ms. Prevost you are still registered as a deadly weapon.

NICKY

Me? Like all of me?

JUDGE

Your history, your previous profession, your ability to kill people with your bare hands -

He mimes breaking a neck.

NICKY

That was an accident.

JUDGE

That you were convicted of and went to prison for. Because it wasn't an accident. And you're on probation. Makes this a very tenuous situation.

NICKY

What's happening right now?

JUDGE

Based on all the evidence provided to this court, I rule that you are guilty of all charges and hereby remand your next of kin to a Solitary Box unit such time as you deposit five Copper Coins to release said kin.

He CRACKS a gavel down.

JUDGE (CONT'D)

Guard, bring the next one in. I have poker tonight.

NICKY

Copper Coins? Where the hell do you even get those?

The Guard grabs her and hauls her off the chair.

NICKY (CONT'D)

Wait! Who's the next of kin? Who do you have as next of kin?

JUDGE

(reading file)

Cameron Prevost.

NICKY

No. No! He's a child. Take his father. I can tell you where to find him.

The guard struggles to contain her.

NICKY (CONT'D)

Five coins? I'll be lucky if I can get one.

JUDGE

Well then you should have behaved yourself. Guard, get her out of here!

The Guard hauls Nicky away kicking and screaming.

EXT. COURTHOUSE - NIGHT

The Cop lets Nicky go and she bolts away.

INT. NICKY'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Nicky runs through the halls in a panic.

INT. NICKY'S APARTMENT 409 - MOMENTS LATER

Nicky rushes in.

NICKY

Cam! Cam!

She searches the apartment but he is not there. She sobs.

She stops at the chess game, at the note Cam left. She takes and reads it: *Stop letting me win.*

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE PHILLIP'S APARTMENT 411

Nicky pounds on the door. Phillip answers. He lets her in.

PHILLIP

I'm sorry. I couldn't stop them.

INT. PHILLIP'S APARTMENT 411

Phillip pours Nicky a drink. They sit on his bed. She is trembling and agitated.

NICKY

He'll die in there.

PHILLIP

If he ate lunch at school and drank enough water today, he has maybe three days. You can get him out in time.

Nicky buries her head in her hands.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

It will be okay.

NICKY

Have you ever seen a Copper Coin?

PHILLIP

No.

NICKY

Neither have I. That's how long ago they were taken out of circulation.

PHILLIP

Then why does the court use them?

NICKY

To keep people like me and you where we are. At the bottom. It's the official currency of the desperate.

PHILLIP

So, a person who deals in desperation might have them?

NICKY

Yes. Probably.

PHILLIP

Someone like Anton?

NICKY

You know Anton?

PHILLIP

You don't get to stay in this country without doing a few favors for a few bad people.

NICKY

So you'll introduce me to him?

PHILLIP

Oh no. I would not be welcome. But you know someone else who could.

NICKY

Yeah. I guess I do.

EXT. TENT CAMP - NIGHT

Nicky tracks a blip on her phone as she navigates a tent camp of INDIGENTS.

She stops when her blip meets another blip. She looks up.

A man is slumped under an overpass. She approaches him.

NICKY

Hi Clyde.

CLYDE is out of it. He hardly registers her presence. She sits next to him.

NICKY (CONT'D)
You're looking good.

He lifts his head and, eventually, turns his eyes to her. There's a small spark of recognition.

NICKY (CONT'D)
Anyway. I'm here to ask a favor.
It's about Cam.

At the name 'Cam' he sits up a bit. His speech is slurred.

CLYDE
You have any food?

Nicky produces a sandwich. He swipes it and gnaws.

NICKY
I need your help. I got into a little
fight over nothing and...
(hesitant)
They boxed our son. It's my fault.
I own that. But I can get him out.
I just need something from you.

CLYDE
Boxed?

NICKY
Yes. A solitary box.

CLYDE
I know what it is. What did you do?

NICKY
A guy spat on me and I... knocked
him out.

CLYDE
And they let you be a mother.

NICKY
He deserved it. It doesn't matter.
I need you to take me to Anton.

CLYDE
You. You are so selfish. Living in
your little castle.

NICKY
It's a one bedroom with one window.

CLYDE
While I starve out here.

He throws the sandwich into a nasty looking puddle.

CLYDE (CONT'D)
Stealing my son away from me. And
now you lose him.

NICKY
I didn't steal him. You left us.

CLYDE
You forced me out.

NICKY
You're an addict.

CLYDE
You're a murderer.

NICKY
That was an accident that I paid
for.

CLYDE
I was there. *I was there.* You don't
do accidents. Everything you do is
c-c-calulated.

NICKY
I didn't steal him, Clyde. I raised
him. By myself. And now we have to
work together to get him back.
Anton's connected. He'll be able to
help.

CLYDE
Anton? No.

NICKY
Yes. I need five Copper Coins. He
has them, yes?

CLYDE
Yeah he has coins. He has all kinds
of coins. But, nah I can't bring
you there.

NICKY
Clyde, you have to. I need five
coins. Now.

CLYDE
What are you going to do for me?

NICKY
Save your son.

CLYDE
No. I mean, what else?

Nicky pulls some cash out of her pocket and rains it on him.
He takes it.

CLYDE (CONT'D)
Maybe tomorrow.

NICKY
Cam only has a couple days in there.
No food, no water. He's going to
die unless you take me to Anton right
now. Please.

Clyde rolls over and turns his back to her.

CLYDE
I'm busy. Come back later.

Nicky takes a moment to rethink her strategy.

NICKY
If you take me to Anton right now,
I'll pay him back for what you've
been skimming.

Clyde sits back up.

CLYDE
I don't skim.

NICKY
Oh no? You pay full market price
for what you use? You think he can't
tell when you're light?

He turns again, back to her.

NICKY (CONT'D)
I'll make you whole, get you back in
his good graces. Get you back on
track.

CLYDE
Back on track.

NICKY
Yes, Clyde.

CLYDE
I want to be back.

NICKY

I know.

CLYDE

With you. And our son.

NICKY

Sure.

CLYDE

Will you take me back?

He crawls into her arms.

NICKY

Sure. Of course. Let's get you
back on track.

INT. ANTIQUE STORE - NIGHT

FRITZ, a body guard, leads Clyde and Nicky through a maze of old furniture to an office at the back.

INT. ANTON'S OFFICE - NIGHT

There are papers piled high on credenzas and old desks. A pair of upholstered chairs flank ANTON at his desk. He's cool and refined, but not flashy.

Behind him: a bookcase with dead people's awards. An old RUSTY RIFLE hanging on the wall.

He's pulling his coat on, getting ready to leave when Fritz opens the door and lets Clyde and Nicky in.

ANTON

Clyde.

(brightens)

And... your wife. Holy smokes.

Clyde nods, itches. He is coming out of his high.

Anton is very excited to meet Nicky. He stands, approaches them. He takes her hand.

ANTON (CONT'D)

Missus Clyde.

NICKY

Nicky.

ANTON

The neck breaker.

NICKY

Nicky is fine.

ANTON

The better half.

CLYDE

Uh... I'm right here.

NICKY

I don't want to take up much of your time, sir.

ANTON

Please sit. The Champ can take up as much of my time as she likes.

He and Nicky sit on opposite sides of his desk. Clyde nervously ambles in the background, fiddling with junk.

ANTON (CONT'D)

What a special day. Damn if I thought you'd ever accept my offer. And it couldn't come at a better time. The other bosses, they're moving in on my yard if you know what I mean.

NICKY

Oh, no no. I'm not here to bust kneecaps for you.

ANTON

Well, what else is there?

NICKY

I've... uh... I've actually come to help get Clyde back on track.

CLYDE

I'm fine. I don't need nothing. Especially not from her.

NICKY

I know Clyde, which means I know he's probably been skimming.

ANTON

He has been skimming.

CLYDE

I have not. Nicky, you're putting ideas in his head. Liar. She came here to get Copper Coins. She's not here for me. She's here for herself.

ANTON
Copper Coins?

Nicky shifts in her seat.

NICKY
Cover blown. Thanks, Clyde.

ANTON
What do you need Copper Coins for?

NICKY
Just a little issue with the courts.
You know. Once they got ya, they
never let you go.

CLYDE
She blew a fuse and cold-cocked some
bone head. Now our son has been
boxed.

NICKY
I need five of them. To get him
out.

Anton shakes his head as he gets up. He saunters to a WALL
SAFE.

ANTON
Oh, Nicky. The rules aren't the
same for people like you. I don't
know why you waste your life trying
to play by them.

He pulls a CERAMIC PIG from the safe and returns to his desk.

ANTON (CONT'D)
When you can play by my rules, which
are much simpler.

He removes the rubber plug from the bottom and shakes it.
Dozens of COPPER COINS fall onto his desk.

Nicky stiffens with excitement.

ANTON (CONT'D)
You help me. I help you. Very
uncomplicated.

NICKY
I can clean, cook, wrangle the
minions. Whatever you need.

ANTON
You know what I need.

NICKY
I can't kill people Anton.

ANTON
History begs to differ.

NICKY
I won't. I'm no assassin.

Anton starts dropping the coins back in the piggy bank one by one. CLINK. CLINK. Nicky gets panicky.

ANTON
The other guys, they don't take me seriously. They say I'm not ruthless enough. I need a person with your skills on my team. And you need these coins. I know that you will do whatever it takes to get them.

CLINK.

ANTON (CONT'D)
One coin for every time you complete a job for me. That's the deal.

Nicky watches the pile dwindle. CLINK.

NICKY
Can I just beat them senseless?

He shakes his head.

CLYDE
Say yes, Nicky.

CLINK.

NICKY
I can't.

CLINK.

CLYDE
NICKY! Do it!

CLINK. There's only one left.

ANTON
Going, going...

NICKY
Ok.

Anton smiles with delight. He pulls a file from a desk drawer and slaps it on the desk.

She pulls it close and opens it.

NICKY (CONT'D)

What is this?

ANTON

The dossier of your first hit. It's got everything you need to know about him. I'm certain it won't take you long to want to kill this douche with every fiber of your being.

She sinks.

NICKY

Can you pay in advance?

ANTON

(laughs)

When you finish him, come back for the next one.

NICKY

How will you know I've done it?

ANTON

I'll know.

NICKY

There's nothing else I can do?

Anton shakes his head.

Nicky takes the dossier. Clyde snickers. She leaves.

Anton catches Clyde before he follows her out.

ANTON

Clyde. This is your ninth life. No more bad behavior.

Clyde nods, then leaves.

EXT. TENT CAMP - NIGHT

Nicky stomps through the camp, dossier in one hand. She's angry. Clyde scampers behind her.

CLYDE

Are you gonna do it?

NICKY
What choice do I have?

CLYDE
Well what did you think it was gonna
cost to get those coins?

NICKY
If I was lucky, I'd just have to
kill you.

CLYDE
Aw that's shitty, Nicky. Really
shitty.

She stops him.

NICKY
I keep wondering when you will offer
something up of value? When will
you do anything other than take?

CLYDE
If I had your skills, I'd kill 'em
all to get our son back. I'd stop
pouting and put that shit to use.

NICKY
Well it's too bad Anton doesn't need
a stolen air conditioner or a stripped
car. Otherwise you'd have to chip
in. I'll be back as soon as this is
done. Try to stay alive that long.

And she storms off.

INT. APARTMENT 411 - NIGHT

Nicky bursts in, surprising Phillip.

NICKY
Phillip, I need your help getting
Cam back.

He nods, then starts sorting through an assortment of
TALISMANS on a shelf.

NICKY (CONT'D)
What are you doing?

PHILLIP
One of these should help.

NICKY

No, Phillip. I don't need prayers or spells. I need your help. I have to kill five people to get five coins.

PHILLIP

How could I possibly help with that?

She opens the dossier and tosses it on his bed.

NICKY

This guy - Silas Frank - he's got a hundred pounds on me. Black belt in Judo. He'll cream me. I need some tools of the trade. A little advantage.

PHILLIP

I am no longer an assassin.

NICKY

And I'm no longer in fighting shape. I know you have some ... knowledge.

He chooses a talisman.

PHILLIP

I have spent the past five years working to leave behind the boy I was forced to be so I could become the man I want to be. I will pray for you.

She is exasperated.

NICKY

Phillip you've been such a good neighbor and a friend. And even a surrogate father. But now I need you to be more. For Cam.

He thinks for a moment.

PHILLIP

Come back in an hour.

NICKY

Thank you. Thank you.

She leaves him. He puts the talisman back on the shelf and selects another.

INT. NICKY'S APARTMENT 409 - NIGHT

Nicky furiously dresses for the part: dark clothes, boots, gloves.

She searches her apartment for some weapons but comes up short.

INT. APARTMENT 411 - NIGHT

When Nicky returns Phillip is peeling a root vegetable. He motions for her to take a seat.

NICKY

I'm not hungry.

She sits at a little table and starts going through her options.

While she talks he squeezes the root peels through a sieve, gathering the liquid in a bowl.

NICKY (CONT'D)

I got a steak knife, a wire clothes hanger, a screwdriver. Wait - don't you have a sword?

PHILLIP

I sold it to buy this.

He holds up the peeled root vegetable.

NICKY

Goddamn it. Poverty sucks.

PHILLIP

So, what do you think your plan should be?

NICKY

The dossier says he he works late and often stops at a bar before going home. If I hurry maybe I can catch him there.

PHILLIP

And do what?

NICKY

Follow him home? Shiv him from behind?

Phillip funnels the squeezed liquid from the root peelings into a VIAL.

PHILLIP

You want to know how I became an assassin?

She shrugs, nods.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

When I was six, I was stolen from my village. For the next four years, I was sold, traded, lost as a bet in a card game.

He sits on a stool across from her.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Finally, I ended up with a group of AWOL soldiers looking for gold in the hills. They made us boys dig until the bones poked through our skin.

He holds up his hands to show the scars.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

I knew if I did not get free of them, they would work me to death. When one of the boys tried to fight back one day they burned him alive in front of the rest of us so we would be too afraid to try. They could not be defeated head on. If I wanted to be free, I knew I had to be smarter. So I began collecting small things I would find around the camp.

He begins to lay out some objects on the table.

THE VIAL...

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

One by one, I assembled my weapons.

A small, rusty PENKNIFE...

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

And I watched them. I kept track of how much they drank. Of when they slept. Of what they ate and when.

A BELT with a BRASS BUCKLE...

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Once I began, I killed them all without the others even noticing.

Finally, the last item - A HOMEMADE SLINGSHOT.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

It took no more than half an hour.
I was finally free.

Nicky looks to him, waiting for more.

NICKY

That's some David and Goliath shit.

PHILLIP

But I was not free. It had turned
me into something worse than them.
And I spent the next ten years making
a lot of money killing a lot of
people. Promise me that my help
will not turn you into something
worse than those who compel you.

NICKY

I promise.

She holds up the vial.

PHILLIP

Cassava extract. Extremely poisonous.
It will kill a man in minutes.

NICKY

Oh. I guess that's worth a sword.

She investigates the other objects, then puts them aside.

NICKY (CONT'D)

I'll just take your nunchucks.

PHILLIP

I sold them to get this.

He presents a long slender bullet.

NICKY

One bullet?

PHILLIP

In the right gun, it's all you need.

NICKY

Jesus christ, Phillip. I would have
preferred the nunchucks.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - NIGHT

Nicky waits, obscured, watching the Suits file out of the work for the day.

She glances down periodically at the photo she has of SILAS FRANK: young, full of privilege.

She spots him. She starts to tail him.

EXT. BAR - NIGHT

Silas enters a bar. Nicky waits a moment, then also goes in.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Silas takes a seat at the bar and orders a drink.

Nicky takes a seat alone at a table behind him, somewhat obscured by a partition wall.

She keeps an eye on him.

He's checking his watch, checking his phone. It's like he's waiting for a date.

He stands, goes to the rest room.

Nicky palms the vial, then pulls her sleeve down to cover her hand. She walks over to the bar and sits next to Silas' drink.

The BARTENDER leans over the bar to take her order.

NICKY
A seltzer and lime please.

When the bartender turns to fix it, Nicky raises her sleeved hand, moves it over Silas' drink. Then -

SILAS (O.S.)
Are you Debbie?

Nicky spins her head around, pulls back her hand with the vial. Silas stands right behind her.

NICKY
Uh, yes. That's me.

She smiles. He takes a seat and orders two more drinks.

INT. SILAS' APARTMENT - NIGHT

It's a really nice bachelor pad overlooking the city.

The front door unlocks and Silas leads Nicky in. He's a bit tipsy. She is sober and nervous.

SILAS
I'll fix us some drinks.

NICKY
I'm good thanks.

At the window, she looks down at the busy city. Far off, the TRAIN she takes to work scurries away into a tunnel.

A tumbler of scotch appears at her shoulder. She accepts it.

Silas leans in, takes in her scent.

SILAS
You don't smell like a whore.

NICKY
What?

SILAS
Coconut. Lilac. Strawberry. That's what you girls normally smell like.

Then it dawns on Nicky, the part she's supposed to play.

SILAS (CONT'D)
And you don't wear as much makeup. Alright. Something new. You could role-play a lesbian. That could be fun. Try to fight off the big dick.

He is unsteady with drink.

NICKY
Yeah. I could do that.

Silas flops on one of two white leather sofas. Between them is a large glass coffee table.

He points to the opposite sofa.

SILAS
Lie down.

Nicky moves slowly to that sofa. She sits.

SILAS (CONT'D)
Lie. Down.

She reclines, setting her drink on the table. It's now that she notices a KATANA hanging on the wall above a side table.

SILAS (CONT'D)

Lift your legs up.

She hesitates a moment, then lifts them up and rests them on the back of the sofa.

SILAS (CONT'D)

You know Debbie, I used to feel sorry for women like you. Maybe you had a couple of bad turns and ran out of options. Maybe you just needed a little more cash to turn it back around. But over the years, I've noticed something. People at the bottom, like you - you like it there. No amount of money or time or help would ever get you out. So, I'm not going to be nice tonight. I'm going to get my money's worth. Because I deserve it. And so do you.

He stands.

SILAS (CONT'D)

First, I'm gonna empty my bladder. I suggest you finish that drink. You're gonna need it.

He disappears down a hallway into the bathroom.

Nicky seethes. She's shaking with anger.

She gets out the VIAL, watching the bathroom door. She changes her mind. Then changes it again.

The toilet FLUSHES.

Quickly she dumps the cassava extract into his drink. Then she sucks down her drink in one shot.

She resumes her position the sofa.

Silas returns in nothing but boxer shorts. He tosses a wad of cash on the table. He takes his drink and tosses it back.

SILAS (CONT'D)

Let's party.

He grabs Nicky by the hair and lifts her off the sofa.

He kicks the legs from under her so she is held only by her hair. She SCREECHES, grabs at him.

SILAS (CONT'D)

Shhhh. Debbie... I'm just playing.

He throws her to the ground. She tries to crawl in the direction of the katana.

He grabs her by the heels and drags her back.

She spins and casts a punch but he catches it, twisting her wrist so it almost breaks.

She kicks, aiming for his crotch, but he catches her shin and shanks her knee. She YELPS.

He lifts her by the hair again and throws her into the side table. She folds to the ground.

SILAS (CONT'D)

This is pretty sexy stuff, don't you think. But I'm not quite getting the lesbian bit. Try to act tougher.

She lifts herself up and launches an attack. Blow for blow he blocks and matches her.

Finally, she gets him square in the chest and he takes a step back to catch his breath.

She reaches for the KATANA. He lunges but — she grabs it, pulls it from the scabbard.

Silas laughs. The blade is made of foam.

SILAS (CONT'D)

Got it at a carnival. Nice try though.

He revs to explode with an attack but suddenly — —

A sharp pain arrests him. He grabs his stomach.

Another internal stab of pain. He stumbles back.

SILAS (CONT'D)

Oh god.

Nicky stands frozen. The pangs of poison overcome Silas and he crumbles to his knees.

SILAS (CONT'D)

What the fuck?

NICKY

He told me that it wouldn't take me long to want to kill you and he was right.

SILAS
Who?

NICKY
Anton.

SILAS
Who?

He's weak, shaking. She stands over him.

NICKY
For the record. I'm a house cleaner,
not a prostitute.

She lifts him by the hair until he's standing. Foam forms
at his mouth.

NICKY (CONT'D)
I really hate cheating. But I need
to win this one.

She delivers an enormous kick to his face and he falls back
into the glass table, smashing it to smithereens.

Silas twitches. She steps closer. His mouth runs over with
bloody foam.

SILAS
What... what did I do? To Anton?

NICKY
I have no idea.

She opens one of the large windows overlooking the city.

She drags Silas to the window. He's catatonic.

It takes all her effort to push him out.

Nicky catches her breath. She tries a therapy smile, but
the commitment isn't quite there.

INT. ANTON'S OFFICE - EARLY MORNING

Nicky enters, out of breath from running. A smear of bloody
foam streaks her face.

Anton is brewing some coffee.

NICKY
You were right about that one.

ANTON
 (yawning)
 You want a cup?

She shakes her head and puts her hand out for a coin. He hands her the coin and her next dossier. She runs out.

EXT. THE BOXES - EARLY MORNING

Inside an open-air tunnel are double-stacked rows of square, nondescript steel doors. It looks a little like a rusty old morgue.

Nicky searches for names but they are all the same.

NICKY
 Cam? Cam?

CAM (O.S.)
 (muffled)
 Here!

She gets on her knees to speak to him at one of the bottom doors.

NICKY
 Are you okay?

CAM (O.S.)
 I'm hungry. And thirsty.

Nicky examines the box. There are no gaps, no windows, only a slot for coins.

NICKY
 I'm working on it.

She drops the first coin into the slot. It CLANGS loudly as it hits the bottom of an empty chamber.

NICKY (CONT'D)
 Honey I have to go but I want you to have faith. I'm coming back and I'm going to get you out.

CAM (O.S.)
 Please don't leave.

NICKY
 I have to get four more. Hang in there. Sleep as much as you can. And... drink your pee.

She runs off.

INT. PHILLIP'S APARTMENT 411 - MORNING

Nicky simultaneously ices her face, eats an egg, and reads through the next dossier:

Beth Rice, 30's, former special forces.

INT. ABOVE GROUND PARKING GARAGE - DAY

Nicky obscures herself behind a row of cars.

She checks her meager weapon - THE SLINGSHOT. She shakes her head and puts it her back pocket.

She looks toward a black SUV, checks the plates against a page from the dossier. The waiting is killing her.

Then, Beth appears.

She's carrying a bag of groceries. As she approaches her SUV, she clicks a keyless fob and the tailgate door opens.

Nicky sneaks up behind Beth, preparing to grab her just as she is about to deposit the bag in the car.

Suddenly, Beth drops the groceries on the ground and spins around.

She trains a PISTOL at Nicky who quickly kicks the gun away.

The two go hand-to-hand.

Apples are flung and deflected. A cereal box blocks a kick, its contents exploding.

Nicky nails Beth in the head with a liter of milk. She falls to the ground, stunned and soaked.

A car slows and the driver lowers the window.

DRIVER

Is everything alright?

NICKY

She just slipped on a banana peel.
She'll be fine. She's got insurance.

The car pulls away and Beth tackles her.

The fight takes them to the HALF WALL overlooking the street.

AT HALF WALL

Beth gets Nicky against the wall, back arched, half hanging over it. *They are four stories up.*

Nicky weasels her way out of the hold but is now standing on the half wall.

Beth pulls off her belt and whips it at Nicky's feet, making her jump repeatedly.

BETH
Did MI6 send you?

NICKY
No. Anton.

BETH
Who?

NICKY
Anton.

BETH
The dweeb who works for –

Nicky jumps off the wall onto a car, then onto a moving car, then to Beth's car.

AT BETH'S CAR

Nicky finds the GUN and trains it on Beth, who marches toward her with no fear.

CLICK. *No shot.*

BETH (CONT'D)
Touch ID, motherfucker.

Nicky throws the gun over the half wall. Beth attacks.

It goes on, blow after bloody blow.

Finally, Nicky KO's Beth and she falls flat on the pavement.

Nicky sits on Beth's back, grabs her head.

The sounds of a CROWD fill her ears. It's her victorious moment. She pulls fists of Beth's hair and twists her neck.

But the cheering shifts to BOOING.

Cam's voice overlaps the crowd.

CAM (V.O.)
*Nicky Prevost just did the
unthinkable.*

Nicky sets Beth's head down.

She gets the SLING SHOT from her pocket and pulls the rubber tube off of it. She slides it around Beth's neck.

Beth starts to wake and realizes something is choking her.

BETH

No. No!

NICKY

I'm sorry. I really am.

And she pulls the tube tight, holds it, extinguishing Beth for good.

Nicky stands, bloodied and exhausted. She stands to go.

Something on the ground catches her eye. She picks it up. It's a pouch of BABY FOOD.

She slowly opens the door to the back seat of Beth's SUV. There sits an empty car seat.

She turns and vomits.

INT. ANTON'S OFFICE - DAY

Nicky barges in.

NICKY

You motherfucker.

ANTON

Interesting choice of words.

She throws Beth's dossier at him.

NICKY

It doesn't say a kid. Nowhere does it say she had a fucking baby.

ANTON

Well it's not her life story. It's her resume. Do you put "mommy" on your resume?

He offers her the next dossier and a Copper Coin.

ANTON (CONT'D)

You should get some rest first.

NICKY

I can't do this again.

ANTON

But you will. Hold on...

As he searches his desk drawer for something, Nicky looks to the rifle on the wall behind him.

NICKY

Did you win that at a carnival?

ANTON

Hm? Oh, that. No. My grandfather hunted Americans in the Hurtgen Forest with that. He named it "Holy Redeemer." They don't make ammunition for it anymore. So now it's just decoration. In case you had any ideas.

He produces a prescription bottle, opens it, and drops out two pills.

ANTON (CONT'D)

To help you sleep.

NICKY

I don't deserve to sleep.

ANTON

Adrenaline will fail you soon and you'll get killed and what good will that do anyone? Get something to eat, get some rest, and tackle this one in the morning. He'll be a piece of cake once you get to him.

Nicky takes everything. But she's not happy about it.

NICKY

Asshole.

ANTON

That's the spirit.

EXT. THE BOXES - DAY

CLINK. The first coin is no longer alone.

Nicky sits on the ground, her back to Cam's box.

CAM (O.S.)

Mom, when I get out we're going on a vacation.

NICKY

Where do you want to go?

CAM (O.S.)

Somewhere warm.

NICKY
Are you cold?

He doesn't answer.

CAM (O.S.)
Don't worry about me mom. I'll be
fine.

NICKY
For a little while.

CAM (O.S.)
I know you'll come through.

NICKY
Yeah.

She is exhausted.

CAM (O.S.)
How many more floors do you need to
clean to get the rest of the coins?

NICKY
Three. Three big ones.

CAM (O.S.)
Well you should go home and get some
sleep.

NICKY
I want to stay here with you.

CAM (O.S.)
You'll be too cold. Anyway you should
check in on Phillip, make sure he's
okay. I worry about him. I don't
want him to be alone.

NICKY
That's sweet of you.

She struggles to get up.

CAM (O.S.)
You alright?

NICKY
Yeah. Just old age. I love you.

CAM (O.S.)
I love you, too.

NICKY
I'll see you tomorrow.

CAM (O.S.)
See me?

NICKY
Yes. I guarantee it.

INT. PHILLIP'S APARTMENT 411 - NIGHT

Phillip stitches Nicky's brow. She winces, but holds still.
He dabs some iodine on the cut.

PHILLIP
You will be okay.

NICKY
After today, I don't want to be okay.
I don't want to get comfortable with
what I did. I mean, what is this?
Trading one life for another?

PHILLIP
It's instinct. Protect your own
pack.

NICKY
Fuck that.

She opens the next dossier. Her face lights up.

NICKY (CONT'D)
I know this guy!

PHILLIP
Really?

NICKY
Rob "The Beast" Bresson. He was a
champ fighter when I was a kid. Old
guard, probably sixty or so by now.
All three of his sons grew up to be
pro fighters too. I beat one of
them in the teen circuit, a long
time ago.

A house key falls out of the dossier. She reads on.

NICKY (CONT'D)
Twelfth floor of the Biltmore.
(to Phillip)
They have a guard at the front desk.
Fuck. How am I going to get past
the guard without killing them too?

He's done stitching. She falls back onto the bed.

PHILLIP

Let's think.

NICKY

I have a traumatic brain injury from today. I can't think.

Phillip reads the dossier.

PHILLIP

Get there at the end of the night guard's shift. He will probably be asleep. Five A.M..

He offers her Anton's pills and a glass of water. She reluctantly takes them.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Sleep now.

NICKY

Will you wake me?

PHILLIP

I will not fail you.

NICKY

Thank god for you, Phillip.

PHILLIP

Which god?

He points to a row of talismans, crosses, and other religious signifiers on a shelf.

NICKY

Couldn't choose?

PHILLIP

I was sent to hell, but rescued by faith.

NICKY

Faith in all of them?

PHILLIP

I'm not sure which one worked.

He puts a small figurine made of grass in her hands.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Maybe it was this one.

She holds the figuring to her chest and closes her eyes.

INT. PHILIP'S APARTMENT 411 - DAWN

When Nicky opens her eyes it is barely light out. Phillip is ready with a cup of coffee and a piece of toast.

Bleary, she sits up. She takes the coffee.

NICKY

I feel sick.

PHILLIP

It means you are still you.

EXT. THE BILTMORE - EARLY MORNING

Nicky looks up at the tall apartment building.

INT. THE BILTMORE - CONTINUOUS

In the lobby, a SECURITY GUARD snoozes at a desk. Nicky quietly slips past him.

She debates risking calling an elevator. When the Guard stirs, she chooses the stairs.

INT. THE BILTMORE STAIRWELL

Nicky drags herself to the third floor, already winded.

NICKY

Ah fuck it.

She pushes the fire door and enters the third floor hall.

INT. THE BILTMORE THIRD FLOOR

Nicky hits the elevator call button. A LITTLE OLD LADY and her tiny dog arrive to wait with her. After an awkward moment-

LITTLE OLD LADY

I love dogs but I hate that they
have to shit outside. Only an insane
person chooses to get up this early
to scoop up someone else's bowel
movements.

Nicky nods. The elevator arrives.

NICKY

I'm going up.

She steps in and waves bye to the Lady. The door closes.

INT. THE BILTMORE TWELFTH FLOOR

The elevator door opens. Nicky peers out. Coast is clear. She steps onto the plush hall carpet and finds the door to the Bresson apartment. She slowly inserts the key.

INT. THE BEAST'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Nicky slides inside, carefully shutting the door behind her. The apartment is quiet and still.

In front of her is an expansive living room featuring an enormous television. Through its large pane window, the sun is just starting to peer over a distant bridge.

To her right is the kitchen with a cafe counter overlooking the living room. Past that is a hallway with **five closed doors**.

She tiptoes toward the hall. At the end of the cafe counter, a floorboard CREAKS. Nicky stops, listens. Then she notices something on the counter.

It's a **jar of coins**. A jar of COPPER COINS actually.

She has to restrain herself from yelping.

She lifts the jar. The coins JOSTLE, so she slows a bit. She sneaks from the apartment.

INT. THE BILTMORE TWELFTH FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

She dances silently on the carpet on her way to the elevator and punches the call button with delight.

While waiting, she opens the jar and grabs a fistful of coins, letting them waterfall through her fingers.

The door opens. The Little Old Lady is inside, snoozing on her feet. Nicky steps in. She calls the third floor and the lobby.

When the elevator door opens on floor three, Nicky coughs loudly. The Old Lady wakes.

NICKY
Your floor, ma'am.

LITTLE OLD LADY
Goddamn it. How long was I out?

And she waddles out. The doors shut.

EXT. THE BOXES - MORNING

The sun is fully up now. Nicky runs across a vacant urban field to get to the Boxes.

At Cam's box, she shines with joy as she gets three coins ready.

She drops them in quickly. Just as quickly, all three fall out of the return slot. Her brow knits.

She tries again. And again every coin she puts in rolls back out. She digs deeper into the jar and tries every coin.

CAM
Mom, what's going on?

NICKY
I... I don't know.

Finally, she examines a coin closely. In small print, it is embossed "Free State of Canada."

NICKY (CONT'D)
No.

CAM
Mom?

Nicky checks more coins. They are all Canadian.

NICKY
It can't be.

CAM
Is everything okay?

NICKY
(defeated, tearing)
It's fine. Sorry, pal. I'll be back.

She runs off.

EXT. THE BILTMORE - MORNING

She enters the building.

INT. THE BILTMORE - CONTINUOUS

The Security Guard is awake.

SECURITY GUARD
Hello. Who are you here to see?

Nicky freezes.

NICKY

Uh... sorry, the name is escaping me. I'm from the veterinarian's. Here to put a dog down. Sweet little thing, but incontinent as hell. Needs to poop at all hours of the day and night. Third floor?

SECURITY GUARD

Mrs. Harrington. And her glorified rat is Precious. Sign in.

Nicky writes "Dr. Jane Smith" in the log book.

He points to the elevator.

INT. THE BILTMORE TWELFTH FLOOR - MORNING

Nicky stands in front of the door, nervous as hell. She unlocks it.

INT. THE BEAST'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Again, she slides inside and shuts the door. It's still quiet in the apartment.

She moves silently to the end of the hall. She opens the very last door. A LARGE MAN sleeps in bed.

INT. THE BEAST'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Nicky shuts the door behind her. She approaches Rob THE BEAST Bresson, who SNORES slightly.

She takes a pillow and readies it. A deep breath. She summons the courage. She holds it over his face.

Then -

An O.S. ALARM BEEPS from another room. The Beast shifts.

Nicky is frozen and in shock. She hears the alarm stop and some MUFFLED FOOTSTEPS in the hall.

The Beast stirs.

She jumps on him, straddling, and pushes the pillow hard against his face. He wakes, thrashing.

She and The Beast struggle for control. They fall to the floor, roll, kick over a night stand.

A KNOCK at the door. Nicky and The Beast look to one another, then dash to the door. Nicky catches and trips him.

YOUNGEST SON (O.S.)
 (through door)
 Dad?

Nicky fashions the belt buckle that Phillip gave her on her fist like brass knuckles. The Beast stands.

THE BEAST
 I'm not a-

SMASH! She gets The Beast square in the jaw. The door opens and he flies back into YOUNGEST SON, toppling him.

A BLENDER runs loudly O.S. down the hall. It drowns out the melee in-

THE HALL:

The Beast is out cold, but Youngest comes after Nicky.

They leap across the hall into his room, then back to The Beast's room, and back again, each time more bloodied than before.

Finally, Nicky emerges from a room alone. She stands over The Beast who begins to come to.

THUMPING WORK OUT MUSIC kicks on. She straddles The Beast.

NICKY
 I'm so, so sorry.

Then she bashes his chest until he drowns in his own bloodied lungs.

She stands, catches her breath.

When she looks up from the body, MIDDLE SON is standing there, bleary eyed, holding a metal coffee mug in bewilderment.

She charges him and he's not yet awake to know what's happening.

He holds the mug up in self defense. They go at it, mug vs belt buckle.

INT. MIDDLE SON'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

She backs him into his room and kicks the door shut. He grabs his glasses so he can see her.

MIDDLE SON
You Dad's new girlfriend?

NICKY
No. I'm Clyde's wife.

She lunges and the hand-to-hand escalates. He's enjoying this, like it's an initiation game.

Books, sneakers, even a globe are employed in their fight.

As Nicky readies a baseball bat, Middle Son points to his fish tank. Large brown fish look back.

MIDDLE SON
Please, they're innocent.

He nods with a smile. She drops the bat.

Middle Son then wails her with a PILLOW so hard it knocks her over. She grabs a pillow and returns the blow.

It's an epic, bruising pillow fight that bloodies both their noses.

They pause to catch their breath.

MIDDLE SON (CONT'D)
Whose Clyde?

NICKY
He works for Anton.

MIDDLE SON
Who?

She tackles him, finally getting him in a hold from behind. He spins, tries to kick her feet out from under her.

She forces his head into fish tank and holds it in there. As he thrashes, blood from his broken nose clouds the water. Only now does he realize this it not a game.

The fish gather round. Suddenly, it's mayhem in the tank.

He thrashes. All the air comes out of him in a watery scream.

Nicky pulls him out. He flops on the floor.

His eyes are gone and his face is stripped to the bone.

Nicky vomits.

MIDDLE SON (CONT'D)

(in agony)

My eyes.

NICKY

Piranha? Really? Who keeps piranha
as pets?

She gathers a pillow –

NICKY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. You weren't supposed to
be here.

– And snuffs him out.

INT. THE BEAST'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Nicky steps out of Middle Son's room. The thumping music is coming from the living room.

She slowly, cautiously approaches.

Gradually the living room becomes visible to her right as she approaches the end of the hall, but she can't see anyone yet.

The song ends. For a brief second, she hears a buzzing in her left ear. She turns her head to look.

Standing in the bathroom, looking right at her, is ELDEST SON, an electric toothbrush buzzing in his agape mouth.

He looks her over. She's bloodied, bruised, her clothes torn.

ELDEST SON

(muffled by toothbrush)

Oo eh ell are oo?

(removes toothbrush
from mouth)

Dad? Richie?

Nicky gives him a look that says, "you know how this is going to go." And he does. He readies the toothbrush like a weapon.

INT. THE BEAST'S BATHROOM

The Bathroom Battle is primal. Eldest Son dominates. Every possible item – from soap to shower curtain – are employed.

He gets a towel around her throat and pulls it tight.

She is about to give in, too tired to fight back.

The CROWD SOUND returns to her head. They are CHEERING HER, demanding she get back up.

Her own voice enters her head.

NICKY (V.O.)
I'll see you tomorrow. I guarantee
it.

Her eyes focus on a bottle of shaving cream. She reaches out and grabs it.

Then - she *jabs the nozzle* up into Eldest Son's nose and lets loose.

He falls back, frantically trying to sneeze the foam out so he can breath.

Nicky slams him flat and pulls one of his arms back as she leans into his shoulder blades.

She sticks the shaving cream nozzle back into a nostril and fills him up. He fights with his free hand, but can't stop her.

He coughs out foam. He gasps, gurgles, spews. She keeps filling him up. Finally, he expires.

INT. THE BEAST'S APARTMENT

Nicky crawls out from the bathroom. She is beat to hell. The Beast is dead at the end of the hall.

INT. THE BILTMORE - DAY

The elevator door opens. Nicky emerges a bloody, dazed mess. The Security Guard stands, alarmed.

The Little Old Lady Walks in to the building with her dog.

LITTLE OLD LADY
(to Nicky)
Hello!

NICKY
Hi.

The Security Guard tries to do the math here: dog alive, veterinarian almost dead.

Nicky pushes open the front door and exits the building.

INT. CAB - DAY

The CAB DRIVER stares at her through the rear view mirror.

CAB DRIVER
So, the hospital right?

NICKY
Nah. I just need some ibuprofen.

EXT. NICKY'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

The CAB pulls to a stop. Nicky drags herself out and the cab pulls away. She passes out on the pavement.

INT. PHILLIP'S APARTMENT 411 - DAY

Nicky wakes on Phillip's bed. He is holding ice to her forehead. Her hands are bandaged. Actually, most of her is bandaged.

NICKY
What day is it?

PHILLIP
Still the same day.

NICKY
Oh god I can't move. I feel like I was hit by a truck.

PHILLIP
You look worse.

She tries to sit up but can't. It makes her cry.

NICKY
I got to get to Anton's.

Phillip pushes her down easily.

PHILLIP
He will be okay, Nicky. No rush.

NICKY
I just want to get him home.

PHILLIP
I made you something.

He presents a tea.

NICKY
What's in it?

PHILLIP
Kratom.

NICKY
What is that?

PHILLIP
It's like a natural opioid. It will
get you through the day.

Nicky sips it.

NICKY
This is awful.

He offers her a sandwich.

NICKY (CONT'D)
That's better.

She devours it.

NICKY (CONT'D)
I killed the whole family.

PHILLIP
The father and the sons?

She nods.

NICKY
I feel horrible. I didn't want to.
I really didn't want to.
(beat)
Until I did.

Phillip nods in understanding. He selects a different talisman from the shelf and gives it to her.

PHILLIP
Maybe this one will work.

EXT. TENT CAMP - DAY

Nicky limps through the camp, tracking the blip on her phone. She finds Clyde, shivering.

CLYDE
I knew you'd be back! You want
something to dull the ass-kicking?
Friends and family deal.

NICKY
No thanks. I'm already on something.

She holds out the jar of copper coins she took from The Beast's apartment.

CLYDE
Holy sh—! Not out in the open! Hide
that shit.

NICKY
They're Canadian.

CLYDE
No one can tell that from afar.

NICKY
Oh, I know.

She hands him the jar and sits with him. He stashes it
quickly.

CLYDE
Is it my birthday?

NICKY
No. You're birthday is in April.

CLYDE
What month is it?

NICKY
May.

CLYDE
So, you missed my birthday? Shows
how much you don't love me.

NICKY
You better not go trying to pass
them off as real. Anton will skin
you.

CLYDE
Anton whatever. Don't you worry,
Nicky. I'm only goin' to buy some
clothes with them.

NICKY
Sure you are.

CLYDE
You can take your self-righteous
horse shit somewhere else.

NICKY
Sorry, Clyde. Nevermind me. I've
had a long day.

CLYDE
You okay?

NICKY

Eh.

CLYDE

Our son okay?

NICKY

So far.

CLYDE

Well get back out there and get him.
I'm gonna clean up, Nicky. I don't
want him to see me this way. I want
him to know me. I'll clean up and
come home.

NICKY

Okay.

She stands slowly.

NICKY (CONT'D)

You take care, Clyde.

CLYDE

Next time you see me, I'll be on the
road to recovery. I promise.

NICKY

Okay.

She walks away. Clyde opens the jar and inspects a coin.

INT. ANTON'S OFFICE - DAY

Anton is trying on some boots when Nicky barges in. Fritz
follows her in.

ANTON

Ah Nicky the Neck Breaker! What do
you think of these? They're a little
outside my comfort zone but I'm
trying.

NICKY

I did The Beast and all three sons.
So that's four coins.

She puts her palm out. Anton takes a moment.

ANTON

All four of them?

She nods, then motions to pay up.

ANTON (CONT'D)

(smiles)

Well aren't you an over-achiever!

He takes a seat behind his desk and peels off the boots.

ANTON (CONT'D)

Have a seat, Nicky. You look like you could use it.

NICKY

I'm in a bit of a hurry.

ANTON

Suit yourself.

He gets out two beers and cracks them open. He sips one.

ANTON (CONT'D)

It's five o'clock somewhere.

NICKY

Just give me the coins, Anton.

He's disappointed. He produces one coin and rolls it across the desk.

ANTON

I only pay for what I order.

NICKY

Three coins.

ANTON

One coin.

NICKY

Two.

ANTON

Give me two more on my list. Then I'll give you two coins. Didn't you take math in school?

She bangs her fist on the table. Fritz steps closer.

NICKY

I spent all fucking morning killing people for you.

ANTON

Ts ts ts. No. You spent like five minutes killing for me and the rest of the morning killing for you.

She seethes, then sits and angrily takes a beer.

ANTON (CONT'D)

You think I haven't seen it all? I know a cold-hearted killer when I see one. You like it.

NICKY

No. I'm just a mom trying to get my son back.

ANTON

Like I said. I know a cold-hearted killer when I see one. Did you snap his neck?

NICKY

Fuck you.

ANTON

Did you?

NICKY

No I burst his lungs.

Anton fist pumps in delight.

NICKY (CONT'D)

What did he ever do to you?

ANTON

It's an ex-girlfriend thing. Anyway...

He slaps the next dossier on the table.

ANTON (CONT'D)

Go big or go home. This guy will be a piece of cake once you get past all his guards.

NICKY

Sounds eerily familiar.

ANTON

They're amateurs but he's got a lot of them.

She sifts through the dossier.

NICKY

Wait... The All American Gal doll factory? I thought they were made in China.

ANTON

They are. They just add a little love to them here in America.

(winks)

Anyway, I tell you what. You do this guy, I'll make the next one super easy. You could have Cam home by midnight.

She downs her beer and takes the dossier.

ANTON (CONT'D)

Oh!

He presents her with a bundle of clothing.

NICKY

What's this?

ANTON

A uniform and a time card. To get you into the factory. Getting out is entirely up to you. Good luck.

NICKY

Fuck off.

ANTON

That's the spirit!

EXT. THE BOXES - DAY

Nicky drags herself to Cam's box. She drops the third coin in the slot and it hits the others inside the chamber.

NICKY

Cam?

No answer.

NICKY (CONT'D)

Cam?

CAM

(groggy)

Mom?

NICKY

Did I wake you?

CAM (O.S.)

Yeah.

NICKY

Sorry.

CAM (O.S.)
What time is it?

NICKY
Four.

CAM (O.S.)
AM?

NICKY
No. PM.

CAM (O.S.)
What day?

NICKY
I'm not sure actually.

CAM (O.S.)
I'm really thirsty.

NICKY
I know.

CAM (O.S.)
I ran out of pee to drink. Any my
mouth tastes terrible. And I'm so
hungry it hurts.

NICKY
I'm sorry. I'm working as fast as I
can. I'm just so happy you're alive.

CAM (O.S.)
Yeah. Are you okay?

NICKY
I'm okay. I got to go now. Hang in
there, baby.

CAM (O.S.)
You too.

She reluctantly pulls herself away.

INT. FACTORY - EVENING

Nicky files in with the SECOND SHIFT WORKERS as they punch
their cards one by one. They all wear the same drab coveralls
and caps.

She follows them into the packaging room.

INT. FACTORY PACKAGING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A large room surrounded by a mezzanine. Rows of conveyor belts deposit identical All American Gal dolls into bins. WORKERS pack them into boxes.

Nicky finds a spot on the line.

She grabs a DOLL from a bin. Its blonde hair is silky, its cheeks full of color, its eyes glisten with dumb, unfounded joy. It smiles from ear to ear.

Nicky pulls the cord at the doll's back.

ALL AMERICAN GAL DOLL
I'm just so darn happy!

The sound catches the attention of NEARBY WORKERS who eye Nicky suspiciously.

Nicky puts the doll in its box and continues. As she works, she scans the space:

About TEN GUARDS at various posts. And THERE on the mezzanine she spies her target: FAT CAT, the rotund boss of this factory.

He yells at his UNDERLINGS who scurry to carry out his wishes.

Fat Cat looks over his dominion, then disappears out of Nicky's line of vision.

Nicky steps away from the line.

She heads towards the stairs to the mezzanine. A Guard stops her.

GUARD 1
Where do you think you're going?

Lightening fast Nicky nails him in the gut. He crumples.

She swipes his BATON and marches up the stairs. A few WORKERS stop working and watch her, talking amongst themselves.

At the top of the stairs, she encounters two more Guards.

GUARD 2
Get back to work. You're not allowed up here.

Nicky nails him in the knee with the baton and tosses him down the stairs.

She fights the other, quickly subduing him and snapping his neck. *That felt good.*

By now the guards have caught on. They rush to her from all points. She ducks into an adjacent room.

INT. BUNNY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mounds of colorful stuffed bunnies are stuffed further with bags of heroine by numb, unaware Workers.

A Guard flies in.

GUARD 3

In here!

He rushes her with a baton, but before he knows what happened she's already beating him senseless with it.

The Workers continue, unaffected.

Nicky moves to the next room.

INT. JUMP ROPE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Miles of rope get trimmed and turned into jump ropes here. Nicky approaches an old man who measures the lengths.

NICKY

Fat Cat. Where is his office?

The man looks to her with glazed eyes, then returns to his work.

A Guard appears. Nicky grabs a length of rope and whips him in the eye, blinding him momentarily.

They do a fight dance, he with a large BOWIE KNIFE, her with rope.

He slashes the rope so its too short to whip.

He lunges. She loops the rope around the knife, then moves behind him. She pulls hard and fast, driving the knife into his heart.

She pulls the knife out and he collapses, blood pumping out of his chest.

INT. SKATEBOARD ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Nicky, holding the knife, runs into a room with rows of skate boards. Sullen Workers attach trucks and wheels to them.

Three Guards are already here, waiting for her. They rush with weapons (batons, cattle prod).

She handily defeats them and leaves with the CATTLE PROD.

INT. ALL AMERICAN DOLL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The dolls that end up downstairs are here getting filled with pills. Nicky runs up to a weary Worker.

NICKY

Fat Cat. Where can I find him?

The worker raises a tired hand and points toward another door. Nicky runs to that door.

It bursts open. Two Guards step in. One has an AUTOMATIC RIFLE.

She is now in rare form. Something has taken over and her movements are more like a dance than a fight. After handily defeating the two guards, she picks up the rifle.

INT. FACTORY MEZZANINE - CONTINUOUS

Nicky peers out. Coast seems clear.

She trains the rifle as she slowly makes her way around the mezzanine.

She finds the office door, turns the handle, and enters.

INT. FACTORY OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Fat Cat is sitting at his desk. He's calm, like he's been waiting for her.

Next to him stands a gigantic man. This is SPIKER.

FAT CAT

What took you so long? You think I don't know who you are? I know who sent you. Ricardo, that fucker.

NICKY

Actually it was Anton.

FAT CAT

Who the hell is Anton?

NICKY

Just another guy with a list.

FAT CAT

Well I bet he didn't mention this
guy.

He points at Spiker.

NICKY

He did say getting in would be the
easy part.

Fat Cat and Spiker laugh.

FAT CAT

Spiker will make sure you don't leave.

Nicky points the rifle at Spiker and pulls the trigger. All
that comes out is a little flag.

NICKY

What the?

Fat Cat roars with laughter.

FAT CAT

Bullets don't keep people in line.
The fear of bullets do. I wouldn't
trust those half wits with a real
gun. They'd shoot their eye out.

Spiker lifts a large FLAIL studded with sharp points. He
circles it above his head.

FAT CAT (CONT'D)

But that... is real.

NICKY

Fuck.

She throws the gun at Spiker and just barely dodges the flail
as it splinters the door.

INT. FACTORY MEZZANINE

Nicky glances behind to see Spiker following, dragging the
flail on the ground.

INT. ACCORDION ROOM

Nicky runs into a room where Workers assemble toy accordions.

The Workers hear the drag of Spiker's flail and run into the
next room.

Nicky frantically searches the vacated room for some kind of
weapon and finds only a screwdriver.

The morbid scrape of the flail gets louder.

She backs away from the door, stepping on an accordion which lets out a loud, DISTORTED CHORD.

The flail stops for a second. Nicky holds her breath. Then it restarts, quickly toward this room.

Nicky follows the Workers into —

INT. STORAGE ROOM

Boxes are stacked into high walls that create something of a labyrinth.

From the labyrinth emerge a dozen Workers armed with table legs, wood boards, and hand tools, READY TO FIGHT.

They file past Nicky, headed for the mezzanine.

One motions for her to stay behind.

Nicky waits.

The Workers ROAR out of the room, weapons raised.

Then—

CRACK

THUD

SMASH

HOWLS

SNAP

Finally... silence. Nicky listens.

Then—

The flail drags again.

Terrified, she runs into the maze of cardboard boxes.

She searches for a place to hide.

FOCUS ON SPIKER

He squares at the door to the room. He looks around and takes a deep sniff of the air.

The smell of fear.

CUT TO NICKY

Silently maneuvering.

She backs up against a wall of boxes and tries to calm her breathing.

The FLAIL DRAGS...

She digs through her pockets: the old bullet, the pen knife, and the note Cam left her.

"Stop letting me win"

The note centers her, gives her purpose.

She selects the PEN KNIFE and puts everything else back in her pockets.

She opens the blade. It's so freakin' small.

The flail makes a gut clenching nails-on-chalkboard sound across the concrete floor. Foreboding boots get closer...

INTERCUT:

SPIKER raises the flail and smashes a pile of boxes. Stuffed bunnies fly everywhere.

NICKY flinches.

SMASH! Another stack of boxes explodes, raining little toy soldiers everywhere.

NICKY swallows hard.

SPIKER'S heavy footsteps get closer.

NICKY wraps her right fist around the pen knife body, holding the blade out at the bottom of her palm.

She holds the fist in the center of her chest ready to stab.

SMASH! Another wall of boxes falls.

NICKY looks straight ahead and her eyes defocus. Her face slackens.

SPLIT SCREEN

Spiker is feet away on the left of screen. Nicky is tucked just around the corner, back to a wall of boxes, on the right of screen.

CLOSE UP ON

Her face. Fear is shed and the anger beneath takes over. She is resolved, focused.

A deep breath in.

Her elbow flicks out and back so fast, we barely hear what it has accomplished. But the blade is wet with blood.

O.S. Spiker GASPS. His flail falls to the floor.

His bloody hand lands on her shoulder and she turns her head to see what we still cannot: his face.

The hand slides off and ... THUD.

O.S. he GURGLES, COUGHS. Nicky lets her breath out.

WIDEN TO

Nicky steps into the thoroughfare. Spiker lies on the ground, clutching a growing red blotch where his heart is. Blood seeps from his mouth.

He weakly grabs her boot. He gasps one more time, fading as his heart stops.

Nicky picks up his FLAIL.

INT. FACTORY MEZZANINE

Nicky emerges from the storage room onto the mezzanine holding the flail.

It's littered with the broken bodies of Brave Workers. She takes a moment to take in the carnage, then walks past them.

INT. FACTORY OFFICE

Fat Cat hears the familiar sound of the flail dragging and smiles. He opens the door. His smile evaporates.

Nicky lifts the heavy flail and swings the spiked ball over her head.

FAT CAT

No. No!

CRUNCH!

INT. FACTORY

Nicky descends the stairs. The Workers on the packing line are still packing, unaffected by her victory. Nothing for them changed.

INT. ANTON'S OFFICE - EVENING

Nicky enters. Anton is surprised to see her.

ANTON
Amazing. You are amazing.

She puts her hand out for the coin.

ANTON (CONT'D)
You should do this last one now so
you can take both coins at once,
save some precious time. It's a
very easy one.

Nicky, exhausted, nods.

Anton hands her the dossier. When she opens it, she is
horrified.

NICKY
No.

ANTON
Yes.

NICKY
I can't.

ANTON
You must.

NICKY
What did he do to deserve this?

Anton slides a copper coin across his desk. Nicky inspects
it: *Canadian*.

ANTON
Being sold to desperate saps on the
street as the real deal. I can't
have my employees tarnishing my name.

NICKY
No one even knows your name. This
is my fault. I gave these to him.

ANTON
Then you'll fix it.

NICKY
I don't have to kill him to fix it.

ANTON

Yes, you do. I'll give you an hour before I send someone else to do it.

NICKY

I'll-

ANTON

(holds up his hand)

No. No negotiation. If you don't someone else will. Clock is ticking.

NICKY

You don't want to give me this ultimatum.

ANTON

My game is simple. You want that coin, you earn it.

She leaves.

EXT. TENT CAMP - EVENING

Nicky runs through the camp.

She finds Clyde slumped and unconscious under a highway overpass. Next to him is the Canadian coin jar (empty) and the leftovers of a night of partying.

She shakes him. He does not rouse.

NICKY

You fucking idiot. Wake up. We have to go.

She tries harder.

NICKY (CONT'D)

Clyde. Clyde! We have to go now.

But he is out cold. She tries to lift him, but he's dead weight and she is weak.

She tries again, more desperate. But she won't be able to carry him.

Off a bit she recognizes ANOTHER ASSASSIN watching them, biding his time.

And then another, a bit further down, trying to look inconspicuous. And yet another, not worried about being seen.

NICKY (CONT'D)

Fuck.

She slumps next to him. There's a little bit of booze left in a bottle. She drinks it.

NICKY (CONT'D)

You really know how to dig a deep hole.

She takes a moment, breathes deep. Then looks to Clyde.

NICKY (CONT'D)

Remember when we held Cam for the very first time? Maybe you don't but for me, when I looked at that tiny fresh life that we made, I saw in that instant all the amazing things that would happen for him. All the things that didn't happen for us. I know now that I saw what I need to see in order to not kill him that instant. I had to have hope. The truth is that right at birth, some of us are doomed. We can't tell who just yet. But for sure, not all of us get to live out life they way our mothers imagined we would.

(beat)

I'm sorry I gave up trying to get you out of the muck. But it became all up to me to keep him out too. I have to still believe that there is a chance for him to live that amazing life I saw, even if we both die in the process.

She puts her arm around Clyde's shoulder, propping him up. A string of drool carries from his mouth.

NICKY (CONT'D)

I hope there is a god so there's someone to forgive me.

She closes her eyes and takes a few quick breaths.

NICKY (CONT'D)

It's okay. It's going to be okay.

CUT TO the city skyline. **CRACK**.

EXT. SIDEWALK, BUSY CITY STREET - DAY

It's raining. Through a sea of black umbrellas, Nicky moves against the tide. All the feeling has drained from her face.

The only thing left is fury.

INT. ANTON'S OFFICE - DAY

Anton is watching a funny video online.

Fritz lets Nicky in and Anton quickly turns off the video.

ANTON

Look at you! Nicky Neck Breaker.
Such beautiful work.

NICKY

Shut the fuck up and give me my coins.

He gets them from his stash in the wall safe.

ANTON

Going forward, I'll pay you two
thousand cash for every kill.

NICKY

There's no going forward.

ANTON

What else you gonna do? Go back to
polishing floors? You're an assassin
and you know it.

NICKY

I'm getting my son and getting the
fuck out of here.

ANTON

C'mon! You and me, we're peanut butter
and jelly, meant to be together.

He puts the coins on the table. When Nicky goes to grab
them, he puts his hand over them.

ANTON (CONT'D)

Besides, I'll find you wherever you
go. You're mine. May as well get
paid for it.

He lifts his hands.

ANTON (CONT'D)

Two thousand a head. Think of the
private school you can afford with
that.

Nicky takes the coins. Her eyes, like cold, poison darts.

ANTON (CONT'D)
I know you'll be back.

NICKY
No I won't.

ANTON
But you will.

She smiles, then leaves. Anton is unsettled.

EXT. THE BOXES - DAY

As the sun sets, Nicky runs across the barren field to the boxes.

AT CAM'S BOX

She drops one and then the next coin in the slot. They CLING against the previous deposits.

Then, nothing. No light, no beep, no gears turning.

She pulls the door latch. It won't open.

She bangs on the coin slot. Nothing. She tries everything, curses, pulls, pushes...

NICKY
Cam? Cam!?

She pulls on the door lever hard, puts all her weight into it. Finally it moves with a CREAK.

The door swings open and she puts her head in. The smell nearly knocks her out.

She reaches in and pulls out a limp, pale bluish body. She hauls him onto her lap. He waterfalls from her grasp, lifeless.

NICKY (CONT'D)
No. No...

She touches his skin, smooths his hair. She shakes him lightly.

NICKY (CONT'D)
Cam. Please, Cam. You have to.
After all I did. You have to.

She listens for his breath.

She pulls him up to her and she bursts into tears.

NICKY (CONT'D)
My baby. Oh I'm so sorry. I'm sorry.

She holds him.

From the other boxes, muffled WAILING that sounds like wounded animals.

A finger twitches. A little cough.

NICKY (CONT'D)
Oh my god, Cam!

He stirs. She laugh/cries.

CAM
(weakly)
Mom?

NICKY
Yeah. Yeah I'm here. We did it.
You're free.

From within the other boxes, muffled clapping... cheers from other imprisoned people. ***They had been there all this time.***

INT. APARTMENT 411 - DAY

Nicky sits on the edge of Phillip's bed flipping the bullet he had given her between her fingers.

Cam sleeps next to her.

Phillip keeps his eyes on the bullet.

PHILLIP
You seem unsettled.

NICKY
I can't help feeling that it's not over. There's still something stuck inside me, like a splinter.

PHILLIP
That is called trauma.

NICKY
Right. What did you do to get past your trauma?

PHILLIP
I haven't. But helping you has helped me.

He sits next to her and takes the bullet. He holds it up even with their eyes.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Putting nails in the coffin makes the death feel final. Sometimes, you need to hammer the last nail to feel complete.

NICKY

That's an old, old bullet.

PHILLIP

Lost. Looking for its home.

NICKY

What favor did you do for Anton?

PHILLIP

One that I thought would set me free.

NICKY

But it didn't.

PHILLIP

Not yet.

She takes the bullet and stands.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Nicky. In his safe, there's a little bit of freedom that belongs to me.

She nods.

NICKY

Take care of him until I get back.

He nods back.

INT. ANTON'S OFFICE - DAY

Anton is on the phone. Nicky lets herself in. He's a little surprised.

He motions for her to wait and take a seat. Then he paces, working the stress from his brow.

ANTON

Yes hi, I just called and was put on hold then hung up on. I'm calling about— yes. That's me.

She finds a bottle of scotch on his desk, intact with a wax seal. There's a bow and a note on it: *happy birthday!*

She opens it and pours herself a drink.

ANTON (CONT'D)
 (into phone)
 Yes. Yes. It's, like I said, when
 I start it, it makes a whirring sound.

While he talks, she takes things out of her pocket one by one and sets them on his desk: the empty vial, the brass buckle, the sling shot...

ANTON (CONT'D)
 (into phone)
 It's not a normal whirring sound.
 It's a new sound. A bad sound. Yes
 I've turned it off and turned it
 back on.

...and the pen knife.

ANTON (CONT'D)
 I did that too. By god just send
 someone out to fix it.

As he paces in frustration, she turns her attention to the rifle on the wall, Holy Redeemer.

ANTON (CONT'D)
 (into phone)
 Well when *can* someone come out and
 look at it? No. No I can't wait
 that long.

She takes it down off its mount. She runs her fingers over all the notches on the old wooden stock.

ANTON (CONT'D)
 I don't have time to wash dishes by
 hand. I'm a very, very busy man. I
 need someone tomorrow. Please don't
 put me on h- Jesus christ.

Nicky opens the single bullet chamber. She compares her bullet to it.

ANTON (CONT'D)
 Finally. Yes. Tomorrow afternoon
 yes thank you. I appreciate you
 taking this seriously. See you then.
 Okay. Okay. All right. Bye now.

He hangs up. When he turns back to her she is sipping the scotch.

ANTON (CONT'D)

Do you mind?

NICKY

(toasts)

Happy birthday.

ANTON

That was from my wife.

NICKY

It's nice.

(sips)

ANTON

She's been dead ten years. I've been saving it.

Nicky gulps what's in her mouth.

ANTON (CONT'D)

But at some point, you have to let go of what you weighs you down. You understand that now.

(pours himself a drink)

So you want be a professional assassin?

NICKY

I certainly don't want to clean floors anymore.

ANTON

You know there's a guild for this. Maybe they'll let you in. I pay half in advance.

(calling to O.S.)

Fritz!

NICKY

He's in the bathroom.

This seems off to him.

ANTON

Oh. Okay.

NICKY

It sounded painful. Do you know who my next target is?

Anton pulls a dossier out of his desk file.

ANTON
Small time hustler trying to punch
above his weight.

NICKY
I know the type.

He hands her the dossier. As he does, he notices that Holy Redeemer is missing. It's a terrible omen.

He takes a beat.

ANTON
Let me get you that advance.

He solemnly crosses the room and, back turned to her, dials the combination on a wall safe.

ON ANTON'S FACE

ANTON (CONT'D)
What went through your mind when you
broke his neck?

NICKY
The crowd cheering is all I remember.

ANTON
No. I meant Clyde.

A long, dreadful pause.

NICKY
I think you know the answer to that.

He turns quickly, but his **skull shatters** with a BOOM.

REVEAL Nicky pointing Holy Redeemer right at the camera.

Anton collapses with a THUD. A **PISTOL** rolls from his hand.

She puts the smoking rifle back on the wall mount.

She steps over Anton's body to get to the safe.

She moves bundles of cash out of the way.

THERE - Two VISAS: one with a photo of Phillip, one with a photo of an unknown woman.

Nicky folds them and puts them in a pocket. Then she takes out fists full of Copper Coins.

INT. OUTSIDE ANTON'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

As Nicky leaves the building, she steps over the bodies of Anton's BODYGUARDS and HENCHMEN.

Fritz lies half in the bathroom, half in the hall, his neck broken by the door.

EXT. THE BOXES - DAY

Nicky starts putting coins into all of the boxes. One by one, she pulls open the rusty doors and releases all of the PRISONERS.

They stumble out, joyful. One of them is the THIN MIDDLE AGED MAN that Nicky watched be hauled away several days ago.

Nicky takes a moment to enjoy what she has done. She *smiles*, genuinely. Then she turns and walks away.

INT. APARTMENT 411 - LATER

Nicky enters. Phillip has already packed their bags. Cam is dressed and ready to go.

Nicky lays out the buckle, slingshot, pen knife, and empty vial on the bed.

She removes the visas from her pocket and puts them on top. Pointing to the women's visa -

NICKY

Who is she?

PHILLIP

My wife. In the refugee camp, waiting to join me. And now she can. Thanks to you. Nicky the Jailbreaker. Where will the two of you go?

NICKY

I have a cousin we can stay with. Widower. Could probably use the company.

She grabs their bags then hugs Phillip.

NICKY (CONT'D)

I couldn't have gotten through this without you.

PHILLIP

Nor me without you.

Cam also hugs him.

CAM
Will we see you again?

PHILLIP
Definitely.

NICKY
All right pal. Let's go.

Phillip holds them for a second. He presents them with a talisman.

PHILLIP
It was this one. Definitely this one.

He hands it to Cam. Nicky laughs, shakes her head.

INT. COMMUTER TRAIN - DAY

Nicky and Cam take a seat. The train lurches forward.

Cam curls up into her. She watches the city disappear.

CAM
Can I home school from now on?

NICKY
Absolutely. I'm never letting you out of my sight again.

Nicky takes a deep, relaxed breath and lets her eyes close.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Nicky Prevost.

Nicky opens her eyes and looks up.

MAN'S VOICE (CONT'D)
I believe you knew my wife. Briefly.

Alarm fills her face.

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END.