

"EXACTING JUSTICE"

FADE IN:

EXT. AERIAL VIEW - MANHATTAN - DUSK - ESTABLISHING

A golden haze hangs over New York Harbor and the Statue Of Liberty shortly before sunset on a hot Saturday night in August.

The City below is silent in the waning light. The distant headlights of cars inch their way through the dark, cavernous streets like slow moving stars.

The scene is bewitching and romantic as the City gradually assumes its nighttime splendor and we MOVE from the Battery Park to the United Nations Building and the Empire State Building, up Broadway to a garish Times Square and finally to Lincoln Center For The Performing Arts.

EXT. LINCOLN CENTER - DUSK

ALEXANDER HUNT is among the crowd of OPERA-GOERS, dowagers in gowns and gentlemen in tuxedos, others dressed from elegant to casual, gathered around the fountain in the Plaza and the entrance to the New York State Theater.

Hunt is in his 40's, young looking for his age and handsome in a Nordic way. He is in extremely good physical condition. When he moves, it is with the stealth of a cat.

He wears a dark suit, despite the heat.

He paces impatiently, checking his watch and scanning the crowd.

HUNT
Damn you, Parker!

A few MEMBERS of the crowd exchange greetings with Hunt AD LIB M.O.S. as they pass him and enter the theater.

He checks his watch one last time and follows them.

Around the Plaza, PEOPLE of all types stroll, holding hands, eating ice cream from a VENDOR, enjoying the evening despite the heat.

A few of the crowd sit on the edge of the fountain, cooling themselves in the refreshing spray of its sparkling water.

Most of the crowd are now in the New York State Theater for a City Opera performance of Verdi's "Rigoletto".

The O.S. VOICE OVER chatter of the audience gradually drowns out the sounds of the fountain and the City, then grows quiet as O.S. APPLAUSE greets the conductor and the Overture begins.

EXT. UPPER BROADWAY - DUSK

The evening gets darker and the music fades in the distance as we travel up Broadway and the noise of the City assumes its normal proportions.

The streets and sidewalks are littered with debris.

HOMELESS lie on benches beside their shopping carts of worldly possessions.

Eightieth Street is a congestion of vehicles and masses of PEOPLE, strolling, shopping and socializing.

Those we hear kvetch AD LIB about the oppressive heat.

EXT. BROADWAY AT EIGHTIETH STREET - ZABAR'S - ESTABLISHING

INT. ZABAR'S - DUSK

The store is a madhouse. YUPPIES and neighborhood FOLKS, dressed for the heat in mu-mus, halter tops, Tee shirts, shorts and sandals, elbow each other as they jockey for positions in the many lines.

The air conditioning unit CLANKS and CLATTERS as it strains to its maximum capacity.

The lights dim and the shoppers groan AD LIB about the heat and brownouts.

ADELE PARKER, a regal looking porcelain beauty, searches through the tomatoes.

Despite the heat, she wears a designer dress and heels.

She is an ice sculpture.

A MAN in rumpled trousers, chatting pleasantly M.O.S. with other shoppers, stares at her. She turns on him, sensing, smelling, like a lioness stalking her prey.

SHOPPER

The kiwis look good, but they're really passé.

She gives him an emasculating stare, throws back a tomato, bitching to herself AD LIB, and goes through the checkout line.

EXT. BROADWAY - NIGHT

Adele gasps and retches as she exits the store into the heat with her arms full of groceries.

She is visibly annoyed as she walks up Broadway accosted by PANHANDLERS and sidewalk PEDDLERS.

She mutters to herself.

ADELE

I won't be living here long.

EXT. RIVERSIDE DRIVE AT EIGHTY-FIFTH STREET - NIGHT

Adele reaches the door of her apartment building.

ADELE'S P.O.V. - LOBBY INTERIOR

It appears to be empty.

BACK TO SCENE

She bitches as she struggles with her groceries and fumbles in her purse for her keys.

ADELE

Where the hell is the doorman?
You pay for security and...
where's the goddamn key?

She finds it, unlocks the door and enters.

INT. BUILDING LOBBY

The lobby is dimly lit and foreboding.

ADELE'S P.O.V. - LOBBY

She sees the figure of a man standing in shadows by
the elevator.

BACK TO SCENE

Her expression reflects concern.

ADELE'S P.O.V.

The man in shadows appears to be wearing a dark suit.
She can't see his face, but his voice sounds friendly
enough.

MAN

Need help?

BACK TO SCENE

Her fears are allayed, but she answers icily.

ADELE

I can manage quite well, thank
you. Where's the doorman?

The lobby suddenly gets darker.

ADELE

(continuing)

What the hell is wrong with the
lights?

MAN

Brownout.

ADELE

Well, I don't like it!

The elevator doors open suddenly with a loud bang, startling her.

It is even darker inside the elevator than it is in the lobby. The man steps into its shadows.

MAN

Going up?

She enters reluctantly.

INT. ELEVATOR

The man pushes the button for the sixth floor with a gloved hand. Adele does not notice.

ADELE

Five.

The gloved hand pushes the fifth floor button. The doors close.

The elevator lurches as it starts and the lights suddenly brighten to their full intensity.

Adele turns to see the man's face.

MAN'S P.O.V. - ADELE'S FACE

Adele has a contemptuous look on her face.

ADELE

(continuing)

You! What are you doing here
you son-of-a-bitch?

BACK TO SCENE

The groceries fall, scattering on the floor.

The elevator plunges back into darkness as we hear the O.S. SOUND of the last violent chords of the overture to "Rigoletto".

INT. BUILDING LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

The DOORMAN stumbles out of a door off the lobby, rubbing the back of his head.

As he passes the elevator there is a loud WHOOSH from the shaft, followed by a DULL THUD.

Puzzled, he looks up at the elevator's floor indicator.

DOORMAN'S P.O.V. - THE FLOOR INDICATOR

It points at the sixth floor.

EXT. LINCOLN CENTER - LATER

The opera crowd exits the New York State Theater.

Among them, although not together, are Alexander Hunt and J. WHITTINGTON PARKER.

Parker, like Hunt, is in his 40's, handsome, same height and build. They even wear the same dark suit.

HUNT

Jay. Wait a minute.

Parker stops and turns. They shake hands.

PARKER

Hi, Alex.

HUNT

Wasn't that new Gilda sensational?

PARKER

She sang like an angel. Thanks for those tickets.

Other opera-goers AD LIB comments about the show as they pass.

HUNT

I told you she was special...
Where's your date?

PARKER

I wanted to be alone.

HUNT

I gave you two tickets, so you
wouldn't be alone.

PARKER

You're such a good friend, Alex,
always caring and giving.

HUNT

Divorces are painful things. I
just didn't want you to be alone.

PARKER

Relax, lots of our friends are
here. How about you? No date?

HUNT

Business. Just made the curtain.

OTHERS in the crowd call to them and AD LIB invitations
for a drink.

PARKER

We're going to Sardi's for a
nightcap. Join us. I want to
talk to you about Mort Green.

HUNT

The junkman... I love people
like him, they'd shit on a star
if they could reach it.

PARKER

I don't want anything to stop
that power plant. We've got
too much to lose.

HUNT

I don't believe in losing. But
Green can wait until Monday.
I'm heading for home.

Hunt hails a cab on the service drive and enters.

PARKER

I'll call you tomorrow... maybe
some racquetball?

Hunt waves a noncommittal good-night and drives off.

INT. HUNT'S BEDROOM - EARLY A.M. SUNDAY

The room is dark. The phone rings, jolting Hunt from
his sleep.

His hand gropes for the lamp on the nightstand beside his bed. It lights the phone only. Hunt's face is in shadows as he speaks.

HUNT

Hello.

INT. POLICE STATION - CUBICLE

A short, disheveled, balding humanoid is on the phone. It is TONY ROSETTI, a movie cop, straight out of central casting.

ROSETTI

This Alexander Hunt, the famous lawyer?

HUNT (V.O.)

Who is this?

ROSETTI

An equally famous client of yours wants to talk to you.

Rosetti hands the phone to Parker.

PARKER

Alex, It's Jay. I've been arrested.

INT. HUNT'S BEDROOM

HUNT

Arrested? For what?

PARKER (V.O.)

Suspicion of murder.

Hunt sits up in bed, fully alert.

HUNT

Murder? Who?

INT. POLICE STATION - CUBICLE

PARKER

My wife... Adele.

(MORE)

PARKER (cont'd)
She fell... or was pushed down
the elevator shaft in her
apartment. Hell, I didn't even
know where she was living, you
know that.

INTERCUT BETWEEN THEM AS THEY SPEAK

HUNT
What have you told the police?

PARKER
Nothing. I don't know anything.
Alex, you've got to help me.

HUNT
Calm down. I'll be right there.

PARKER
Hurry, please.

INT. HUNT'S BEDROOM

ROSETTI (V.O.)
Don't rush, Counselor, he'll
wait.

HUNT
Who is this?

ROSETTI (V.O.)
Detective Sergeant Tony Rosetti.

HUNT
And is the charge murder?

ROSETTI (V.O.)
It sure is.

HUNT
Where are you?

ROSETTI (V.O.)
Twentieth Precinct, 120 West
Eighty-second.

HUNT
I'll be right over.
(MORE)

HUNT (cont'd)
Please do not question my client
until I get there.

ROSETTI (V.O.)
Aw, gee... I have these stocks
I wanted to get his advice on.

HUNT
I don't want you asking him
about the weather.

ROSETTI (V.O.)
No sense of humor.

Hunt hangs up the receiver.

EXT. 120 WEST 82ND STREET, 20TH PRECINCT -
ESTABLISHING - LATER

Hunt pulls up to the police station in his Bricklin.
The street is cluttered with police vehicles. He double
parks alongside one of them.

POLICE with unsavory looking CLIENTS in tow, enter and
exit the station. Hunt is careful not to brush elbows
with them as he enters the building.

INT. 20TH PRECINCT - LOBBY

POLICE and their CLIENTS come and go through a locked
door marked "Authorized Personnel Only".

A "Notice" on a thick window invites visitors to speak
to the desk officer on the other side through a speaker.

HUNT'S P.O.V. - THROUGH THE WINDOW

A big stereotypical Irish COP busies himself at a desk
littered with paperwork inside the reception area.

BACK TO SCENE

Hunt taps on the window. He is ignored.

He taps again.

HUNT
(melodiously)
Hel-lo-oh.

HUNT'S P.O.V. - THROUGH THE WINDOW

The Cop stops and looks at Hunt over the rim of his glasses.

After a beat, he addresses Hunt in an officious "what-the-hell-do-you-want-you-pain-in-the-ass?" Tone of voice.

COP
Can I help you, Sir?

BACK TO SCENE

HUNT
Sergeant Rosetti, please?

COP
(yelling)
Rosetti!

The Cop goes back to his business, ignoring Hunt.

Hunt waits.

HUNT'S P.O.V. - LOBBY

The walls and ceilings are badly in need of repair. The plaster is cracked and falling, the bilious green paint is peeling in patches.

A cockroach peeks out from a crack in the floor around some radiator pipes, then strolls nonchalantly along the wall to another crack where it disappears.

The door to the inner sanctum opens. It is Rosetti.

He puffs a stub of a cigar, flicks the ash on the floor and spits a piece of tobacco off the tip of his tongue. It lands on the wall.

ROSETTI
I'm Rosetti.

He spits another little piece of tobacco off his tongue while he looks Hunt up and down.

ROSETTI
(continuing)
You gotta be the lawyer.

BACK TO SCENE

HUNT
I'm the lawyer.

Neither offers to shake the other's hand.

ROSETTI
Follow me.

INT. PRECINCT, MAIN BOOKING AREA

Hunt follows Rosetti as they negotiate their way through a morass of messy desks in a big, dimly lit office, busy with POLICE processing CLIENTS to the O.S. AD LIB SOUNDS of booking, arguing, questioning, pleading, and clattering of office equipment.

Floor and desk fans whir away as they sweep back and forth throughout the office.

Hunt follows Rosetti to his cubicle in the rear of the office.

INT. ROSETTI'S CUBICLE

Parker waits there, anxious and distraught. He springs to his feet when Hunt enters.

PARKER
Alex, thank God you're here.
Don't let them send me to jail.

HUNT
Get hold of yourself, Jay, you're
not going to jail.

ROSETTI
Oh, yeah? First, I'd better
get some good answers.

Rosetti spits another piece of tobacco. It lands on the case file folder he's working on.

HUNT'S P.O.V. - ROSETTI'S OFFICE

Piles of paperwork are scattered everywhere.

The place looks like a landfill.

Everything is covered with coffee stains, tobacco spit and ashes.

The trash receptacle is brimming with partially eaten sandwiches and doughnuts, styrofoam cups and cigar butts. It is a smorgasbord for cockroaches.

Rosetti fits right in.

BACK TO SCENE

ROSETTI

(continuing; to Parker)

Okay, so you and your wife were
splitville, right?

HUNT

The Parkers were getting a
divorce. That is true.

Rosetti wipes a wet brown stain from the corner of his mouth and cleans his finger on his mottled pants.

ROSETTI

(ignoring Hunt)

She was looking for a few bucks,
too, wasn't she? Like about
ten million? It was headlines.

HUNT

We were negotiating a financial
settlement.

ROSETTI

So you did it the easy way, you
killed her.

PARKER

No, no... I didn't.

Hunt pats Parker on the shoulder to calm him.

HUNT

I had the impression it was an
accident.

ROSETTI

The elevator door was pried open. She was dumped down the shaft.

Rosetti opens the case file folder and reviews it aloud.

ROSETTI

(continuing)

Okay, let's go over your alibi again. The Medical Examiner puts the time of death at between eight and nine last night... Where were you?

Hunt nods assent to Parker to answer.

PARKER

Alex, tell him, I was with you at "Rigoletto".

Rosetti mimics the actor, Pat O'Brien, from the movie, "Some Like It Hot".

ROSETTI

Rigoletto, eh? What's his first name... Where does he live?

HUNT

It's an opera, Sergeant.

ROSETTI

I know that, I used to sing opera.

Rosetti smiles. Hunt is amused but Parker is confused.

HUNT

He was at City Opera... with me.

ROSETTI

Oh, a lawyer for an alibi, that's believable... He could have paid for it! Hit men are a dime a dozen. It's a lot cheaper than a divorce.

HUNT

I wouldn't know.

(MORE)

HUNT (cont'd)
In any event, his alibi's air
tight, you have no right to
hold him... We'll say good-night.

Rosetti studies them for a moment, spitting a piece of
tobacco off his tongue.

ROSETTI
For now... but keep in touch.

HUNT
I'll call you if I hear anything.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - EIGHTY-FIRST STREET TRANSVERSE -
LATER

It is still dark as Hunt drives Parker home to his
apartment on the East Side.

INT. HUNT'S CAR

Parker is emotionally drained.

PARKER
I hated her for what she was
threatening to do to me, but
even she didn't deserve this.

HUNT
I don't want to sound callous,
Jay, but this is New York.
People are killed every day.
The violence is just as random
and unpredictable as lightning,
and just as impassionate.

PARKER
Your situation was like mine...
Threats of exposure... our
business dealings. How did you
feel when your wife was killed?

Hunt ponders as he searches back through doors closed
long ago.

PARKER

(continuing)

Talk to me Alex, I'm falling apart.

HUNT

The truth is... I felt bad. It might have ended differently if she hadn't been such an uncompromising greedy bitch... no, she had to have it all... and threaten me with prison...

SUBLIM

Prisoner of war Hunt in a Viet Cong tiger cage.

BACK TO SCENE

HUNT

(continuing)

I wish she hadn't done that.

PARKER

Like my wife. Like Eli Goodman's wife. Like all of your divorce cases.

HUNT

Like my wicked step-mother. Ruined my father, drove him to suicide and threw me out of the house. Unfortunately, she died of natural causes before I could express my feelings to her.

PARKER

Makes you wonder who you can trust.

HUNT

Ah, well... Justice works, it just takes time. Anyway, you have nothing to worry about.

PARKER

To tell you the truth, that's not what's worrying me.

HUNT

There's more?

PARKER

Rumor has it that a Federal Grand Jury is investigating inside trading... they're asking questions about some big hitters.

HUNT

Are they getting close?

PARKER

I'm not sure, but there's a lot going on. Belsky told me last night that he thinks he's a target.

HUNT

What about us? Are we in trouble?

PARKER

Can't tell... Some new prosecutor up from Washington, a real hot shot. Out to make a name for herself.

HUNT

Herself?

PARKER

Yeah, and untouchable.

HUNT

No flunky government lawyer's getting in my way.

EXT. 81ST STREET AT LEXINGTON

Hunt stops and Parker gets out.

PARKER

Thanks, Alex. I don't know what I'd do without you.

HUNT

Get some rest. I'll see you at the club next week.

Parker watches as Hunt drives off into the early morning light.

INT. HUNT'S OFFICE, RECEPTION AREA - DAY

Hunt's offices at One Broadway are plush, exuding wealth and taste. The walls and ceilings are mahogany, lustrous from years of hand polishing. The oriental carpets are deep and luxurious.

Hunt is greeted by his secretary, EDNA JOHNSON, as he enters his offices the Monday morning following Adele Parker's murder. Edna is matronly and very proper, with hair dyed blue, a graduate of the old Katherine Gibbs school. She is old enough to be Hunt's mother.

She gets up from her desk waving a newspaper at Hunt as he enters.

EDNA

Oh, Mister Hunt, did you see the headlines? It's so dreadful. That poor woman. You don't think Mister Parker did it?

HUNT

(taking the paper)
Let me see.
(beat)

HUNT'S P.O.V. - THE PAPER

INSERT

"The Daily News" has blaring headlines, "Wall Street Wife Slain", "Serial Killing?", and "Millionaire Husband Suspect".

BACK TO SCENE

Hunt reads portions of the story aloud.

HUNT

(continuing)
"... millionaire junk bond broker husband only suspect... " Ha! Listen to this, Edna. "He's represented by flamboyant Attorney Alexander Hunt, known for his political connections..." I'm flattered... Do you think I'm flamboyant?

EDNA
(embarrassed)
Mister Hunt.

HUNT
No, Parker didn't do it. He
was with me at the opera. Clip
this story and put it in his
divorce file. Mark it closed.

He gives the paper back to her and goes into his private office. She follows with the paper still in her hand.

INT. HUNT'S PRIVATE OFFICE - ESTABLISHING

Double mahogany doors open to opulence. The walls are covered with original paintings by the masters. Fresh cut flowers adorn Hunt's desk, a Louis the Fourteenth, gilded in gold.

On a side table is a carved jade dog and an Etruscan vase. An oriental rug spans the floor and a massive marble fireplace covers the wall behind his desk.

The mantle is Hunt's family album and trophy case. It is lined with photos of Hunt with persons of worth and stature, former Mayors, Senators, Presidents, business magnates and celebrities, as well as medals and trophies for swimming, horsemanship and karate.

Hunt sits behind his desk in a comfortable looking leather Windsor chair. Edna is still in a tither.

EDNA
Do you think there's a serial
killer on the loose?

Hunt pays little attention to her as she babbles and he busies himself with files on his desk.

EDNA
(continuing)
The police think it may be a
pattern, like the wife of that
publisher who was murdered last
year...

HUNT
The police don't know any more
than you do.

EDNA
... you remember, you represented
him... What was his name?

HUNT
I have no idea.

EDNA
The one whose wife was killed
by a mugger in a shopping center.

HUNT
Goodman, Eli Goodman. Lucky
for him, he went to that charity
fund raiser on my tickets.

EDNA
Poor woman.

HUNT
Some people need killing.

EDNA
You defended him.

HUNT
I saved his life.

EDNA
I'm frightened. I only live a
few blocks from where Mrs. Parker
was killed. I could be his
next victim.

HUNT
Edna, you have a better chance
of winning the lottery. Now,
please?

She leaves his office muttering AD LIB M.O.S., then
reappears.

EDNA
A Mister Green is here.

HUNT
Show him in.

MORT GREEN shows himself in. He is a burly man in an
expensive suit that even tailoring cannot make fit.

He talks like a machine gun as he plods across the room and thrusts a huge callused hand at Hunt.

He carries a briefcase.

GREEN

Mort Green, Mister Hunt. You were recommended by my stockbroker as a man who gets things done. I need something done, and I'm willing to pay to get it done. Understand?

Hunt offers him a seat, but Green stands and paces as he speaks. Hunt sits.

HUNT

Sounds like you need something done, Mister Green.

Green puts his briefcase on the chair and walks to the mantle.

He picks up the photos of Hunt on his college swimming team and in karate garb.

GREEN'S P.O.V. - THE PHOTOS

INSERT

Photo of Hunt, in black belt, taking down an opponent in a karate contest.

SUBLIM

Hunt breaks his Viet Cong captor's neck with one twist.

INSERT

Photo of Hunt, in swimming trunks, with gold medal around neck.

SUBLIM

Hunt diving and swimming underwater as bullets spray around him.

BACK TO SCENE

GREEN

Quite an athlete.

HUNT

I'm not the man I used to be.

GREEN

Tell me, Mister Hunt, would you like to be wealthy? I don't mean rich, I mean wealthy.

HUNT

Money doesn't interest me, Mister Green. Only seeing that my clients get justice... so, how can I help you get something done?

Green leans forward on Hunt's desk. He is intense and straight from the shoulder, totally lacking in social grace.

GREEN

I made my fortune the old fashioned way. I started with nothing but a junk yard and scrap iron. Now I want to build a resource recovery plant on the bay by JFK. It'll save landfill space, tax money, It'll produce safe, low cost electric, and... make millions for its ground floor investors.

HUNT

Sounds great. Do it. Why me?

GREEN

Some environmental maniacs are stonewalling the project, they want to save the world from pollution, save some goddamned marsh flower from extinction, tie me up in court for ten years to make a political statement. A statement, for Chrissake! How's a legitimate businessman supposed to make an honest buck anymore?

Hunt smiles politely.

HUNT

Where do you stand with the agencies... EPA, EnCon?

GREEN

I knocked their socks off. I can bottle the stack emissions and sell it in health food stores.

He whispers, taking Hunt into his confidence.

GREEN

(continuing)

And the local yokels I got to real easy. When Mister Green talks, people listen, know what I mean?

Green winks. Hunt nods and smiles.

HUNT

I'm listening, Mister Green.

GREEN

Get these bastards off my back. I don't care how you do it. I've got a quarter of a mil earmarked for "petty cash".

HUNT

That's the figure I had in mind.

GREEN

Get them before they ruin me. I've got too much invested in this. That crusading bitch... she's the problem. Get her and they'll fold.

HUNT

Who's that?

GREEN

That goddamn Joan of Arc, Esther Fried. I could make one phone call to my friends in the garbage hauling business and have her recycled.

HUNT

Violence never solved anything,
Mister Green.

GREEN

Bribe her, pay her off. She's
got a price, they all do.

HUNT

Bribery's not my business.
Persuasion, lobbying... they're
legal.

Green's bull neck reddens.

GREEN

Then persuade her, goddammit.
That's what I'm paying you for.

HUNT

Correction, you haven't paid me
anything yet.

Green puts his briefcase on Hunt's desk and opens it.
It is loaded with bundles of cash in all denominations.

GREEN

Does this qualify me?

He pushes it to Hunt who closes it and places it
alongside his chair. He speaks slowly and emphatically
as he does.

HUNT

There is something I want clearly
understood about my fee. I am
result oriented. The bottom
line is all that matters. When
your problem is solved... my
fee is fully earned. No
questions, no refunds.
Understood?

Green thinks for a moment, then nods.

GREEN

Understood.

Hunt picks up his phone and dials.

HUNT

Roy Cohn used to do it with one phone call.

GREEN

Aren't you going to count it?

Hunt puts his hand over the mouthpiece and smiles at Green who is sullen and suspicious.

HUNT

I trust you.

(pause)

Hello, Shelley... Alex, I need a favor... talk to Esther Fried for me about this power plant in her District. I want to see it built. She's being very unreasonable.

(beat)

You have? Won't... doesn't give a damn... Ah, well, I'll try some other approach. Thanks, Shel.

Hunt shakes his head as he hangs up the phone.

HUNT

(continuing)

Sometimes it takes more than one call. I'll be in touch.

Hunt rises as a signal to Green that the conference is over. He walks Green through the reception area to the door and Green leaves.

Hunt picks up the phone and hits an automatic dial button. An answering machine clicks on and we hear the VOICE OVER of STONE MOUNTAIN.

STONE (V.O.)

You have reached the office of Stone Mountain, Private Investigator. I'm out on a very important case right now, so when you hear the signal...

At the tone, Hunt yells into the machine.

HUNT
Pick up the phone, dammit, I
know you're there.

INT. STONE'S OFFICE

Stone gets up from a couch where he has been napping and picks up the phone. He is similar in size and build to Hunt, but older. He is a Native American, retired from NYPD.

There is speaker feedback from the machine which records as he speaks.

STONE
Hi, Alex. Wait a minute.
(turns off machine)
Okay, I'm here. What's up?

HUNT (V.O.)
I hope I didn't wake you.

STONE
Late night. Whaddayaneed?

INT. HUNT'S PRIVATE OFFICE

HUNT
About the Parker murder...

STONE (V.O.)
Yeah?

HUNT
... Remember where she lived?

STONE
Sure.

HUNT
Talk to the doorman, ask around
the Station, see what kind of
evidence they have... then I
have a job for you at the State
Capitol.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE AT SEVENTY-FIRST STREET - LATE AFTERNOON

Hunt, in running shorts and Tee shirt, paces himself up Fifth Avenue in the shade of the trees.

His face reflects preoccupation.

He slows as he approaches a sidewalk VENDOR'S cart in front of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE, THE MET - ESTABLISHING

A modest CROWD of art lovers of all ages and types, young and old, sun themselves on the Museum steps.

Hunt takes a break from his run and buys a can of apple juice.

He drinks slowly, standing in the shade of a tree.

A gentle breeze stirs the leaves, filtering sun and shadow over his face.

A voice calls his name. It is GRETCHEN CASE.

GRETCHEN

Alex? Alex Hunt?

Startled out of his concentration, Hunt whirls around at the voice.

He relaxes when he recognizes her, but looks puzzled.

HUNT

Gretchen?

Gretchen is a beautiful strawberry blonde, vivacious and energetic. She is dressed in a running suit.

GRETCHEN

You remembered!

HUNT

How could I forget?

He kisses her on the cheek.

They study each other. Hunt is melting.

HUNT

(continuing)

How nice to see you... what brings you to New York?

GRETCHEN

Big career move. Relocation. New life-style.

HUNT

Still with the SEC?

GRETCHEN

Nope. I'm the newest Assistant U.S. Attorney in Manhattan. Appointed especially to prosecute inside traders and other securities frauds.

Hunt conceals his surprise.

HUNT

Inside traders? I'm impressed. Sounds good for you. Can I get you some juice?

GRETCHEN

Just had some, thanks. But, I'll tell you what I would like.

HUNT

What's that?

GRETCHEN

I'd like to celebrate my new job with someone... special... Dinner, candlelight, a little bubbly... you know...

HUNT

I'd like that... and I'd really like to hear more about your new job.

GRETCHEN

I wanted to call you, but I thought... maybe I did something wrong...

HUNT

You didn't do anything wrong.

GRETCHEN

I kind of hoped to hear from
you.

Hunt is evasive.

HUNT

The law is a jealous mistress.
She doesn't let me mix business
with pleasure.

GRETCHEN

She did once.

HUNT

It was a walk in the zoo... as
much as it offends me to see
living things in cages, I wanted
to see the pandas. I don't
know why, but they've always
fascinated me.

(laughing)

Actually, I wanted to see Ling-
Ling and Sing-Sing do their
thing-thing.

GRETCHEN

I thought it turned out to be
something wonderful.

HUNT

Yes, it was.

The mood eases as they share this recollection.

GRETCHEN

(impishly)

I bet I know something about
Alex Hunt that no one else knows.

HUNT

What?

GRETCHEN

When he was a little boy, he
slept with a stuffed panda bear.

HUNT

I told you that?

She laughs and nods her head. He looks around to see if anyone overheard.

HUNT
(continuing)
Let's keep it our little secret.

GRETCHEN
On one condition. Dinner...
soon?

Hunt breaks into a smile.

HUNT
Bribery.

GRETCHEN
Blackmail... extortion...

HUNT
Indictable offenses...

GRETCHEN
Tie me... whip me...

HUNT
Your place... or...

GRETCHEN
I only live two blocks up...

HUNT
So do I. I was going to walk
it... cool down... hit the
shower...

GRETCHEN
Me too...

HUNT
I'd invite you over, but I don't
have any champagne in the fridge.

GRETCHEN
I do... and I don't like to
drink alone.

They gaze lustily into each other's eyes.

She raises her eyebrow in a question mark.

He answers with his.

GRETCHEN

(continuing)

Last one in's a rotten egg.

She sprints up Fifth Avenue with Hunt hot on her heels.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GRETCHEN'S APARTMENT - LATER - ESTABLISHING

From the size of the apartment and the furnishings, it's obvious that Gretchen comes from money. It is tastefully appointed, antiques mixed with modern, silver and crystal pieces here and there, but not ostentatious. The woman has class.

A path of running suits, sneakers, underwear and socks, strewn along the floor lead from the hall through the foyer to the bedroom and bath.

The O.S. SOUND of voices is not audible over the running water of the shower, but the mood and tone are erotic.

INT. GRETCHEN'S APARTMENT, BATHROOM

Gretchen's and Hunt's bodies are wavy outlines through the translucent glass shower door.

They embrace and kiss, more lovingly than feverishly.

Their hands explore each other's bodies.

She turns her back to him and gently guides his hands over her breasts and belly.

He bites her shoulder.

She turns, facing him again, lifts her leg and wraps it around him.

He arches his back, reaches around and spreads her buttocks to gain entry.

She moans and bites his chest, then his upper lip, his lower lip, his chin, both lips at once.

She digs her nails into his back.

He controls his scream through clenched teeth, then shudders and gasps.

Their bodies go limp in each other's arms.

Steam clouds the glass door and it gradually darkens as the sound of the shower becomes fainter and fainter.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GRETCHEN'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM - LATER

Dusk through the window curtains casts shadows across the two lovers as they sip champagne in bed.

GRETCHEN

I forgot how strong you were.

HUNT

I forgot how sweet you were.

(beat)

I can't believe you've been living in my building, right under my apartment for over a month...

Gretchen smiles enigmatically.

HUNT

(continuing)

.. you knew... you must have known... I gave you my address... or, was it an accident?

GRETCHEN

Accidents happen.

HUNT

(introspectively)

Yes, they do.

EXT. MOUNTAINOUS COUNTRYSIDE, YEARS EARLIER - DAY

A lone WOMAN on horseback rides along a trail.

The horse rears, throwing her.

The woman lies motionless alongside the trail.

Her horse gallops away.

INT. GRETCHEN'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

GRETCHEN

Oh, I'm sorry, Alex, I didn't mean to... I hope I didn't remind you of your wife...

HUNT

It's all right... I'm over it.

GRETCHEN

Do you want to talk about it?

HUNT

It doesn't bother me.

GRETCHEN

It left you very bitter. You must have loved her.

HUNT

I don't even know anymore. It's all a bad memory. She had nothing when I married her. A year later she wanted everything I had. Worst of all, I confided in her, I trusted her... my business dealings... she actually threatened to...

Hunt catches himself almost about to make a faux-pas.

SUBLIM

Hunt in the Viet Cong tiger cage.

BACK TO SCENE

HUNT

(continuing; laughing)
... and I thought the gold diggers were only after my clients... That accident saved me a lot of trouble.

GRETCHEN

Alex, that's... cruel.

HUNT

Cruel? It's instant Karma!

GRETCHEN

That's not fair.

HUNT

Life's not fair.

(calmly intense)

You think justice is some
abstraction you pray for from
God...

Gretchen becomes visibly upset as Hunt reveals his dark side.

GRETCHEN

Alex, please.

HUNT

... or plead for from some
political hack of a Judge? No,
you balance the scales yourself.

In a reflexive action, Gretchen moves away from him. She is frightened.

GRETCHEN

Please don't talk like that.

Hunt's mood swings back to charming.

HUNT

More champagne?

She gets up and puts on a robe.

GRETCHEN

Too much champagne gives me a
headache.

HUNT

I'm sorry.

GRETCHEN

No need to be. I should know
better.

HUNT

That's not what I mean.

GRETCHEN

It doesn't matter.

Hunt gets up and tries to put his arm around her. She is not receptive.

GRETCHEN

(continuing)

Why? You don't trust me. You can't trust anyone.

HUNT

I have my share of scars.

She leaves the bedroom. He follows naked, picking up his clothes and dressing along the way.

INT. GRETCHEN'S APARTMENT, HALLWAY

Gretchen leads him to the door and stands with her back against it as she faces Alex.

HUNT

You're right. I don't trust anyone. Life has taught me not to trust anyone. It's a painful burden, but I'm stuck with it.

GRETCHEN

What does a woman have to do, Alex? Is there some test?

HUNT

What do you mean?

GRETCHEN

To prove herself worthy of your trust? What do I have to do?

HUNT

You don't have to do... anything...

(confused)

Oh, I don't know...

GRETCHEN

You think you're the only one who's ever been hurt? My mother was in labor with me for days.

(MORE)

GRETCHEN (cont'd)
She never forgave me. My father
was always preoccupied with
affairs of State. I can't
remember either of them ever
hugging or kissing me. Poor
Alex, nobody loves him.

HUNT
I'm sorry, Gretchen...

GRETCHEN
I don't need your pity. Get
out of here.

She opens the door and stands aside.

HUNT
Gretch, I...

GRETCHEN
I don't want to hurt you, Alex.
The only thing I need... doesn't
hurt.

Hunt says nothing. He is moved.

GRETCHEN
(continuing)
I don't want to hurt you.

HUNT
I don't want to hurt you either,
Gretchen.

They embrace. He kisses her and leaves. She closes
the door behind him and turns, leans against it, closes
her eyes and bites her lip.

INT. NEW YORK ATHLETIC CLUB - DAY - ESTABLISHING

BUSINESSMEN of all shapes and sizes fill the club,
from the lobby to the track area and the nautilus and
locker rooms.

O.S. SOUNDS of running feet pound the hardwood track
floor.

Men exercise as they confer M.O.S. on and around the club and the track, limbering up, jogging, doing calisthenics and power walking.

Nautilus machines clang to the strains of puffing and grunting men.

Club PERSONNEL assist the members, giving AD LIB M.O.S. advice as they adjust tension on the machines.

The locker room ATTENDANT gives out towels to guests as they enter. A hamper brims with used towels.

Men chat AD LIB as they shower.

INT. LOCKER ROOM

Hunt and Parker are changing into running togs.

HUNT

I understand how you feel, Jay,
but you've got to shake it off.

PARKER

I can't believe what's happened.

HUNT

You can't mope around like a
maudlin poet.

PARKER

What if I hadn't gone to the
opera?

HUNT

You did, now get your head out
of your ass. There's too much
money at stake. People might
lose confidence in you.

PARKER

I'm totally drained, exhausted.

HUNT

(impatient)
Let's run.

Hunt jogs in place while Parker laces his sneakers.

PARKER

I just don't have it today.

HUNT

Come on!

INT. INDOOR TRACK AREA

Hunt and Parker do warm up exercises.

HUNT

Under four-thirty for the mile
or you buy lunch.

PARKER

God, don't you ever let up?

HUNT

When you come in second in a
murder trial, you don't get a
silver medal. Let's go.

Hunt yells to a TIMEKEEPER with a stop watch at the
starting line of the oval track.

HUNT

(continuing)

Time me.

He sprints off without waiting for Parker, who watches
him, arms akimbo.

Hunt is a machine. He pounds the floor, passing other
runners on the track.

His muscles ripple, tensing and slacking as he strains
his body to the limits of its endurance.

SUBLIM

Hunt running through the jungles of Vietnam, pursued
by Viet Cong.

BACK TO SCENE

Parker calls to him as he rounds the first lap.

PARKER

Alex, wait...

Hunt hears nothing.

He is in deep concentration, a self hypnotic trance.

SUBLIM

Hunt stumbles and falls, gets up and continues running through the jungle.

INT. CLUB DINING ROOM - LATER

Parker nervously plays with his silverware while he and Hunt await lunch.

They are showered and dressed in business suits.

PARKER

You don't like to talk about
your wife, do you?

HUNT

It seems to be a popular topic
lately.

PARKER

Am I a wimp, or what?

HUNT

(negatively pregnant)
Of course not, you're just...

The WAITER interrupts their conversation with lunch.

Hunt has steak and eggs, Parker a salad.

Hunt eats ravenously while Parker picks at his food.

PARKER

She had an accident with a horse
or something?

HUNT

Who?

PARKER

Who? Your wife, who!

HUNT

She went to a ranch up in the
Catskills while the divorce was
pending and I was in Europe.

INT. MOUNTAINOUS COUNTRYSIDE, YEARS EARLIER - DAY

A lone WOMAN on horseback rides along a trail.

A lone MAN on horseback watches from trees at a
distance.

HUNT (V.O.)

A favorite place of ours. She
liked riding.

As the woman gets closer, the man rides out to the
trail and crosses her path.

MAN'S P.O.V. - THE WOMAN

The woman has a surprised look on her face. It quickly
turns to fear.

She throws her arms up in front of her face as if to
ward off a blow.

BACK TO SCENE

The horse rears, throwing her.

HUNT (V.O.)

(continuing)

One day the horse came back
without her.

The man whips her horse and it gallops away.

HUNT (V.O.)

(continuing)

They found her along the trail.

The woman lies motionless alongside the trail.

INT. CLUB DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

HUNT

Bad luck.

PARKER
The horse threw her?

HUNT
Horseback riding can be
dangerous.

Hunt motions for the waiter.

HUNT
(continuing)
Give the check to Mister Parker.
(getting up)
Thanks for lunch, Jay. Have to
run.

INT. CLUB STAIRS AND LOBBY

Hunt and Parker talk as they leave the club.

PARKER
Ever think about remarrying?

HUNT
When I do, you'll be the best
man.

PARKER
I'm considering therapy.

HUNT
It'll be good for you.

PARKER
Have you ever considered therapy?

HUNT
What would I talk about?

PARKER
You seem very bitter... about
women.

HUNT
They're only half the world's
problems... In any event, they
need attention and I need
solitude. The two don't mix.

EXT. STEPS OF THE CLUB

Hunt hails a cab, opens the door and enters as Parker speaks.

PARKER

I'm going out to the Hamptons for the weekend. Come along.

HUNT

We have a power plant problem, remember? Someone has to do the dirty work.

PARKER

Now's the time to buy, while it's in litigation. The stock's low... if you win the case, we'll make a bundle.

HUNT

What do you mean, if? Order me another two hundred and fifty thousand worth. I feel lucky.

Parker slams the door and the cab drives off.

EXT. AERIAL VIEW - ALBANY, NEW YORK - LATE SATURDAY NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

The Empire State Plaza is quiet as we approach from the South along the Hudson River.

There is little traffic on the streets around the Plaza which looks deserted.

Gradually we hear O.S. VOICES. They are festive and celebratory.

INT. LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING (LOB), ASSEMBLY OFFICES OF ESTHER FRIED - CONTINUOUS

A CROWD of college students, older people, all types, swarm like bees around a middle aged frumpy woman who looks as though she couldn't get laid if her life depended on it.

She wears a wig askew her head.

She has a mole on her upper lip, sporting a two week growth of hair. She wears a polyester leisure suit that went out of style years earlier. Somehow, it fits her well.

She is ESTHER FRIED, Assemblywoman from Bell Harbor, Queens, proponent of moratorium legislation that would prohibit construction of any power plants in New York State forever.

Among the crowd of political party-goers is Stone Mountain, Hunt's investigator.

Waving some documents, Fried addresses the crowd as if she were General George Patton.

FRIED
(yelling over the
noise)
This should stop the bastards!

The crowd bursts into applause.

FRIED
(continuing)
We've got a little surprise for
Mort Green and his junk yard
dogs.

There is more applause and AD LIB support which continues enthusiastically throughout her speech.

FRIED
(continuing)
Monday morning our Attorneys
will file legal briefs in Federal
Court for a permanent injunction
against Green and those suck-
off political hacks at EPA and
EnCon...

The crowd interrupts her with laughter and catcalls.

FRIED

(continuing)

... from proceeding any further in the permit process for his power plant until environmental impact studies can be made on the fate of the salt water marsh flower Doc Shaeffer discovered living there...

The crowd acknowledges botanist ROBERT SCHAEFFER.

FRIED

(continuing)

... you all know, that little flower doesn't exist anywhere else on the earth... and if it goes, we all may go...

The crowd applauds again.

FRIED

(continuing)

... I'd like to thank Professor Harvey and his students from the Environmental Law Center at Albany Law School for their help. We couldn't have done it without them...

There is more applause as BERNARD HARVEY and Doc Shaeffer pat each other on the back and the group of LAW STUDENTS congratulate each other.

FRIED

(continuing)

Doctor Bob, Professor Harvey, would you like to say something?

They decline with a wave of their hands.

FRIED

(continuing)

Okay, have fun, I have to head back to the city. I'll see you all at the rally in Foley Square Monday.

There is more applause.

FRIED
(continuing)
We're gonna kick their ass!

The crowd is hysterical with enthusiasm.

FRIED
(continuing)
Good night, God bless you all.

Fried shakes the hands of well-wishers to more cheering and applause as she makes her way out of her office.

Stone Mountain slips out quietly ahead of her.

DOC SHAEFFER
Do you want me to walk you to
your car, Esther?

FRIED
No, we have plenty of security.
I'm not worried. Enjoy the
champagne.

They kiss cheeks and she walks down the hall to the elevator.

INT. LOB, HALL

Alone in the dimly lit hall, she rings for the elevator.

She waits, deep in thought.

The elevator arrives silently.

The doors open suddenly with a loud bang, startling her.

She enters and pushes the button for her parking level.

INT. LOB, PARKING GARAGE

The elevator doors open and she walks into the darkened garage towards her parking space.

A uniformed security GUARD is on patrol.

She approaches her car, rummaging through her purse for her keys.

FRIED
(to the Guard)
Kind of quiet tonight.

The Guard says nothing, but waves acknowledgment.

She unlocks her car door.

There is a sound of the crunching of broken glass as the Guard walks behind her car.

The Guard bends over in the shadows and looks at her tail light.

FRIED
(continuing)
What's wrong?

She walks to the back of the car to see for herself.

She bends over to look at the damage.

FRIED'S P.O.V. - THE REAR OF THE CAR

The tail light is broken.

BACK TO SCENE

FRIED
(continuing)
Ah, son of a bi...

There is the sickening SOUND of a "WHOMP" as the Guard drives a tire iron crashing down on her neck with all the force of an executioner chopping off a condemned's head.

Her body falls in a rag doll heap.

The tire iron drops alongside her. Its clanging sound echoes through the garage.

The Guard walks silently away into the shadows.

EXT. THE NEW YORK STATE THRUWAY, SOUTHBOUND -
LATER THAT NIGHT

Doc Shaeffer is driving back to New York City alone in his car.

The Thruway is desolate, except for Shaeffer and one car behind him.

Shaeffer's face is suddenly brightened by the reflection in his rear view mirror of the high beams of the other car.

He tries to adjust his mirror to avoid the glare.

The other car accelerates, riding Shaeffer's tail.

Shaeffer has an annoyed and puzzled look on his face.

The other car rams into the rear of Shaeffer's.

DOC SHAEFFER

What the hell?

He accelerates, trying to get away from the other car.

The other car matches his speed, bumping him again and again.

Shaeffer is clearly frightened now. The other car has made contact and is pushing Shaeffer's out of control.

Shaeffer screams and covers his face as his car careens off the highway and down an embankment.

The other car continues south, carefully observing the speed limit.

INT. HUNT'S PRIVATE OFFICE - DAY

It is eight o'clock Monday morning. Drapes cover the windows. It is dark.

Hunt lies asleep on his office couch. A sliver of light from a crack in the drapes falls across his closed eyes. He is dressed in a sweatsuit and is unshaven.

There is a knock at the door.

EDNA

Mister Hunt? Are you there?

Edna peeks in, rousing Hunt from his sleep.

EDNA

(continuing)

Oh, you are here... excuse me,
but you didn't answer the
intercom.

Hunt stretches and yawns.

HUNT

I worked all weekend. I turned
everything off so I wouldn't be
disturbed.

As he gets up, he delivers instructions to Edna.

HUNT

(continuing)

There's a cassette of dictation
in your steno machine. I'll
need the power plant brief first.

He switches on the phones and starts to undress.

Edna leaves. Hunt goes into his bathroom, strips and
showers.

INT. HUNT'S OFFICE, BATH

The bath is as luxurious as the rest of his office,
marble and gold.

He drops his sweats in the hamper and enters the shower
stall. Head bowed, he lets the heavy stream of hot
water beat on the back of his neck. He rotates his
head and massages his neck muscles.

INT. HUNT'S OFFICE, BATH - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Hunt is just finishing shaving when Edna buzzes him on
the intercom.

INT. HUNT'S PRIVATE OFFICE

He presses the intercom button.

EDNA

Mister Hunt, Mister Green on
one.

HUNT
(on the speaker phone)
Good morning, Mister Green.

INT. GREEN'S OFFICE

Green's office is Spartan compared to Hunt's, functional and totally lacking in taste, thought or design.

Green is jubilant.

GREEN
Have you heard the good news?

INT. HUNT'S PRIVATE OFFICE

HUNT
No, I've been busy working on your case. What good news?

INTERCUT between Hunt and Green as they speak.

GREEN
It's all over the paper.
Somebody did us a big favor.

HUNT
Us? Who did us a favor and why?

Hunt, in Turkish robe and barefoot, paces slowly on his oriental carpet, reading the morning's paper.

HUNT'S P.O.V. - NEWSPAPER

INSERT

The front page of the "New York Times" with the headlines, "Assemblywoman Murdered In Albany", "Led Opposition To Power Plant", "Botanist Dies In Car Accident", "Deaths Related?".

BACK TO SCENE

GREEN
Somebody knocked off the bitch of the bay.

HUNT
Esther Fried?

GREEN
You got it.

HUNT
What are the details?

Hunt selects clothes from an armoire as they speak.

GREEN
Robbery, apparently. Found her
behind her car in the Assembly
parking garage... killer must
have been an animal, broke her
neck with one blow.

HUNT
Hmm... bad luck for her.

GREEN
They had this big rally planned
this morning, a circus... I
can't wait to see it fall apart.

Green is laughing hysterically.

HUNT
You're taking this pretty hard.

GREEN
(screaming)
I love it! Even that goddamn
flower lover's dead.

HUNT
The botanist?

GREEN
Botanist, queer, creep, whatever,
the one sleeping with the flower
lovers.

HUNT
What happened to him?

GREEN
(cackling)
Went off a bridge on the Thruway.
(MORE)

GREEN (cont'd)
Maybe drinking, fell asleep,
maybe another car involved...
police not sure...

HUNT
Shouldn't drink and drive.

GREEN
(laughing)
Goddamn, what a night.

HUNT
Your grief overwhelms me.

GREEN
If only I waited another week,
I could have saved myself a
briefcase full of money.

INT. HUNT'S PRIVATE OFFICE

HUNT
Justice works in strange and
wondrous ways, Mister Green.

GREEN
Thanks, buddy.

Hunt turns off the speaker phone and buzzes Edna.

HUNT
Edna, is that brief ready?

EDNA
In a minute, Mister Hunt.

Hunt stares at the newspaper, the muscles in his jaw
rippling. His eyes are cold, his expression hard.

INT. DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE, ENTRANCE - DAY -
ESTABLISHING

A door reads, "BUREAU OF HOMICIDES, CHERYL HOLMES,
CHIEF".

CHERYL HOLMES, a woman in her forties, walks in.

INT. DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE, RECEPTION AREA -
DAY

She is greeted by her STAFF ATTORNEYS and SECRETARY.

STAFF

Good morning, Chief.

HOLMES

Good morning, men. Ready for a
briefing?

STAFF

Ready, Chief.

SECRETARY

One of your favorite people is
waiting for you... Rosetti.

HOLMES

In my office?

She storms into her office.

INT. DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE, HOLMES PRIVATE
OFFICE - DAY

Rosetti is sitting on a couch chewing on the stub of a
cigar and reading a pathologist's report.

HOLMES

Rosetti, you repulsive cretin,
if you ever come into my office
again without an invitation,
I'll kick you in the crotch so
hard you'll have three Adam's
apples.

ROSETTI

That's what I like about you,
Holmes, direct and to the point.
Now, all you have to do is learn
how to say 'balls' and you'll
be one of the boys.

HOLMES

I don't want to be one of you.
What do you want?

ROSETTI

Lighten up. You know, you and me, we're a lot alike. We should have dinner together sometime, get to know each other better. Give it a chance.

HOLMES

You're not my type.

ROSETTI

Oh, yeah? What is your type?

HOLMES

Just about anything!

Rosetti feigns a pout.

ROSETTI

I'm insulted.

HOLMES

We're communicating. What do you want?

ROSETTI

Take a look at this file.

She takes the Adele Parker homicide file and reads as Rosetti speaks.

ROSETTI

(continuing)

There's something going on here, I can't quite put my finger on it, but I don't want it to fall through the cracks.

(pause)

Mind if I smoke?

She gives him the same look the nuns gave him through twelve years of catholic school just before they cracked him with a ruler.

ROSETTI

(continuing)

No, huh?

Holmes finishes the report and gives it back.

HOLMES

So?

ROSETTI

We got a broken neck... but...
not from the fall. No mess, no
rape, no robbery. So what is
it?

HOLMES

You tell me.

ROSETTI

She's split from her husband,
lots of money at stake.

HOLMES

I know the personalities. Parker
and Hunt. We went to law school
together. Parker was born with
a silver seat to the New York
Stock Exchange in his mouth. A
murderer? Doubtful.

ROSETTI

And Hunt's his alibi. Go figure.

HOLMES

Now, Hunt... that charming son-
of-a-bitch could break your
neck while waltzing to "The
Blue Danube" and not miss a
beat.

ROSETTI

You know the man!

HOLMES

I sat next to him for three
years. The story was that he
was taken prisoner by the Viet
Cong...

EXT. VIET NAM, VARIOUS LOCATIONS - YEARS EARLIER -
DAY

SERIES OF QUICK SHOTS

A. Hunt in a Viet Cong tiger cage.

HOLMES (V.O.)
... held in a tiger cage and
tortured.

B. Hunt being lifted into a shoulder dislocate by his
hands tied behind his back .

HOLMES (V.O.)
(continuing)
He escaped by breaking the neck
of his jailer...

C. Hunt breaks his Viet Cong captor's neck with one
twist.

HOLMES (V.O.)
(continuing)
... and swimming under water
for about a mile...

D. Hunt diving and swimming underwater as bullets spray
around him.

HOLMES (V.O.)
(continuing)
... and running through enemy
held territory for another fifty
miles with the V.C. on his tail.

E. Hunt running through the jungles of Viet Nam pursued
by the Viet Cong.

F. Hunt stumbles and falls, gets up and continues
running through the jungle.

SERIES OF SHOTS ENDS

INT. DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE, HOLMES PRIVATE
OFFICE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

HOLMES
He came back to the village
that betrayed him later and
killed everyone of them by
himself. No court martial. No
proof. Just a story.

EXT. BROADWAY, OUTSIDE HUNT'S OFFICE - DAY - LATER

Hunt is on his way to Federal Court to file his brief in the power plant business.

Sergeant Rosetti is just about to enter when they meet.

ROSETTI

Hey, Pal, how ya doin'?

HUNT

Rosetti, how nice to see you.

ROSETTI

I just got back from the District Attorney's office... had nothing else to do, thought I'd stop and see you and your buddy, Parker... maybe do lunch.

Hunt talks to Rosetti over his shoulder while he hails a cab.

HUNT

What's that Supreme Court case, Miranda something?

ROSETTI

Oh, it's not about poor wifey. I agree with you... I don't think he killed her... just got the Coroner's report. She was dead when she hit ground zero. Broken neck... nice, clean kill we call it... Know anybody who can just snap a person's neck...
(snapping)
just like that?

SUBLIM

Hunt breaks his Viet Cong captor's neck with one twist.

BACK TO SCENE

HUNT

I'm a little out of practice myself.

ROSETTI

You hear about Assemblywoman
Fried?

HUNT

I don't pay attention to
politics.

ROSETTI

Your client's selling stock in
the power plant she was trying
to stop.

HUNT

I can't discuss my clients'
business, you know that.

ROSETTI

Oh, yeah, ethics. You know,
it's a good thing you lawyers
are all so goddamned ethical.
I can't imagine what the country
would be like if you were crooks.

HUNT

And a Merry Christmas to you.

ROSETTI

Anyway, he had a lot to gain by
her death...

(sarcastically)

.. not that he's a suspect, I
hasten to add, but I'm going to
ask him a few questions.

HUNT

You're wasting your time.

ROSETTI

Oh, another alibi?

HUNT

He wasn't anywhere near Albany
when she was murdered.

ROSETTI

Yeah? Where was he, with you
and Rigoletto?

A cab stops and Hunt gets in.

HUNT
(to cabbie)
Foley Square, Federal Court
House.

Before Hunt closes the door he turns to Rosetti and laughs.

HUNT
(continuing)
I'd love to hear you sing
sometime, Sergeant.

Rosetti spits a piece of tobacco off his tongue. He has a smile on his face, but he is not amused.

INT. FEDERAL COURT HOUSE, LOBBY - A LITTLE LATER

The lobby is flooded with PEOPLE. Prospective JURORS wander aimlessly with jury notices in their hands, asking for help from the deputy COURT PERSONNEL.

CLIENTS huddle in the corners with their LAWYERS.

Hunt is in a phone booth, talking with Jay Parker.

INT. PHONE BOOTH

HUNT
... asking more questions, about
the power plant and Fried...
(pause)
... so what if he finds out,
it's no secret... and, it's all
legal.

INT. PARKER'S OFFICE

PARKER
I didn't have anything to do
with Esther Fried's murder...
why me?

INTERCUT BETWEEN HUNT AND PARKER

HUNT

Of course you didn't... he's fishing. The important thing is that you have an alibi for the night she was murdered... you did tell me you were going to the Hamptons.

PARKER

No, I changed my mind... stayed home... never left the apartment.

HUNT

Oh, that's just great... Well, don't worry about it.

PARKER

That's not the worry du jour.

HUNT

What's going on?

PARKER

That new Federal Prosecutor?

HUNT

Yeah?

PARKER

She's for real... subpoenas are floating around here like ticker tape.

HUNT

You've covered your ass, I hope.

PARKER

I think we're safe.

INT. PHONE BOOTH

HUNT

That's what the LAPD thought.

Hunt hangs up, holding onto the phone, deep in contemplation.

A little OLD MAN with a piece of paper in his hand knocks on the door of the phone booth. He looks confused.

Hunt opens the door.

HUNT
(continuing)
Yes?

OLD MAN
Can you help me? I'm supposed
to report here somewhere, but I
don't know where.

Hunt takes the paper and reads it.

HUNT
Here, let me see.

HUNT'S P.O.V. - JURY NOTICE

INSERT

It is a Notice For Grand Jury Duty. It says, "In The Matter Of The United States Of America: 'INVESTIGATION OF VIOLATIONS OF THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE ACT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA'", with the date, time and place to appear, and it bears the signature, "GRETCHEN CASE, ASSISTANT U.S. ATTORNEY."

BACK TO SCENE

HUNT
(continuing)
You're supposed to report to
Room 504.
(pointing)
Take that elevator to the fifth
floor and turn right.

OLD MAN
You seem to know your way around.
This is my first time on Grand
Jury, I don't know what to do.

HUNT
Do what I always do, vote 'Not
Guilty', you can't go wrong.

OLD MAN
Thanks a lot.

Hunt marches off to his assigned Courtroom, leaving a happy old man waving good-bye.

INT. HUNT'S OFFICE, RECEPTION AREA - LATER

Hunt is ecstatic as he throws open the doors and enters.

HUNT

We did it, Edna. They're
breaking ground for the power
plant as we speak.

Hunt sails past Edna into his office.

INT. HUNT'S PRIVATE OFFICE

He throws his briefcase on the couch, plops into his
chair and spins around in circles.

Edna follows him with a worried look on her face.

EDNA

But what about that poor little
flower? They're so delicate.

Hunt gets up and puts his arm around her shoulder
reassuringly.

HUNT

Don't worry. I saved enough
green space to insure its
survival, and, more good news...
the flower is being named after
Doctor Schaeffer, the botanist
who discovered it.

EDNA

(elated)
Oh, isn't that sweet?

HUNT

A fitting tribute for a dedicated
man.

(to himself)

What irony... to achieve
immortality as a flower, and to
spend eternity living in the
shadow of the power plant that
killed you... how sublime!

(to Edna)

What's on my calendar for the
rest of the day?

EDNA

You have a Humane Society meeting, and a Miss Case called, said it was personal... and...

She looks at the floor nervously and hesitates.

HUNT

Well?

EDNA

I know you're very busy...

HUNT

What is it? Are you in trouble?

EDNA

Not me, it's this poor old lady who lives near me, I think in the park.

HUNT

One of our homeless?

EDNA

She eats in my church's soup kitchen. Anyway, the police took her to Bellevue... for observation, they said.

HUNT

Sounds innocent enough.

EDNA

Yes, but now they won't let her leave.

HUNT

And they say no one cares.

EDNA

Mister Hunt, she wants to leave.

HUNT

Get your steno book, I'll get a Writ of Habeas Corpus.

EDNA

Oh, Mister Hunt, you're so kind.

Hunt pulls a law book off a shelf as Edna prepares to take dictation.

HUNT

I don't like people being held prisoner, even if Big Brother says it's for their own good... Okay, what's this woman's name?

EDNA

Oh my, I don't know.

HUNT

Wonderful, get Judge O'Brien's chambers on the line.

Edna leaves the office while Hunt writes. She buzzes him and he picks up the phone.

HUNT

(continuing)

Hello, Red? Alex.

(beat)

Yeah, it was a cakewalk, call Jay and buy yourself some shares... listen, I need a Writ of Habeas Corpus... I'll be down in a little while.

INT. SUPREME COURT, - LATER

Hunt and REVEREND PULVER, a cleric, confer on his testimony.

Hunt is finishing.

HUNT

... the point of which is that she is just as sane as you or I, and it is an injustice to hold her.

There is a commotion of O.S. VOICES. It is an argument.

The doors burst open and through them the bodies of a MALE and FEMALE ORDERLY, two MEN in suits, the Hospital Administrator and his lawyer, and the BAG LADY.

BAG LADY

(swinging her purse)

Get your hands off me, you
fascists!

She is disheveled and unkempt and carries a bulging shopping bag. She wears sneakers without laces, their tongues flapping, a hat and a winter overcoat with layers of clothing underneath.

STONE

(to Hunt)

Nah, she's not nuts.

Hunt introduces himself to the men in suits (M.O.S.) and interviews his client.

She looks like a mutation of 'Little Orphan Annie' grown old and shriveled.

She is as hostile as a feral cat.

Hunt is his most charming.

HUNT

Hello, grandmother, I'm Alex
Hunt. I'm going to get you out
of the hospital.

BAG LADY

Oh, yeah? Why?

HUNT

Because I don't like to see
people held against their will.

BAG LADY

What are you, a lawyer?

HUNT

Yes.

BAG LADY

I don't trust lawyers. You got
the whole country screwed up.

HUNT

(whispering)

It's the Democrats.

BAG LADY

Well, you better be good, or
I'll sue your ass!

(yelling)

I'll sue all of you!

She searches through an assortment of refuse in her shopping bag until she finds a disgusting, stained rag which she uses to blow her nose.

MONTAGE BEGINS

She naps while the Court takes testimony in her case (M.O.S.). The orderlies stand guard over her, struggling to stay awake.

The only SOUND is that of the ticking of a big Regulator clock on the wall.

JUDGE FRANCIS X. O'BRIEN sits patiently on the bench listening. He checks his watch. He checks the clock.

The last witness steps down.

MONTAGE ENDS

JUDGE

(to the parties)

Any other witnesses?

(abruptly)

There being no other witnesses,
I find for the Respondent. The
patient is ordered released.

He bangs his gavel and leaves the bench.

The assemblage look around asking each other (M.O.S.) what happened.

Hunt and Stone nudge the bag lady who has been napping.

HUNT

Well, grandmother, you're free
to go.

BAG LADY

It's about time, I probably
missed dinner.

She swings her bag at Hunt, but misses, and leaves.
Hunt chuckles.

HUNT
Dear, sweet, Granny.

STONE
She wasn't really your
grandmother, was she, Alex?

Hunt laughs heartily.

HUNT
I don't even know her name.

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE AT SEVENTY-SECOND STREET - LATER
THAT EVENING

Hunt is running up Fifth Avenue. Gretchen is running
down the same side towards him.

She waves to him and calls.

GRETCHEN
Hi, Alex.

Hunt remembers that she had called his office earlier.

HUNT
Damn!

She runs up to him, clearly happy to see him.

GRETCHEN
Mind if I join you?

HUNT
I'm so sorry, Gretchen, I just
got out of Court and I needed a
run to clear my head.

GRETCHEN
I understand. Your Secretary
told me you were championing
the cause of justice.

HUNT
A lawyer's work is never done.

GRETCHEN
I'm impressed.

HUNT

Once in a while my sense of justice is offended... I take it personally.

GRETCHEN

I've noticed.

HUNT

It was nothing, really.

GRETCHEN

Nothing? How many high priced Wall Street lawyers would let a bag lady's problem interfere with their billable hours? I'll tell you... Damn few!

HUNT

Well, I'm not looking for any medals... anyway, you called? I'm all yours.

GRETCHEN

It was only an invitation for dinner. I have this great recipe, veal chops stuffed with prosciutto and Fontina cheese in a wine and cream sauce.

HUNT

And strawberry cream pie for dessert?

Gretchen laughs at his euphemism and gently punches his shoulder.

HUNT

(continuing)

Let's do a few miles first. I don't like the park after dark.

GRETCHEN

You don't? That's funny. I'm not afraid.

HUNT

Seriously, Gretch, the place is dangerous... no matter what the asshole Mayor says.

GRETCHEN

This woman eats meat.

HUNT

You're not listening. With your work... you're a target...

GRETCHEN

Who knows what I do or where I live?

HUNT

You never know. Anyone under investigation, someone with a grudge... they just lie in wait, follow you... and you're another statistic. It's easy.

GRETCHEN

(laughing)

Come on, let's run... last one in's a rotten egg.

She sprints off. Hunt has a concerned look on his face as he paces himself behind her.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK

They run through the park, over wooded trails, off the paths, across fields.

She looks over her shoulder for him.

She laughs, taunting him.

He closes in on her, pinching her butt.

She screams and quickens the pace.

They are alone. The cautious have vacated the park; the predators have not yet come out of their lairs.

Hunt catches up to her and pulls her shorts down, exposing her beautiful firmness.

She struggles to pull her shorts up.

He grabs her around the waist and pulls her gently to the ground on top of him.

They embrace and kiss passionately.

INT. GRETCHEN'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - LATER -
NIGHT

Gretchen and Hunt sit on the floor kissing and petting. They are dressed in robes and their hair is wet from the shower.

The cocktail table has two empty plates, a bottle of champagne in a bucket of ice, and two fluted glasses.

HUNT

That was delicious. Super chef,
super lawyer...

GRETCHEN

(biting his ear)
Super anything else?

HUNT

Ow! Yes, a super lover.

He tries to pull away, but she drags him to the floor, pinning him on his back.

She kisses him deeply. He responds.

She straddles his torso and holds his hands on the floor.

GRETCHEN

Give up?

He feigns a move to one side, throwing her off balance, then rolls her over on her back.

He kisses her long and full on the lips.

HUNT

To conquer... one must yield.
That is the Tao.

They kiss again.

HUNT

(continuing)
HMMMM, you taste good.

GRETCHEN

So do you. How about dessert?

HUNT

I thought we had dessert before we ate? Is that all you think about?

GRETCHEN

That was just an appetizer.

HUNT

It worked.

GRETCHEN

You bring out the best in me.

They begin to make love again.

INT. GRETCHEN'S BEDROOM - LATER

They are still in each other's arms.

HUNT

Why don't we take the day off tomorrow and go up to the mountains? It's supposed to be beautiful... no crowds... we can picnic, go swimming or horseback riding?

GRETCHEN

I can't, Alex, I have a Grand Jury reporting and it's going to be a heavy hit.

Hunt gets up and dresses.

HUNT

Oh, securities violations?

GRETCHEN

I can't tell you, you know that. Grand Jury proceedings are secret. I could lose my job, go to jail, be disbarred. My whole life down the drain... Please don't ask.

HUNT

I'd never compromise you.

GRETCHEN

I can tell you this... you'll recognize the names.

HUNT

(laughing)

As long as mine's not one of them.

GRETCHEN

(seriously)

It's not... yet... but your name has been mentioned.

HUNT

(joking)

Should I be flattered?

GRETCHEN

You should be careful. It was close this time. If it gets any closer... I might have to stop seeing you.

HUNT

That serious?

GRETCHEN

Or risk my career.

HUNT

You'd prosecute me?

GRETCHEN

I'd have no choice.

SUBLIM

Hunt in the Viet Cong tiger cage.

BACK TO SCENE

HUNT

We make choices.

GRETCHEN

I've dedicated my career to the pursuit of justice.

HUNT

Not nearly as much as I have.

GRETCHEN

I suspect that our sense of
justice is on different levels.

SUBLIM

Hunt behind bars in a tiger cage.

BACK TO SCENE

HUNT

Ah, well, no picnic tomorrow.

GRETCHEN

Maybe tomorrow night?

HUNT

I have a feeling I'm going to
be busy with clients.

(pursing his lips)

Won't know until the Grand Jury
hands up indictments though,
will we?

He's fully dressed in his running outfit. They kiss
as they walk to the door.

INT. GRETCHEN'S APARTMENT - HALL

HUNT

How will the story end, he
wondered? Will they be the
heroes of their own lives?
Will they find love and glory?

She kisses him affectionately.

GRETCHEN

At least we had Paris.

HUNT

Night, love.

He opens the door and leaves without looking back.

INT. FEDERAL COURT, MANHATTAN - DAY

Court is in session. The gallery is packed with SPECTATORS, PRESS, JURORS, INDICTEES, LAWYERS and the CURIOUS.

Among the crowd are Parker in the front row and Hunt standing in the aisle.

Hunt is taking care of business.

Parker is listless. He watches other indictees paraded in chains before the Court and remanded to the custody of Federal Marshals.

Hunt's other stockbroker client, EVAN BELSKY, has just been indicted, has posted bail and has been released.

Hunt is saying good-bye to him AD LIB M.O.S.

JUDGE ARNOLD BOOKMAN directs the BAILIFF to call the next case.

JUDGE

Bailiff, let's keep things moving.

BAILIFF

(to the U.S. Attorneys)
Call the next case.

Gretchen Case and other U.S. ATTORNEYS sit and stand in turn at the Prosecution's table before the Bench.

Gretchen presents the next case.

GRETCHEN

The Government against J.
Whittington Parker, Indictment
Number S-1056-93.

Hunt moves to Defense Counsel's Table with Parker. He directs Parker to be seated. Hunt remains standing.

GRETCHEN

(continuing)
Let the record show that I am
presenting Defense Counsel with
a copy of the Indictment.

She hands the document to Hunt.

HUNT

(reading it)

May it please the Court, on behalf of the Defendant, I enter a plea of 'Not Guilty' to all the charges contained therein, and ask that the Defendant be released on his own recognizance.

JUDGE

Miss Case?

GRETCHEN

The Government requests that bail be set in an amount of at least one million dollars.

HUNT

I respectfully suggest that amount is excessive and punitive. The Defendant is a prominent member of the community and is not likely to leave the jurisdiction of the Court.

GRETCHEN

Your Honor, the Defendant stands accused of securities frauds in excess of one hundred million dollars. The penalty could be that much in fines, plus restitution, plus a lifetime in prison.

JUDGE

Bail is set at one million dollars. Motions due in thirty days.

(bangs gavel)

Next case.

BAILIFF

Next Case!

Gretchen calls out the name of another indictee who moves forward to the Defense Counsel's Table with his lawyer as Hunt and Parker move away.

GRETCHEN

The Government against Peter
Block, Indictment Number S-1057-
93.

Gretchen's voice fades in the b.g. as Hunt and Parker
pay bail and leave the Courtroom.

HUNT

(aside to Parker)
Didn't I tell you? Give the
check to the Clerk.

Neither Hunt nor Gretchen look at each other.

Parker gives the bail to the CLERK who gives him a
receipt.

Hunt and Parker work their way through the crowded
Courtroom into the Hall.

INT. FEDERAL COURT HOUSE, HALL

Parker is agitated. He is starting to fall to pieces
again. Hunt is already planning his defense.

They find a quiet alcove where they huddle and whisper.

PARKER

Jesus Christ, that woman is
hungry.

HUNT

More than you know...

(pause)

Look, they only have one witness,
that's the Secretary to the
CEO, the one who fed you the
inside information, right?

PARKER

Yes, but who knows who else she
was sleeping with.

HUNT

If you followed my advice from
the beginning of this tidy little
scheme, you should have left no
tracks.

PARKER

Can you get to that Justice
Department lawyer?

HUNT

Impossible.

PARKER

You know her?

HUNT

Yes, she lives right under me.

PARKER

Is she any good?

HUNT

The best... You can bet she has
it all tied up in a neat little
package... this Secretary...
she's the only loose end...

PARKER

Belsky finished?

HUNT

(nodding)

He was too greedy... couldn't
take my advice. Now all he can
do is make a deal and drag his
friends down with him.

PARKER

Good thing we didn't bite when
he held out the bait.

HUNT

How many millions does a man
need?

PARKER

Do you think he'll do something
desperate? You know, the stories
about underworld connections?
Maybe kill off witnesses... or,
the Prosecutor?

HUNT

He doesn't have the balls.

(MORE)

HUNT (cont'd)

His best hope is a case of Legionnaires' disease in the Federal Court House.

PARKER

What about us, Alex... you? How much do you think they know about your involvement?

HUNT

My guess is that without your friend they have no case against either of us. You have her address?

Parker gets out his wallet and writes down her address.

PARKER

Her name is Alice Manet, she lives in the Hamptons. Nice place, right on the water. I'm going to miss it.

HUNT

I'll have Stone Mountain pay her a visit... find out what she told them.

PARKER

Be careful, I hear she's being guarded... Federal witness protection program, or something.

HUNT

What? Talk about paranoia.

They still speak in hushed tones as they walk to the exit among other people.

HUNT

(continuing)

Meanwhile, let me worry about it. Relax, get out of town. Take a cruise. Go to Bermuda.

PARKER

Bermuda? Jesus, Alex, it has to be a hundred degrees down there now.

HUNT

(almost shouting)
Well then go to Alaska! What
the hell do I care where you
go? Get out of town for a few
weeks.

PARKER

Okay, okay. God, are all lawyers
this testy?

HUNT

This one is.

PARKER

I have an artist friend in Nova
Scotia. Maybe I'll...

HUNT

I'll have Edna make reservations
today.

PARKER

What about my case, Alex? Do
you think you can win?

HUNT

I can almost guarantee it.

PARKER

What will it cost me?

HUNT

Do you have your bail receipt?

Parker takes the receipt out of his pocket.

HUNT

Endorse it to me.

EXT. AERIAL VIEW - LONG ISLAND'S SOUTH SHORE, THE
HAMPTONS - DAWN - ESTABLISHING

Mist creeps lazily in from the ocean to the shore.
The only sounds are those of gulls and shore birds and
gently breaking waves.

The beach is desolate.

Except for a few houses and a single runabout anchored about five hundred yards off shore, there is no indication that the place is inhabited.

In front of the beach house, Federal agents sit in an unmarked car, watching the only access road to the ocean.

The lone figure of a WOMAN crosses the dunes from a house to the water.

She is barefoot and wearing a terry robe.

She is tall and handsome, and walks with proud demeanor.

She is ALICE MANET.

As she walks she tucks her hair under her bathing cap.

When she reaches the water's edge, she drops her robe.

She is nude.

She shivers in the chill of the mist and rubs her arms, then wades into the surf.

She stands quietly for a moment looking out at the sea.

ALICE'S P.O.V. - THE BOAT

The runabout bobs and rolls gently in the waves. There appear to be no occupants.

BACK TO SCENE

She gives it no serious thought.

She strides into the sea and dives into an incoming wave.

She surfaces, takes a breath and angles her body into the ocean with strong, steady strokes.

She is a good swimmer, a confident swimmer.

A stream of bubbles in the water heads in her direction, but she does not see them.

She swims directly toward them, closing the distance between them with her confident, strong, steady strokes.

She pauses for a moment, treading water, and wipes her face.

She looks around her. Her expression is apprehensive. She turns in the water.

ALICE'S P.O.V. - THE SCENE

There is nothing. She is alone. Only her, the birds, the gentle waves, the mist, the bobbing boat.

BACK TO SCENE

The stream of bubbles comes closer.

The bubbles burst behind her.

She turns quickly.

Bubbles stream up between her breasts and burst in her face.

She has a queer and frightened look on her face.

She flails her arms backward in an attempt to swim out of their path.

She cries out in panic and fear.

Suddenly and silently she disappears under the water.

She surfaces, thrashing her arms and gasping for air.

She cannot scream. She can scarcely breathe.

She disappears again. Her arms thrash frantically as she struggles to surface and breathe.

The silhouette of her body is barely distinguishable struggling in the murky, turbulent water.

The disturbance gradually subsides. The sea becomes calm again.

The stream of bubbles heads noiselessly away from the scene towards the runabout.

Serenity returns. All is quiet, except for the faint screaming of gulls in the distance and the soothing sound of waves slathering the sand.

Only an occasional whitecap disturbs the peaceful blue tranquility.

An outboard motor starts in the distance and the runabout sneaks away.

The nude body of Alice Manet floats to the surface and rocks slowly to shore on the gentle waves.

INT. HUNT'S PRIVATE OFFICE - LATER THAT DAY

Hunt is busy at his desk proofreading a legal brief against a law book.

The intercom buzzes. He presses the speaker button.

EDNA
Mister Stone Mountain on one.

HUNT
(on phone)
How'd you make out?

INT. STONE'S OFFICE

Stone is pleased.

STONE
Couldn't be better. She's dead.

INTERCUT BETWEEN THEM AS THEY SPEAK

HUNT
What does it look like?

STONE
Accidental drowning.

HUNT
(laughing)
Perfect! Why is it that every time I send you somewhere to investigate, the subject ends up dead?

STONE
Just lucky, I guess.

HUNT
Anyone see you?

STONE
I don't think so. Police all
over though. I hung around and
listened.

Hunt is deeply immersed in thought.

HUNT'S P.O.V. - A WALL MIRROR

Hunt looks at his reflection in a mirror on the opposite
wall. He smooths his hair as he speaks.

HUNT
(nodding slowly, to
himself)
Nice work.

STONE
Do you want me to follow it up?

HUNT
No, I think that was the last
loose end.

STONE
Call me if you need me.

INT. HUNT'S PRIVATE OFFICE

Hunt hangs up. He leans back in his chair, folds his
hands across his chest and sits quietly staring into
space.

His index finger moves and gently taps a rhythm on the
back of his other hand, like the pendulum of a clock.

He is deep in thought.

The intercom buzzes again.

Hunt slowly reaches for the button, still in thought.

HUNT
(calmly)
What is it, Edna?

EDNA

A Sergeant Rosetti is here to see you.

INT. HUNT'S RECEPTION AREA

Rosetti is standing by the Secretary's desk, puffing on a cheap cigar. Edna is visibly annoyed with the smoke.

Hunt speaks loudly enough in the intercom for Rosetti to hear.

HUNT (V.O.)

Tell him to leave his stinking cigar out in the hall.

ROSETTI

(in the intercom)
Smokers have rights too, you know.

Rosetti walks to the office entrance, opens the door and throws his cigar on the hallway floor. He closes the door, turns and feigns a smile at Edna. She does not like him, but she is the consummate professional.

EDNA

You may go in now.

Rosetti spits a piece of tobacco off the tip of his tongue as he plows into Hunt's office.

INT. HUNT'S PRIVATE OFFICE

Rosetti stops for a moment and gapes at his surroundings in awe, then gingerly crosses the oriental carpet to Hunt's desk and seats himself without invitation.

HUNT

Sergeant... How nice to see you again, and again....

Rosetti leans back in the chair and puts his hands behind his head. He almost puts his feet up on Hunt's desk, but catches himself.

ROSETTI

You know what I like to do in
my spare time, counselor?

HUNT

(shaking his head
slowly)

If I cared, would it matter?

ROSETTI

I like to do jigsaw puzzles. I
love putting together all those
little pieces... insignificant
by themselves, but when they
all come together.... it's like
magic.

Hunt stares at him impassively.

ROSETTI

(continuing)

You like jigsaw puzzles?

HUNT

I understand idiot savants are
very good at them.

ROSETTI

This Parker case interests me...
Remember the murder of that
Assemblywoman in Albany?

HUNT

Vaguely.

ROSETTI

Now, who'd want to kill her?

HUNT

Half the people in New York?

ROSETTI

... And you and Parker.... I
heard your name mentioned in
that power plant case.

HUNT

You find time to read, too?

ROSETTI

More than that... It got me to thinking... I got a case where a soon to be ex-wife is murdered by some slime...

Rosetti stresses the word slime, but there is no reaction from Hunt.

ROSETTI

(continuing)

... sick stuff...

Rosetti emphasizes the word sick. Hunt remains impassive. He looks Rosetti directly in the eyes.

ROSETTI

(continuing)

Know what I found?

Hunt shakes his head in feigned wonder.

ROSETTI

(continuing)

They were all getting divorces. And you know what else they had in common? Money... And their spouses, the prime suspects, all had alibis... All provided their lawyer.

HUNT

How fortuitous.

ROSETTI

Yeah, lucky too... So, I say to myself, this is no serial killing, there's gotta be a connection. But what? Maybe something to do with the stock market... so, I've been talking to the District Attorney and that Justice Department lawyer, you know, that hot number who indicted Parker.

HUNT

I've seen her in action.

ROSETTI

We're comparing notes... You should have seen her ears perk up when I mentioned your name.

HUNT

Really?

SUBLIM

Hunt in the Viet Cong tiger cage.

BACK TO SCENE

ROSETTI

Yeah, I wonder why?

(smirking)

You don't suppose you're being investigated by her Grand Jury? Anyhow, we're playing this close together... Know what I mean? Maybe there's a connection.

HUNT

Be careful.

ROSETTI

What?

HUNT

The subway. Subways can be dangerous.

ROSETTI

Thanks for the tip.

Rosetti leaves without formalities. Hunt sits in deep thought, as he was when Rosetti arrived.

EXT. AERIAL VIEW - CENTRAL PARK - NIGHT -
ESTABLISHING

EXT. FIFTH AVENUE AT SEVENTY-FIFTH STREET - NIGHT

Gretchen leaves her apartment building in running attire.

She crosses Fifth Avenue and enters Central Park.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - NIGHT

She runs, pacing herself for a six minute mile.

She meets a few other RUNNERS leaving the park, but they gradually all disappear as she runs deeper into the park.

She stays on the paths, but the lighting is sporadic and dim.

She runs from light into darkness and into light again as she passes under the street lamps.

The lamps are few and far between, it seems, and the expression on her face changes from confidence to concern.

The only sounds are those of her feet pounding the path and her breathing.

She glances nervously over her shoulder now and then.

GRETCHEN'S P.O.V. - THE SCENE AROUND HER

A shadowy FIGURE follows her. It looks like a man. He is just far enough behind her so that she cannot see his face.

It seems that he is stalking her. She is frightened.

A sudden breeze stirs some trees and shrubs.

BACK TO SCENE

Gretchen senses danger in the movement all around her.

This is no longer a casual run.

Gretchen quickens her pace. She is panting now, almost hyperventilating.

She looks from side to side as she passes every bush, giving plenty of room to each one, just in case.

She stops for a moment to catch her breath and get her orientation. She holds her sides. She is in pain.

There is no sound of anyone following her.

There is nothing but shadows and the sound of her heart pounding in her chest.

A rabbit springs out in front of her. She screams and back pedals off the path in confusion.

Something snags her hair. She screams again and whirls around and back pedals away from the snare.

It pulls harder.

She grabs her hair and rips it out of the grasp of her unseen attacker. A bush entangled in her hair, bends and breaks.

She pulls twigs out of her hair and throws them violently away with mixed vexation and relief.

She regains her composure quickly and sprints off again, looking over her shoulder for her pursuer, running deeper into the park.

She checks behind her again.

We see the feet of the runner following her.

Gretchen quickens the pace, but the pursuing feet match hers stride for stride.

She looks over her shoulder constantly. She is terrified.

We see the face of the man following her. It is Hunt. He has a determined look on his face.

GRETCHEN'S P.O.V. - THE SCENE AROUND HER

She can see the man again. He is definitely after her, but she is pacing herself fast enough to keep ahead of him.

She still can't see his face.

BACK TO SCENE

She rounds a bend and looks over her shoulder again.

GRETCHEN'S P.O.V.

She can no longer see the man following her. There is only quiet and shadows.

BACK TO SCENE

She breathes a sigh of relief.

Suddenly a pair of gloved hands grab her around the neck from behind.

She screams and breaks away.

The hands grab her shoulders and spin her around.

GRETCHEN'S P.O.V. - HER ATTACKER

The man who grabbed her is wearing a stocking mask.

BACK TO SCENE

She screams in terror repeatedly throughout the assault.

Her attacker appears to be in excellent physical condition and extremely strong.

He lunges at her, driving her off the path between some brush in the darkness.

The wind is knocked out of her as they hit the ground together.

She cannot catch her breath. She tries to scream, but cannot.

She pushes her attacker. She punches and claws at his masked face.

He rips off her top.

She digs her nails beneath the mask.

He screams in rage and punches her in the stomach.

She doubles up and turns on her side in a fetal position.

He straddles her.

He rips off her bra and throws it over his shoulder.

He tugs at her pants, getting them down over her hips.

She turns, surprising him, and backhands him in the throat. He releases his grip and gasps for air.

She tries to get out from under him, but the weight of his body prevents it.

He grabs her pants with both hands and rips them off the rest of the way, lifting her off the ground with the force of the act.

He starts to pull down his own pants, but Gretchen gets up and tries to run.

He tackles her and drags her down again, tearing off her panties at the same time.

He drops his pants and throws himself on her, clutching her throat with one hand, and attempting to penetrate her with the other.

Gretchen writhes in physical pain and mental agony. She begins to lose consciousness.

Her attacker suddenly groans with intense orgasmic pain.

His body arches and stiffens, then doubles up and falls off Gretchen.

He rolls on the ground, moaning and holding his groin.

He is kicked repeatedly in the balls by another man in a running suit.

In the shadows we can see the rescuer's face. It is Hunt.

He rips off the attacker's pants and throws them into a tree, then kneels down to see if Gretchen is all right.

The attacker takes advantage of the diversion and hobbles away, clutching his testicles, still masked, but bare-assed.

HUNT

Are you okay, Gretch?

Gretchen sinks in his arms, barely able to focus her eyes or talk.

GRETCHEN

Oh, Alex, thank God.

HUNT

I tried to catch up to you but
you were running like a gazelle.
I cut through the woods to head
you off. Lucky thing I did.

Hunt gathers together her clothes and helps her dress.
She is still in pain.

GRETCHEN

Did you see him? Did he get
away?

HUNT

Don't worry, he can run, but he
can't hide.

Gretchen gets up, limping. Hunt puts her arm over his
shoulder and they walk slowly home.

INT. GRETCHEN'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM - LATER

Hunt hangs up the phone on the nightstand. Gretchen
lies prone on her bed beside him. She wears only
panties. Her body is bruised.

HUNT

The police are sympathetic.
You can stop by tomorrow and
make a complaint. Meanwhile,
they'll look for a naked man
with black and blue balls.

GRETCHEN

God, what a place. How can you
live like this?

HUNT

Are you sure you don't want to
go to the hospital?

GRETCHEN

Yes, I'm just bruised. The
shower was all I needed.

HUNT

How about a massage? I warmed
up some baby oil.

GRETCHEN

Sounds great... where the hell are the police when you need them?

Hunt gently massages her. She 'oohs' and 'ahhs' AD LIB.

HUNT

Giving out parking tickets, towing away cars... raising revenue. I programmed your phone for auto dialing my number in case of an emergency... and don't forget 911. We have caller ID.

GRETCHEN

It wasn't like this in Georgetown.

HUNT

Don't listen to Alex.

GRETCHEN

I had to run. I had a rough day.

HUNT

Welcome to the big leagues.

GRETCHEN

I found out I lost a witness yesterday.

HUNT

Oh? Important?

GRETCHEN

My entire case depended on her.

HUNT

What happened?

GRETCHEN

She drowned. An excellent swimmer, and she drowns.

HUNT

It's always the good swimmer
who drowns, the good horseman
who gets thrown...
overconfidence... stretching
the limits... anyway, bad luck!

GRETCHEN

Bad luck for me, good luck for
your client, Jay Parker.

Hunt does not let on that he knows anything about the
drowning.

HUNT

Parker? This was a witness in
the securities case?

GRETCHEN

Yes.

HUNT

Well, shall I make the motion
to dismiss, or shall you?

GRETCHEN

I have no intention of dismissing
the indictment.

HUNT

How can you prosecute without
your witness?

GRETCHEN

I still have the tape.

Hunt is stunned, but he conceals his surprise from
Gretchen who has her head turned away.

HUNT

Tape? What tape?

GRETCHEN

Your friend's lover had the
foresight to protect herself by
taping her phone conversations
and lovemaking.

HUNT

(feigning indignation)
And you eavesdropped on their
intimacies? That's obscene.

GRETCHEN

They spoke very highly of you.

HUNT

What?

GRETCHEN

I shouldn't be telling you this,
but you may be indicted yourself.

HUNT

How are you going to get it
into evidence? It's not
admissible without corroboration.

GRETCHEN

I can tie it in with
documentation. . . . Anyway,
Sergeant Rosetti thinks it's a
key to something bigger, serial
killing, maybe.

HUNT

I wouldn't get too close to
Rosetti if I were you.

GRETCHEN

(turning)

Why?

HUNT

He spits.

GRETCHEN

He thinks there's a connection
between Parker and a number of
homicides... witnesses... so
does the D.A. You know anything
about it?

HUNT

That's crazy.

GRETCHEN

Anyway, the tape could be the
key.

HUNT

I hope it's in a safe place.

GRETCHEN

It's safe.

Gretchen glances at the nightstand as she speaks.
Hunt notices.

HUNT

If what Rosetti says is true,
you may be in danger.

GRETCHEN

Why should I worry? I have you
to protect me.

HUNT

And, let's not forget... the
woman eats meat.

Hunt lies down beside her. She leans over and kisses
him.

GRETCHEN

My hero.

EXT. 20TH PRECINCT - DAY - ESTABLISHING

INT. ROSETTI'S CUBICLE

Rosetti lights a cigar as he chats with Hunt. It has
been a week since Gretchen's attack.

ROSETTI

You don't mind if I smoke in my
own office, do you, counselor?

HUNT

Smoking can kill you, you know.

ROSETTI

Jigsaw puzzles... I love 'em!

HUNT

Your enthusiasm is contagious.

ROSETTI

It took me a while to find a connection, but I found it.

HUNT

NYPD won the Lottery when it promoted you to detective.

ROSETTI

The lawyer... the same lawyer in every case... Interesting... that pretty Justice Department prosecutor thinks it's interesting. I just got off the phone with her.

HUNT

Really?

ROSETTI

Now what do you suppose the odds are of something like that?

HUNT

I don't know much about odds... I never take chances.

ROSETTI

Didn't you think it unusual that witnesses against your clients' were being murdered? Seven in five years?

HUNT

Who counts?

ROSETTI

I think you're lying. I think you killed all of them... after you planned the alibis.

SUBLIM

Hunt in the Viet Cong tiger cage.

BACK TO SCENE

HUNT

Interesting theories.

Rosetti points his finger in Hunt's face.

ROSETTI

I bet you killed your wife,
too.

HUNT

Now, that's cruel.

SUBLIM

The woman has a look of surprise on her face. It quickly turns to fear. She throws up her arms as if to ward off a blow to her head.

BACK TO SCENE

HUNT

(continuing)

Anyway, I was out of the country
at the time.

ROSETTI

I'm checking airline passenger
manifests, in and out of New
York.

HUNT

(grinning)

You don't seriously expect to
find my name?

ROSETTI

You used a phony name.

HUNT

Brilliant minds fascinate me.

ROSETTI

You came in across the border
from Canada.

HUNT

Montreal's such a fun city.
Parlez vous Français?

Rosetti sits silently, rolling his cigar around on his
lips.

ROSETTI

You sick son of a bitch... you
killed her too, didn't you?

SUBLIM

Hunt in the Viet Cong tiger cage.

BACK TO SCENE

HUNT

Sorry, Sergeant, I wasn't raised Catholic... no confession today.

ROSETTI

You killed them all.

HUNT

I hate to leave in the middle of a movie, but I really must go... sally forth into the world and right all wrongs.

A PLAINCLOTHESMAN sticks his head into Rosetti's cubicle. He and another COP have a SUSPECT in custody. The suspect's eyes are glazed over. He is high on something.

PLAINSCLOTHESMAN

Can I talk to you, Tony?

ROSETTI

What is it?

PLAINSCLOTHESMAN

We picked this guy up on a complaint from an old lady. She says he tried to strangle and rape her.

ROSETTI

So book and print him. Whaddaya want from me? I'm busy.

PLAINSCLOTHESMAN

I think you want to hear this. We arrested him in his apartment. It was loaded with newspaper clippings about murder and rape stories. Including the Parker case and the other stuff you're working on. He says he did them.

The suspect is a sorry looking, disoriented mess.

ROSETTI
(to the suspect)
So, you killed them all, huh?

SUSPECT
Yeah.

ROSETTI
Wanna confess?

SUSPECT
Yeah.

ROSETTI
(to the
plainsclothesman)
Take him down in the basement
and beat the shit out of him
until he denies it.
(yelling at suspect)
You hear me, you wacky bastard?
I don't need a brain dead fucking
schizo scumbag like you screwing
up my investigation. I'm gonna
give these nice officers here
all night to beat the living
dog shit out of you, and if you
haven't denied it by morning, I
will personally break both of
your fucking legs!
(to the
plainsclothesman)
Get this puke out of here.

The plainsclothesman escorts the suspect out of the scene.

HUNT
You are some lucky guy!

ROSETTI
The shit I have to put up with.

HUNT
You have my sympathy. I'll say
good-bye.

ROSETTI
G'wan, get the hell out of here.
(as Hunt leaves)
Hey, Hunt...

Hunt turns.

ROSETTI

(continuing)

Do me a favor?

(pause)

Don't kill anybody?

INT. HUNT'S PRIVATE OFFICE, THE NEXT DAY

Hunt is reviewing Parker's case with him, analyzing the quality of evidence and preparing possible defenses.

Parker has just learned of Alice Manet's death.

PARKER

What the hell is going on? I win my divorce when my wife is murdered... I win the power plant case by a murder... and now, poor Alice. No wonder I'm a prime suspect.

HUNT

God must be on your side.

PARKER

I don't even go to church. How the hell is it possible?

HUNT

You won... Justice has prevailed. Nothing else matters.

PARKER

When is this guy Rosetti going to quit? I have alibis. They couldn't be better if they were planned. I was out of the country when Alice drowned... I never left my apartment when that botanist and Assemblywoman were killed... I was at the opera with you when my wife was killed. You know that, you...

Parker has a sudden sickening flash of insight.

PARKER
(continuing)
Oh my God... Alex?

Hunt says nothing. His expression shows no emotion.

PARKER
(continuing)
You were my alibi at the opera.
But I never saw you until it
was over.

Hunt stares icily at Parker.

HUNT
What do you think, I play by
the Marquis of Queensbury's
rules, you silly bastard? You
won... your cause was just. I
saved you millions... and a
lifetime in prison. Nothing
else matters!

PARKER
(incredulously)
I've never seen this side of
you. Doesn't your conscience
bother you?

HUNT
A good lawyer needs a killer
instinct, not a conscience...
anyway, you're not out of the
woods yet. They still have the
tape.

Parker is stunned.

PARKER
Tape? What tape?

HUNT
Her insurance... didn't keep
her alive, poor lady...
apparently she taped every sweet
thing you whispered in her ear.

PARKER
Jesus! Christ, Alex, this could
really be bad for us.

HUNT

Us?

PARKER

I mentioned your name lots of times... details... numbers... off shore banks... the whole scheme.

HUNT

Wonderful. I've been told there's a sealed indictment on the Federal Bench with my name in it. Now I know why.

PARKER

You've got to get to that U.S. Attorney.

HUNT

Impossible.

PARKER

You've got to... I know what's on that tape.

HUNT

She'd die before she gave it up.

PARKER

I'll get out of town... take another vacation while you...

Hunt shakes his head slowly throughout this conversation.

HUNT

It's no longer an option.

PARKER

What are you going to do?

HUNT

I don't have many choices.

PARKER

What should I do? Get out of town?

HUNT

It doesn't matter any more.

INT. GRETCHEN'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM - NIGHT

The room is in darkness.

The only light is from outside the window, filtered through curtains which flow gently in the warm summer breeze.

Gretchen is in a deep sleep.

She is covered by a sheer satin sheet.

By her outline we can see that she sleeps nude.

An arm reaches in from the fire escape through the curtains of her bedroom window and moves them to the side.

A leg appears next, feeling its way, quietly, noiselessly.

The INTRUDER is inside her bedroom.

The intruder is dressed in black and wears a ski mask.

He moves as quietly as a cat, using a penlight to find his way.

He rifles through the things on top of her dresser, picking up rings, bracelets, a watch. He puts them in his pocket.

Then he goes through her dresser drawers, lifting her bras, panties, sweaters, sorting through them, searching.

He moves to the nightstand beside her bed.

She sighs and stirs.

He turns off the light, and waits for Gretchen to remain calm again.

In the shadows we see the faintest light reflecting off the blade of a knife.

The knife moves towards Gretchen's throat.

She sleeps peacefully.

The intruder goes back to the nightstand.

He slides open a drawer. It makes the slightest noise.

Gretchen stirs and turns in her sleep.

The intruder turns off the light and waits.

She sleeps.

He rummages through the drawer, finding some more jewelry. He puts it in his pocket.

He picks up a cassette tape and examines it closely under his penlight.

INTRUDER'S P.O.V. - THE TAPE

INSERT

The tape is labeled "Alice Manet: US v Parker;
Ind. # S-1056-93"

BACK TO SCENE

The light on the nightstand clicks on.

Gretchen screams. With one sweep of his arm, the intruder smashes the light on the floor.

She screams again. The intruder jumps on her.

In the shadows we see him with one hand on her throat, the other holding the knife close to her face.

She punches him in the nose, loosening his grip.

She pushes him off her, kicks off the sheet and rolls to the other side of the bed.

He grabs her leg and pulls her back.

She whirls and kicks him in the face.

He falls backwards and loses his grip on her again. He drops the knife on the bed.

She gets to her feet alongside the bed, trips and falls to her knees.

She grabs the phone from the nightstand and punches in "911".

He knocks the phone out of her hand.

He picks up the knife and lunges at her with it, tackling her and driving her to the floor.

As they struggle we hear a POLICE 911 VOICE OVER answering the call.

POLICE 911 (V.O.)
Nine one one... hello...hello...
your caller number has been
identified... a car is on its
way... stay on the line...

The intruder rips the phone from the wall and throws it across the room.

He raises the knife to strike.

Gretchen drives her elbow into his solar plexus, knocking the wind out of him.

He drops the knife. She picks it up.

He lunges at her again, straddling her, reaching for the knife in her hand.

She jerks her arm back.

He misses the knife.

With all the force she can muster she drives the blade deep in his throat.

Blood gushes all over.

He grasps his throat to stop the blood, screaming bloody, gargling unintelligible expletives.

He staggers to the kitchen, leaving a trail of blood.

INT. GRETCHEN'S APARTMENT, KITCHEN

He tries to find his way out of her apartment, but collapses dead against her door.

Gretchen follows to the kitchen tentatively. She is not sure that the man is dead.

She trembles from shock.

She looks at the masked dead man, the bloody trail from her bedroom, her body covered with his blood, the knife still in her hand.

She approaches the dead man cautiously.

She kneels beside him and starts to lift the ski mask.

She hesitates. She trembles violently and murmurs fearfully.

GRETCHEN

Oh, no, no... Alex? No...

She clutches her arms, still trembling, and shakes her head in denial.

GRETCHEN

(continuing)

No... please, God, no...

She drops the knife on the floor and reaches behind her for the phone.

She hits an autodial code button.

The phone rings at the other end, then an answering machine clicks on.

HUNT (V.O.)

Hello, this is Alex. I can't come to the phone right now...

Gretchen starts to sob.

HUNT (V.O.)

(continuing)

... I'm out taking care of business...

She sinks slowly down the wall to the floor with the phone at her side.

HUNT (V.O.)

(continuing)

... so when you hear the tone...

Gretchen convulses with apprehension.

HUNT (V.O.)
 (continuing)
 ... leave your name and number
 and I'll call you.

The tone signal beeps and the open line is quiet.

Gretchen squats on the floor and sobs uncontrollably.

HUNT (V.O.)
 (continuing)
 Hello? Hello? Anyone there?

Gretchen is startled.

GRETCHEN
 Alex?

HUNT (V.O.)
 Gretchen?

She drops the phone and crawls hysterically through the blood as Hunt speaks throughout the scene from the dangling phone.

HUNT (V.O.)
 (continuing)
 Gretchen? Is that you? What's
 wrong? Are you all right?
 Gretchen? Talk to me...

Gretchen rips off the intruder's mask.

It is Jay Parker.

At first she is horrified, puzzled, then overjoyed. She slides back across the floor through the blood and grabs the phone.

GRETCHEN
 Oh, Alex... I'm so happy...

She sobs hysterically.

INT. GRETCHEN'S APARTMENT, KITCHEN - LATER

POLICE and emergency rescue squad PERSONNEL are on the scene.

They are finishing up their business of taking a statement from Gretchen, photographing the grisly scene, and removing the body on a stretcher.

Hunt comforts Gretchen.

Rosetti is there as well.

HUNT

Jay? I can't believe this.

ROSETTI

I can. Millions at stake...
prison... but I don't think he
was in it alone.

(to Hunt)

Know what I mean?

Hunt remains his stoic self throughout.

ROSETTI

(continuing)

You gotta be the luckiest son-
of-a-bitch alive. First the
drughead, now this poor shit.

HUNT

Somebody up there likes me.

ROSETTI

Well, I don't... and I'm not
finished with this.

SUBLIM

Hunt in the Viet Cong tiger cage

BACK TO SCENE

HUNT

Have a nice day, Sergeant.

Rosetti follows the last of the police, leaving Hunt alone with Gretchen.

GRETCHEN

What the hell kind of a city is
this?

HUNT

Big apples have lots of worms...
Poor Jay... I had no idea...

GRETCHEN

I'm going back to Georgetown.

HUNT

Meanwhile, let's go up to my
place. Less blood.

INT. HUNT'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - LATER

Hunt and Gretchen sip tea on the couch.

She is still shaken.

GRETCHEN

Rosetti told me everything.

HUNT

Interesting theory.

GRETCHEN

He warned me that as long as I
had the tape, I was in danger.
Tonight, when I turned the light
on, and saw that he had the
tape... I thought it was you.

HUNT

Thanks.

GRETCHEN

I'm sorry... I had good reason.

HUNT

The tape... where is it?

GRETCHEN

(patting her pocket)
Right here.

HUNT

If what Rosetti told you is
true...

Hunt shrugs his shoulders.

GRETCHEN
Over my dead body.

HUNT
Think of the stakes.

SUBLIM

Hunt in the Viet Cong tiger cage.

BACK TO SCENE

GRETCHEN
I have.

HUNT
Then why are you telling me
this?

GRETCHEN
Because I have to.

HUNT
Why?

GRETCHEN
To prove something.

HUNT
About what?

GRETCHEN
Trust. Did you, Alex? Did you
kill all those people?

HUNT
I've killed hundreds of people.
What does it matter if it's a
military uniform or a business
suit?

GRETCHEN
Why, Alex, is winning that
important?

HUNT
Justice is that important. I
balance the scales.

GRETCHEN
Oh, God...

HUNT

I've never hurt any innocent people.

Hunt turns into his shadowy self.

GRETCHEN

... I can't imagine what it would take... just to win...

There is no show of any emotion on his face.

GRETCHEN

(continuing)

... would you kill me, Alex...

Hunt stares right through her with eyes of ice, devoid of feeling.

GRETCHEN

(continuing)

... would you, Alex?

He reaches over and puts his hand on her cheek. She jumps and pulls back. His hand is cold.

He caresses her skin. She trembles.

He strokes her neck, feels the pulsing of her blood, explores the fragile softness of her larynx.

SUBLIM

Hunt breaks his Viet Cong captor's neck with one twist.

BACK TO SCENE

She closes her eyes and shudders.

Tears seep through her closed eyelids.

Hunt wipes the tears from her cheeks with the tip of a finger and tastes it.

GRETCHEN

(continuing)

You want the tape, Alex? You'll have to pry it out of my dead hands.

He leans over and kisses her tenderly, on her cheek, her temple, her lips, caressing her all the time.

It is a long and tender kiss.

HUNT

I don't want to hurt you,
Gretchen.

They kiss again, full on the lips. He kisses her neck, her shoulder. She shudders, then submits completely.

They kiss passionately.

Gretchen takes the tape from her pocket and offers it to Hunt.

GRETCHEN

Here, I'll make it easy for
you.

HUNT

No.

GRETCHEN

Why?

HUNT

I can't.

GRETCHEN

Why not?

HUNT

It's not that easy.

GRETCHEN

No one has to know... only us.

HUNT

That's the problem. You know.
And I'll always know that you
destroyed evidence.... I can't
let you.

GRETCHEN

You know the stakes.

HUNT

We make choices.

Hunt rises and goes to the door. Gretchen follows.

HUNT

(continuing)

I think you better leave now.
I'll help you clean up tomorrow.

He opens the door and she steps through it and turns.

GRETCHEN

I don't want to see you again.

She leaves. Hunt remains emotionless.

INT. FEDERAL COURT - DAY

It is sometime later. Hunt is seated at the Defense Table with his COUNSEL. The room is full of PEOPLE who AD LIB among themselves.

Gretchen is at the Prosecution's Table conferring with an ASSOCIATE AD LIB M.O.S.

Hunt confers with his counsel AD LIB M.O.S.

Judge Arnold Bookman confers with the Clerks and the Bailiff AD LIB M.O.S.

The Judge opens a sealed envelope and beckons for Gretchen to approach the Bench. He hands her copies of the Indictment. She gives a copy to Hunt's counsel and returns to her table.

The Judge raps his gavel and the room becomes silent.

JUDGE

Is the government ready to
proceed?

GRETCHEN

(standing)

Your Honor, the government moves
to dismiss the Indictments herein
against the Defendant Alexander
Hunt in the interest of
justice...

There is an outburst of surprise from the spectators. The Judge bangs his gavel and the room becomes silent again.

GRETCHEN

(continuing)

... on the ground that it has
no witnesses or evidence or
other means with which to
proceed.

Hunt is stunned. He stands and stares at Gretchen.

There is a rush of energy through the Courtroom.

Everyone is caught off guard with the unexpected turn
of events.

Members of the press run to the bank of phones in the
lobby with the news.

The Judge raps his gavel again.

JUDGE

Case dismissed. The Defendant
is released from custody.

Gretchen picks up her file and leaves the Courtroom
without looking at Hunt.

He watches her, says good-bye to his counsel and goes
after her.

EXT. FEDERAL COURT HOUSE, STEPS - DAY

Hunt catches up with Gretchen. She is unemotional and
expressionless.

HUNT

Gretch, what about the tape?

GRETCHEN

There was nothing on it. It
was blank.

HUNT

Why, Gretch?

GRETCHEN

I had to. I had to prove
something.

Hunt is visibly moved.

HUNT

What about your career?

GRETCHEN

I resigned this morning.

HUNT

Ah, Jesus, Gretch.

GRETCHEN

I couldn't do it.

Hunt can't talk. He tries. He can't.

He touches her hand. He bites his lip.

He wants to kiss her, hug her, hold her. She wants him to. They look around.

HUNT

Too many people.

She nods in agreement. She is choked up too.

Their eyes are dewy.

GRETCHEN

Inappropriate.

He starts to head down the steps.

HUNT

I'll call? Maybe we'll see each other again?

She nods.

Hunt descends the steps to the street. He hails a cab, opens the door, turns and gazes fondly at Gretchen.

He manages a wave as he gets in. The cab moves out from the curb.

Gretchen manages a similar wave and sighs heavily.

The cab stops. Hunt gets out.

He races up the steps, then slows to a walk, a deliberate walk, almost as if he were stalking Gretchen.

They are face to face. Hunt's expression is intense.

Gretchen is apprehensive.

They gaze at each other for interminable seconds.

HUNT

(continuing)

I am so crazy in love with you.

They kiss in a passionate, crushing embrace.

GRETCHEN

To hell with them all.

They flaunt their passion and kiss violently.

They melt in each other's arms, their bodies dwarfed by the immensity of the Court House.

FADE OUT.

THE END