

The Last String

Written by

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FADE IN:

TITLE CARD - THE LAST STRING

ROLL CREDITS

Front end credits play over a plain black screen set to classical music.

END CREDITS

**INT. NYC APARTMENT - NIGHT**

SMASH CUT TO:

A man's sweating face - he is being strangled. Our (anti)hero, JOEY VESTRI, tries to tighten his grip. The man elbows Joey and stands up.

He throws anything in reach: books, a lamp, but Joey charges forward. The man throws a violin case. It bursts open and bundles of money fly everywhere.

Joey rushes the man and they go to the ground. Joey wraps a garrote around his prey. The man raises his hand up, reaching for a line to pull him from the maw of oblivion.

Joey holds on, his face red from the effort. The man dies.

Joey checks the man's pulse then stands. In his late thirties, over six feet, with short, curly black hair and thick eyebrows, a thick scar runs down Joey's neck.

He touches his swollen cheek and ribs. He puts the money back in the violin case, and notices a slip of paper tucked into the lining reading: Park 581 #12.

He scans over random possession with his hand. The other room is tidy, with artwork on the walls. A crayon drawing of a stick figured man and child hangs on the fridge.

Joey picks up an envelope and reads: "Arthur Thomas." He picks up a picture. We recognize Arthur as the dead man. He stands on a balcony with a little boy in his arms.

Joey picks up a toy green car from the shelf and sits. He looks at every detail. We push in on Arthur's eyes and --

DISSOLVE TO:

**INT. BAR - CONT.**

CLOSE UP - JOEY'S EYES

Joey is impassive. With empty glasses in front of him, young urbanites jostle for a place. The barman leers at Joey, the only one sitting.

BARMAN  
Another beer?

A couple walks up and looks at Joey.

BARMAN  
Come on. I need you to order or  
move.

Joey doesn't blink, he's in a daze. The man with the girl puts his hand on Joey's shoulder.

MAN  
Hey, you heard him.

In one swift movement Joey breaks the man's wrist and shoves him away. The woman screams as the crowd reacts.

BARMAN  
Whoah!

The barman brandishes a bat.

BARMAN  
It's time to go!

WOMAN  
I'm calling the police.

Joey calmly puts his arm back down.

BARMAN  
Hey, you hear me?!

He walks up to Joey, and waves his hand in front of Joey's face. Joey takes a long breath.

BARMAN  
He's not even there.

WOMAN  
The cops are coming. You here me?

Joey looks at himself in the mirror behind the bar.

FADE TO:

**EXT. NYC STREET - DUSK - CONT.**

Joey stands alone in the middle of an empty street. The hum of absent traffic vibrates through concrete.

As if out of nowhere a little girl in a navy dress and black stockings runs around a corner and faces Joey. She smiles. They both stand still.

Joey is distraught, the girl stares at him, and he walks briskly away. A distant scream gives way to a barge horn.

Joey, breathing hard, looks over his shoulder. The girl is gone. He reaches the Hudson river. The interminable black void undulates.

Joey's foot extends over the water.

Beat.

(O.S. VOICE)

Hey!

Hands pull Joey backwards. Joey grabs the man's throat while knocking the air out with a ribs jab. The man falls.

GOOD SAMARITAN

(hoarsely)

..fuck's your problem? Was trying to help..

Joey looks at the man, then checks for witnesses.

JOEY

I don't need help.

Joey heads in towards the city.

**EXT. NYC STREET CORNER - CONT.**

Joey enters an alley, and steam floods in from a sewer. Joey goes deeper as the traffic fades. He spins, lost, and the first echoing notes of classical music push break through.

Joey looks around, and inexplicably, follows it. More music comes as night falls. Trapped in a surreal state, more steam and dark alleys abound. Screeching horns signal wrong steps.

At the end of the alley shines a bright light. Joey is drawn in by the swelling brilliance. He floats towards it, forgoing thought. He shields his eyes, the music overwhelms.

(CONTINUED)

The world is blown out before returning to normal. Joey stands at street's edge, his hand up. The setting sun was reflecting light off a window.

Across the street stands an limestone concert hall. A man in its alley packs up his violin and enters a side door. Couples in formal wear mill about as a Valet drives off.

**EXT. MMC - NIGHT**

Joey walks towards the box office.

O.S. VOICE  
You're not supposed to be here.

Joey turns.

JOEY  
What?

A woman turns in surprise - she was talking someone else.

A young woman, MAGGIE, waits at the B.O.

MAGGIE  
Good evening sir.

JOEY  
What is this place?

She's bewildered, thinking Joey is pulling a prank.

MAGGIE  
(pointing to a sign above  
them)  
This is the Manhattan Music Center  
sir.

Joey flits his gaze.

JOEY  
I've never been here before.

MAGGIE  
Yes, well, would you be interested  
in attending the concert?

JOEY  
The concert?

Maggie rolls her eyes, barely.

MAGGIE

The New York City Orchestra is playing Selections of Paganini for the last time tonight. Would you like a ticket?

Joey sees a tuxedoed man get out of a Porsche.

JOEY

I guess. Do you have a balcony?

MAGGIE

Yes sir, we have two. Which one would you like?

Beat.

JOEY

The top one, towards the back.

Maggie clicks her console then turns it towards Joey.

MAGGIE

We have one seat available in the upper balcony, but it's in the front row. Do you still want it?

Joey looks at the screen, back at the man in the tux, and finally at his own shabby coat. Beat.

JOEY

Yes.

**INT. AUDITORIUM - CONT.**

Joey enters the dark auditorium as the orchestra tunes instruments. His reverie ends when an usher walks up. He hands over his ticket before being escorted upstairs.

**INT. UPPER BALCONY - CONT.**

Joey stands by a filled row. He chair is at the center. Everyone watches him push forward, picking apart his lower class. He sits as the lights go down.

Joey nods at the woman next to him, but she turns away.

The Emcee walks out.

(CONTINUED)

## EMCEE

Good evening ladies and gentleman. My name is Roger Cornish, the director of public relations at the Manhattan Music Center. I would like to start by thanking all our generous donors for their continued support, without whom our program would not be possible.

CU Joey listening.

## ROGER

Tonight you are in for an amazing performance of Paganini's collected works, with featured soloist Gaspar Kovic. The highlight is certainly Caprice No. 24. One of the most breathtaking pieces of music ever made, we are proud to present an all new arrangement. Each variation has been reconstructed and reinterpreted like never before.

Insert crowd members.

## ROGER

For old audiences and new alike I know tonight will be one of discovery and wonder. Listen with an open mind, and an open heart. Do not be afraid of losing what you have known - for without growth we are only dying. Thank you very much, and enjoy the show.

Sporadic clapping - the crowd is perplexed.

The first notes ring out - holding Joey captive with hypnotic power.

DISSOLVE TO:

Later in the night as Caprice No. 24 begins. We enter a dream-like state. The room seems to get even darker.

Quick cuts - guests look at Joey with hostile glares in sync with the music. Joey doesn't notice, even when the seats on either side of him drift away.

Joey sits alone. In a push pull shot he is pulled towards the pit, seemingly a few feet distant. All we can see is the orchestra playing. We stay on Joey for his transformation.

(CONTINUED)

A multitude of emotions show as he tears up. We have witnessed first contact with his own humanity in God only knows how long. Joey puts his face in his hands.

The music ends. In a quick dolly out we see Joey sits alone. An usher cleans. Joey looks around, confused.

USHER

Are you alright sir?

Joey stands and leaves. He pushes to the street, through the throngs of people. We see glimpses of his face, one mask after another peeling away to a happy spirit.

Caprice No. 24 reenters to explain. We freeze on Joey's smiling face.

FADE TO BLACK

**INT. JOEY'S APARTMENT - CONT.**

Joey walks in, smiling. When the door closes he stops. His gaze draws to a bookcase taking up the left wall.

In a jump cut Joey topples the book case, picks up a piece of wood and hacks away.

But -- Joey still stands at the door. He paces towards the shelf, puts his hands on the wood, closing his eyes. BEAT.

He shakes his head, then bobs it up and down. He starts shaking, then hits his head on the wood. Then again. Over and over, shaking its contents, his blood smears.

His yell is a quick bark. Beat.

He goes to his bedroom, then exits with a gun and cleaning kit. He sits cross-legged, the shelf behind him, and breads down the gun. He brushes it, relentlessly, tearing skin.

He calms down. A whisper sounds. He looks over his shoulder.

He keeps cleaning. The whisper sounds again. Beat. We see the toy green car on the shelf. Joey twists around.

JOEY

Shut up.

BEAT.

Joey's phone sounds an alert.

"New Assignment. Pickup Tomorrow."

(CONTINUED)



Joey pieces the gun together. As the slide goes forward we-

CUT TO:

**EXT. MAFIA HQ - MORNING**

The sun rises, people go about their lives. In Brooklyn an old warehouse sticks out in a gentrified area of mixed users. The Hipters are firmly entrenched.

A man stands at a window overlooking the street.

Joey walks up to a pair of rusty, green shipping doors.

CUT TO:

**INT. BACK ROOM - CONT.**

The same man sits by a row of monitors, hidden in shadows. A screen shows Joey at the doors.

**EXT. MAFIA HQ - CONT.**

A biometric scanner reads Joey's hand then buzzes him in.

**INT. MAFIA HQ - CONT.**

Joey walks into a small ante-room with an old horizontal-door elevator to his right, a hallway straight ahead, and a door to his left.

He goes left to a room empty save for a metal table and chair. On the right hangs a mail slot and camera.

Joey sits. He hums, tapping a beat from the Caprice.

**INT. BACK ROOM - CONT.**

The shadowed man's hand operates a control. The camera zooms on Joey, showing his latent bruises.

**INT. MAFIA HQ - CONT.**

A thick card drops in the mail slot. Joey snaps out of it, grabs the card, and sits. Hand written text reads: "Having trouble with your assignments?"

Joey looks at the camera.

(CONTINUED)

JOEY

No sir.

Beat.

Another card drops.

"If you can't handle the task, better to say so than risk the embarrassment of failure."

JOEY

(to camera)

I can do anything you need.

BEAT.

A folder drops. Joey scans the information.

JOEY

An accident, in his apartment.  
Tonight?

Beat.

The final card: "Yes."

Joey nods to the camera and leaves.

**INT. BACK ROOM - CONT.**

The man watches Joey go. He walks to a set of windows, standing in silhouette.

**EXT. NYC CHINATOWN - NIGHT**

Paper lanterns shine over a dragon dance as kids throw snappers. Joey watches the revelry, eating a kabob. He goes up a set of stairs, putting on gloves. He knocks.

GIRL (O.S.)

Mom!

Joey looks back and sees a girl run past. He pukes, puts his hand on the door, but it starts shaking. The door opens, and an old Chinese man looks at Joey. Beat.

The sound fades down, classical music fades up. Joey pulls the man over him and springs up, throwing the man to the bottom step. Joey goes inside, hears the man's neck snap.

**INT. DEAD MAN'S APARTMENT - CONT.**

Someone screams. Joey scans shelves and tables. He sees a glass tiger figurine, picks it up, and walks to the fire escape.

**EXT. FIRE ESCAPE - CONT.**

In the building across the alley a Chinese woman watches Joey. He freezes. Beat. She smiles and waves. Joey climbs down, breaking eye contact. He runs away into the evening.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

**EXT. BROOKLYN HEIGHTS - LATER**

Joey stands on the sidewalk, in a daze. Beat. A man walks outside - SAL GIULIANO - second in command of their syndicate.

SAL

Joey - what are you doing here?

Joey palms the tiger figurine. Sal sees Joey's dazed look.

SAL

Joey!

Joey looks over.

JOEY

Sal?

SAL

What are you doing?

Joey looks around.

JOEY

I don't know. I was just walking, after...I guess I ended up here.

SAL

Well, have a seat. I'll get some beer.

Sal gets the beers. He hands one to Joey. An old woman walks up the steps with a cart of groceries.

(CONTINUED)

SAL  
Mrs. Serrano, good evening.

Sal picks up the cart and gives Mrs. Serrano a steady arm.

SAL  
I see you got the usual, and what  
looks like some prosciutto. What's  
the special occasion?

She's impassive. Sal smiles as Joey holds open the door. Sal helps her to her apartment.

SAL  
Same time next week?

Mrs. Serrano closes the door in Sal's face.

SAL  
You have a great night now Mrs.  
Serrano.

Sal rejoins Joey.

JOEY  
She's coming along.

SAL  
You know I think soon she might  
wait for me to walk away before  
closing the door.

Sal smiles at Joey. Joey cracks up as well.

SAL  
And how about you, is there a  
lovely woman in your life shutting  
doors in your face?

Joey looks off.

SAL  
Yea, you sweet talker you. Don't be  
ashamed.

Joey grins and nods.

SAL  
All right, you keep your secrets.

Kids ride bikes up the street. A mom pushes her stroller.

SAL

So, Joey, you seem weirded out.  
Anything you want to talk about -  
maybe about the job tonight?

Joey takes a swig.

JOEY

What makes you say that?

SAL

I'd like to think I know you, and  
I'm just looking out for you. Want  
to make sure your head's in the  
right place. Who else has had your  
back since you started?

Joey nods.

JOEY

My consigliere.

Sal chuckles.

SAL

More than that, I'm your designated  
sin eater.

JOEY

Haven't you heard? I've been made  
free from sin. I get immortality.

Sal thinks.

SAL

Well, if he'll scratch out what  
you've done and forget your sins, I  
guess I will too.

Joey looks at Sal.

JOEY

And if you knew all of them?

BEAT. Salk looks Joey in the eye.

SAL

I already do...

Joey blanches--

SAL  
You're a stone cold ladykiller.

Joey grins as they drink.

SAL  
Keep your eye on the prize Joey.  
Forget the rest. Okay?

Joey nods his head.

SAL  
I'll keep an eye out for you too.

Sal grabs Joey's shoulder. The sun sets and their faces dissolve in the ensuing shadows.

**INT. ORCHESTRA - NIGHT**

Joey wears a cheap suit, shuffling towards his seat. He bumps into - THE girl - VIVIAN BARNES, late thirties with brown hair, the aging girl next door.

Their eyes meet. He looks too long. She blushes. Joey moves on, but Vivian watches him. Gaspar, first violinist, starts a solo. Joey is transfixed.

**INT. ORCHESTRA LOBBY/BACKSTAGE - CONT.**

Vivian watches people milling about. Joey walks by, and she follows him. He slows, and she turns away.

BACKSTAGE - Gaspar makes a heated call.

GASPAR  
Ten thousand on The Last Stand in  
the fourth to win.

Gaspar listens to the response.

GASPAR  
Lay it off if you need to.

A celloist walks by and Gaspar smiles as he hangs up before turning to head back on stage.

LOBBY - The lights flash. Joey continues, and Vivian resumes following. She gets close, reaches her hand out to touch his shoulder, but gets bumped by an older woman.

(CONTINUED)

WOMAN

Sorry dear.

Vivian smiles and looks for Joey. He's seated. She frowns.

Gaspar walks out and bows. He readies to play, but pauses. The conductor gives a look. Gaspar smiles, takes out a kerchief and wipes his brow, bowing. People chuckle.

Gaspar attacks the strings. Joey watches Gaspar play as Vivian looks at Joey. When Vivian stops, Joey sneaks a glance at her.

**EXT. RECORD STORE - CONT.**

Joey walks home but spots an old record store. He goes in.

SALESMAN

Good evening sir, how may I help you?

JOEY

I'm looking for some records.

The salesman smiles and looks around.

SALESMAN

Any preferences?

JOEY

Classical?

The salesman leads him towards the back.

SALESMAN

Are you new to vinyl?

JOEY

New to music.

SALESMAN

But you know which genre?

JOEY

It suits me.

SALESMAN

Not too many people interested in classical these days. Do you have any works or composers in mind?

Joey shakes his head as they reach the back of the store.

(CONTINUED)

SALESMAN

Just as well. Sometimes its better not to come in with old prejudices. That way you're able to find some really great pieces.

JOEY

Have any in mind?

The salesman flicks through cases before pulling one out.

SALESMAN

The Best of Beethoven?

JOEY

Sounds good. And?

The salesman quickly finds another case.

SALESMAN

Brahms to Mahler: The Greats from the 17th Century to now?

JOEY

Let's say one more for good measure.

The salesman nods his head and thinks. He searches, then stops and moves around the trough to find a battered case.

SALESMAN

Third edition - very rare.

JOEY

And used.

The salesman leans towards Joey.

SALESMAN

Only by me.

JOEY

You're willing to let it go?

SALESMAN

I've listened to this record over 100 times, no small feat mind you, considering the length. "Paganini's Caprices"

Joey remembers the concert.



JOEY

Does it have No. 24? I've heard  
it's his magnum opus.

SALESMAN

His only opus really. But  
magnificent. It changed the face of  
music as we know it. The  
complexity, the patience to build  
something so...perfect...without a  
moment's doubt.

The salesman thinks.

SALESMAN

Yes. Let me play it for you.

He steps over to a record player and puts it on. It begins  
to play, but Joey pulls the needle up.

SALESMAN

Something wrong?

JOEY

I'll take it. But I think I'll want  
to save this for when I'm alone.

SALESMAN

Excellent.

They head to the counter.

JOEY

I'll take the player too.

SALESMAN

How's that?

Joey looks over all the records standing in a row.

JOEY

I'll take the player, and more--

Joey motions to the cases.

SALESMAN

Anything in particular?

Joey picks up case at random.

JOEY

No, you can pick them for me. Let's  
try a little bit of everything.

**INT. JOEY'S APARTMENT - LATER THAT NIGHT**

Joey sets up the record, a pile of records in the background. He puts a record on. As the needle drops his phone rings. It's Sal.

JOEY

Yes?

SAL

The office. 30 minutes.

Joey's face falls.

JOEY

I'll be there.

Joey grabs his gear, looks at the records, and leaves.

**INT. MAFIA HQ - LATER THAT NIGHT.**

Joey steps in an elevator. The guy next to him holds a stagecoach shotgun. Joey reaches the open plan floor. Over 30 men wait under the only light. He shares a few nods.

Sal motions him over. A man steps out of the shadows, clad in trim gray slacks, a lavender shirt with white cuffs and collar and black pearl buttons, and black suspenders.

Tailored clothes from a past age. He leans on a black cane.

He is LEONARDO COSTA - the great grandson of the original founder of the Costa crime family, and current crime boss. Trim with a buzz cut and stolid brown eyes.

A spotlight turns on in the back to reveal GEORGE WEBB, sitting blindfolded and tied to a chair. George looks up.

GEORGE

Hello? Is someone there?

Sal goes and takes off George's blindfold.

GEORGE

Sal, what the hell is going on?

Leo walks around behind him hidden in shadow with a pat and click of foot and cane. Everyone watches in silence.

GEORGE

Who's that?

(CONTINUED)

Leo walks up behind George, and throws his cane to Sal. George sees the cane and sweats. Leo slides his hands onto George's shoulders.

LEO

George. My boy. It's been too long.

GEORGE

Oh God. Boss...I'm so sorry. I'll make it up to you I swear.

Leo puts his face next to George's - who shudders. Leo puts brass knuckles on his right hand.

LEO

No need for that.

George whimpers as and Leo limps to face him. He leans close, pulls out his handkerchief, and wipes away George's tears, brass knuckles sliding over wet skin.

LEO

Look at me.

George shakes his head, staring at the ground.

LEO

(sternly)

Look at me.

BEAT. George looks.

LEO

I want you to know why I'm doing this.

GEORGE

I didn't do anything I swear-

Leo grabs George's mouth - silencing him.

LEO

George, I know what you did. Be a man, and tell them.

Leo looks at the men watching.

GEORGE

It's not what you think-

Leo squeezes.

LEO  
Tell them.

GEORGE  
I...I only talked about great you  
are you to a guy. I thought he was  
a friend of ours.

Leo lets go of George's mouth.

LEO  
You talked about me. About my  
business.

Leo wipes up George's saliva.

LEO  
You betrayed me.

GEORGE  
No.

Leo holds his brass knuckled fist to George's eye.

GEORGE  
I...betrayed you...(whimper)

Leo lets his fist go and takes off the knuckles.

LEO  
Good.

Leo throws his brass knuckles to Sal. George smiles.

GEORGE  
Oh thank you boss, thank you. I'll  
never talk, never again.

Leo pats George's cheek, staying his hand.

LEO  
I know.

Leo brings up his other hand and squeezes George's face.

LEO  
Never again.

Leo's livid. His thumbs go to George's eyes. The men watch.  
George screams, behind Leo we see George's legs kick. He  
stops gurgling. Some men look away, but not Joey or Sal.

(CONTINUED)

Leo, fuming, leans up in the light and wipes George's blood across his face, from forehead to upper lip. He wipes it off, and and turns to the men.

LEO

We're going to war with the Russians. I called you all here to let you know that things are going to pick up, and to tell you that you're all going to have to be on the ball. No fucking around, no screw ups.

Leo looks at George.

LEO

Understand?

Everybody nods. In the silence sounds a tapping. Necks crane for the source as Sal see's Joey's foot moving. He nudges Joey, who looks at him in surprise.

Everyone looks at Joey too, who keeps going. Leo comes over.

LEO

The fuck are you doing?

Joey looks at Leo. Sal steps on his foot, silencing it.

JOEY

Nothing boss.

Leo stares Joey down, then turns back to his desk.

LEO

Good. Now, you all stand to make a lot of money if you do exactly what I say. The standard rate just went up, and I'm giving a bonus to every man who kills one of theirs.

Leo flicks on a projector and we see a row of men's faces taken with telephoto lenses.

LEO

These are the guys. Now, let's get to work knowing who they are.

DISSOLVE TO LATER THAT EVENING

Joey turns to go, but Sal pulls him aside.

(CONTINUED)

SAL

Joey, is something going on? First you show up at my place and now you're acting up?

Joey is off in his head. He walks forward, silent.

SAL

Joey, you've been with us a long time. You heard what he said, now's not the time to lose it.

Joey looks out the window. Beat.

JOEY

You ever think about doing something else?

SAL

What?

Joey doesn't look at Sal.

JOEY

Something besides...what we do?

Sal turns Joey about face.

SAL

Joey, this is what you're doing, will be doing. It's no good to think of what might have been.

JOEY

But there are still some things that could be.

Sal doesn't let go of Joey's arm.

SAL

No Joey. I know you've had to do some hard things, but you know the boss doesn't let people leave. Ever.

Joey looks down at Sal's grip.

JOEY

(to himself)

All those people. Just faces. Gone.

Sal shakes Joey hard. Beat. Joey nods.

(CONTINUED)

JOEY

Right Sal. Just thinking out loud.

Joey walks away and Sal returns to Leo.

LEO

What's going on with our old soldier?

SAL

Nothing that I know of.

LEO

Hmm, I wonder if I should tell that cocksucker to jump off the roof and try to hit one of those fucking kids outside the building. I bet he'd do it.

Leo walks over to his chair and sits down.

LEO

Did he get any money from that skimming bookie piece of shit?

SAL

Yep. Joey found almost a million in the guy's place. Who knows where Thomas got it all.

LEO

Almost a million huh?

Leo smiles in surprise.

LEO

He only owed us 500K.

FADE TO:

**INT. JOEY'S APARTMENT - DAY**

Joey lies in bed, shirtless, listening to classical. His torso is a patchwork of scar tissue and fading bruises. Two gun shot wounds on his chest, a scar up his right bicep.

A burn on the left forearm, the neck scar. Someone knocks. Joey pulls a silenced pistol from under his pillow.

O.S. VOICE

Joey?

(CONTINUED)

Knock Knock. Joey crouches and moves to the kitchen counter, aiming at the door. He turns on an LCD screen showing a camera POV of the hall.

A 30 something woman knocks again. He collapses with relief, stashes his gun, and opens the door revealing MARIA VESTRI - his younger sister.

JOEY

Jesus Maria, you almost gave me a heartache banging on the door like that.

Maria gives a sneer, charging inside.

MARIA

Well, what the fuck did you expect? I've been out here for fucking ever.

She's brunette, green eyes, pretty. The opposite personality of Joey. She stares Joey down, but can't stay angry. She smiles and hugs her brother.

MARIA

It's great to see you Joey.

Beat.

MARIA

Nothing? You're sister who you haven't seen in weeks shows up and you have nothing to say?

Joey puts a shirt on - we see his phone on the bed. He turns the music off as Maria raids the fridge, making a sandwich.

MARIA

So, don't you want to know where I've been for the last month?

Joey sits in his high backed chair.

JOEY

I didn't know you were gone.

Maria nods.

MARIA

And why is that? Because you never fucking call me OR answer my calls.

Joey looks away.



JOEY

I'm very busy with work.

MARIA

That and updating your apartment apparently. Since when are you into such fancy music and records?

He shrugs.

JOEY

Just a little while ago.

Maria walks over and starts flipping through the volumes.

MARIA

Not what I was expecting.  
Beethoven, Brahms, Vivaldi.  
Recorded live at Vienna's Great  
Hall. Hmm, I was there.

JOEY

Really?

Maria finishes her sandwich and takes a big bite.

MARIA

Well, as I was trying to say, I've just got back from the most amazing trip to Europe that I went on with my friend Barb, you know my friend from work? London, Paris, Rome, you name it.

JOEY

Exciting.

MARIA

You're damn right it was. And you wouldn't believe it. When we were in Vienna we went to this grand fucking orchestra place called the -- Great Hall. We rented fancy dresses and saw this big orchestra playing. You wouldn't believe how beautiful all the women were, and the men...in their suits with such dark looks.

Joey looks to her.

JOEY  
Orchestra?

MARIA  
Yes, that's what I just said.

JOEY  
What did they play?

MARIA  
I don't know, I hardly even remember the fucking music. We were there for the society not the music. Besides they have concert halls like that all over the place - we saw a lot of them. But I didn't come over to talk about that.

JOEY  
Maria please, not now.

Joey's phone rings on vibrate. Maria sits opposite Joey, masking the noise. She puts her sandwich down and takes Joey's hands.

MARIA  
Come on now Joey, I haven't see you in almost a year. Why don't you answer my calls?

BEAT. Joey looks away, his phone keeps ringing. Maria musters her courage.

MARIA  
You've never told me what you do, and, I can tell by the way you act when I bring it up...I probably don't want you to. But maybe if you stopped drinking..

Joey's head slightly drops.

JOEY  
That's not what you think it is.

She stops him. Joey's phone stops ringing - Sal doesn't leave a voice mail.

MARIA  
I don't want to fight. You don't have to say anything, I just want you to know I'm here for you. I

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MARIA (cont'd)  
appreciate all that you've done for  
me and helping me out with money.

JOEY  
Maria-

MARIA  
Let me finish. Please. No matter  
what you've done, or what you  
think, we all deserve some  
happiness...us especially.

Joey's eyes glass over. He looks outside a long time. Beat.

JOEY  
I've gone so long without...Now  
that things are different, I don't  
know what to do.

She puts her hand on his face.

MARIA  
What do you mean? What happened?

Joey considers this moment. He lets go of her hand.

JOEY  
I, I don't know what I'm talking  
about.

Maria frowns. She regrabs his hand. He squeezes back.

IN A SLOW DOLLY OUT, THEIR BACKS TO US, WE BACK THROUGH THE  
SHELVES AND THE TIGER FIGURINE BEFORE WE --

FADE TO BLACK

**EXT. JOEY'S DREAM - HALLWAY - NIGHT**

Joey stands in a long hallway with black tiled walls.  
Darkness extends infinitely above and behind. Only a few  
lights hang overhead in front. He looks around, confused.

JOEY  
Hello?

His voice fades almost immediately.

JOEY  
Hello!

(CONTINUED)

His voice echoes several times. A violin's strings ring out. He looks around, and sees in one wall what looks to be him in an old European city, near a grand hall.

Joey turns to the other wall, another note sounds, and an image of him standing in a pastoral eden wavers into view. He reaches out, but music comes from in front of him.

JOEY

What the hell is happening!?

The last three words sound loudest. Joey walks forward, but at one speed - stuck in motion. The lights overhead turn off as he goes past. He sees alcoves on either side of him.

Orchestra members play, smiling at him. A Sheperd tone reaches our ears. Joey looks left and sees the Asian man he killed, holding his tiger figurine.

Joey starts to react but jumps cut forward to another alcove with an orchestra player, before he's whipped forward to see Arthur Thomas holding his toy car. Joey blanches and gets pulled backwards in fast motion before returning to normal.

The lights are getting darker, and the people in the alcoves are increasingly lit from underneath. The Sheperd tone starts to take over.

Joey sees orchestra members, then a woman holding a sailboat and a fat man with a crystal angel figurine. He looks at Joey for a beat before looking away.

As Joey keeps moving the orchestra players go into slow motion. The first two's chairs start to turn away, and then Joey sees a man bringing a harmonica up to his mouth, and then a man turning over a jade ashtray in his hands.

The next two orchestra players' chairs get pulled away in slow motion.

The classical music is all but gone now, and he sees a man flipping a large half dollar in his hand and then another man take a drink from a shotglass on his left.

On the right he watches as a man spins a keychain with two gold spurs inside of it, and then sees another man holding a small gold plastic trophy.

In the next two alcoves orchestra players flicker in and out of view as the music tries to make a resurgence. The Sheperd tone takes over.

(CONTINUED)

In the next three left alcoves Joey sees a man holding a pocketwatch, a man spinning a class ring on his finger, and a man dragging his thumb along an ornate comb.

Joey turns away and is faced with three alcoves on the right and in longer shots Joey sees a man holding a small statue of liberty, a woman holding a broach, and a woman touching a pearl necklace at her collar.

They are all staring at Joey. Joey moves in fast motion and then slow, jumps cut forward and then stands still. He can see several more alcoves lit up ahead of him ending at a large wooden door. A woman's screaming just reaches his ears.

Joey reaches his hands out to the glass tile next to him and tries to hold himself back, but the walls slide back and he is pushed forward by some unknown force.

As he comes up to the alcoves he sees a man flipping a knife in his hand, a woman holding a teacup in her hand, a man wiping his brow with a green and white patterned handkerchief, and a man opening and closing a gold zippo.

Joey is bewildered and starts to cower as the hallway of the dead stares him down, and the woman's cries crescendo to terrible heights. He falls to the ground and whimpers.

BEAT.

The woman's screams cut off and are replaced by the din of roaring flames. A hand reaches down to Joey - a little girl's hand. Joey freezes when he sees it.

He looks up, sees the girl dressed in black stockings and a blue dress that we saw earlier. Joey gets up and retreats, and we see behind her a door exposing an apartment.

We can just make out a body in the back of the apartment and a light shining through a small hole in the wall.

The girl keeps holding her hand out. In flash frames we see the girl pull her hair back to reveal half her face covered in blood as she points, looking on with apathetic eyes.

Joey's eyes well up, he screams without sound. When he looks at the girl again she returns to normal, and slowly points towards the wooden door a few yards away.

The sound of flames gets louder. Joey gets pulled backwards towards the door, but he turns and mouths something. What is he saying: I'm sorry, help me?

(CONTINUED)

We're not sure, because in a whirlwind of motion all the lights in the hallway flicker off with a loud banging and what looks like an advancing figure cloaked in darkness.

Joey finally gets to scream and backs into the door - he falls into a black void and the door closes just before the shadowy figure reaches him.

**INT. JOEY'S DREAM, BOILER ROOM - CONT.**

Joey sits on thick red carpet in a room covered from floor to ceiling in a wallpaper - even the door - that looks like an Edward Hopper painting of a park at night.

He stands and sees figures on different walls, one on the right wall holding something, four on the wall opposite running towards two people on the wall to the right.

On the left side of the room Joey sees a man, the STOKER, in thick blue work clothes and distinct tan boots covered in soot shoveling coal into a furnace.

He is muscular, with graying hair and a strong jaw. He looks like he could be Joey's father.

JOEY

Hello?

The stoker doesn't turn, only pauses after throwing in some coal to watch the flames.

JOEY

Can you help me?

The stoker shovels more coal. Beat. Joey gets frantic and goes up to the Stoker.

JOEY

Please, how do I get out?

The stoker points at the door behind Joey. Joey tries it, but its locked.

JOEY

It's locked, can you open it?

The stoker looks at the fire, motionless. Joey gets a hold of himself, and although he can't see the stoker's face the mood changes.

(CONTINUED)

JOEY

What is this place?

The stoker slowly takes a large load of coal and feeds the fire.

JOEY

What's going on!?

STOKER

Have to keep the fire going.  
There's no time.

The Stoker wipes his brow, eyes always on the fire.

JOEY

This doesn't make any sense.

The stoker points to the opposite side of the room at the two figures on the wallpaper without looking. Joey glances but he can't quite make out the whole picture.

As soon as he walks over for a closer look music starts up; moody, dark, and in minor key.

STOKER

Can't save them both.

Joey comes to the wall. He looks at the figures, and at that distance he can start to see their faces.

His hand comes up towards the male figure, and as soon as he makes contact water starts flooding in from where the walls meet the floor. Joey looks around, perplexed.

JOEY

Whats going on?

STOKER

Hurry.

The Stoker keeps shoveling coal as the water rushes in. It's knee high already and rising fast.

JOEY

We have to get out.

Joey runs over to the door.

STOKER

No time.

Joey slobes over to the door and tries the handle.

(CONTINUED)

JOEY

Help me!

The water is past Joey's waist, he pushes over to the Stoker. He tries to turn him but can't, because somehow he's still moving under water, slowly shoveling coal into the furnace. The water's coming in faster, it's at Joey's chest.

JOEY

We have to go.

Joey tries to swim over to the door, but the water is coming up over his head. He puts a hand on the ceiling, taking in his last few breaths.

JOEY

No, no...do something!

Joey goes under, the light from the fire still burns as it dims. He sees the Stoker passed out, sinking because the floor is gone.

Joey reaches his hand out as he starts drowning but can't reach the Stoker, and he floats up towards the light, looking at it and then back to the Stoker. He is frozen by indecision, and then he screams swallowing water and we

SMASH CUT TO:

**INT. JOEY'S APARTMENT - DAY**

Joey wakes up in a flop sweat, reaching out into space. He sees the clock, knows he's late. He gets his stuff together but sees a postcard Maria taped to the fridge.

He dwells in the image of Austrian countryside for a moment, then pockets it and leaves.

**EXT. MAFIA HQ - CONT.**

Joey reaches the HQ and sees Sal waiting out front.

SAL

You're late. You didn't answer your cell.

JOEY

I was busy, I didn't hear it.

(CONTINUED)



SAL  
You are never *busy*, because you are  
always working.

Joey thinks of what to say.

JOEY  
Something happened last night. It  
made me think...

SAL  
Made you think what?

JOEY  
Maybe I shouldn't...

SAL  
Maybe you shouldn't what?

Joey pats his pocket where Maria's postcard is.

JOEY  
Maybe I can get out.

BEAT.

SAL  
Nobody gets out Joey. We talked  
about this.

JOEY  
Well maybe-

SAL  
Stop right there, don't say another  
word. If you say another word I  
have to tell the boss, and you know  
how he'll respond. Now, I need you  
to tell me that this won't ever  
happen again.

Joey doesn't answer. He pulls out the postcard, looks at it  
again.

JOEY  
Of course, don't know what I was  
thinking.

Sal sees the postcard, but relaxes into his chair.

SAL  
I'm going to have to figure out  
what to tell Leo to save your sorry  
ass.

(CONTINUED)

JOEY

I just...

Sal gets up to leave so Joey can't keep going.

SAL

Joey, after this, you'll be so rich you can take a nice long vacation, get recharged, then come back a new man.

JOEY

Yea.

SAL

Good. Now let's head up.

The two men head inside.

**INT. ORCHESTRA HALL - NIGHT**

At the concert during intermission, Joey sees Vivian across the Lobby. She makes eye contact, and gives the slightest of smiles. That's all Joey needs, and he walks straight over.

JOEY

Hello.

VIVIAN

Hello.

JOEY

My name is Joey.

VIVIAN

I'm Vivian.

Joey is at a momentary loss. Vivian waits, eyeing him over her cocktail.

JOEY

What did you think of the program?

Vivian looks up.

VIVIAN

It's nice.

She leans in towards him - almost like she's sharing a secret.

(CONTINUED)

VIVIAN  
I've heard them play it before.

JOEY  
Does it get better the second time  
through?

VIVIAN  
I don't know about better. But you  
see different things.

Joey nods.

VIVIAN  
So, what prompted the sudden  
dedication to the orchestra?

JOEY  
What do you mean?

VIVIAN  
I've been to every performance for  
the last year. You've only been  
coming for the last few weeks.

Joey holds this tense moment. He wasn't expecting that.

JOEY  
Every one, really?

Vivian smiles.

VIVIAN  
That's right.

JOEY  
Well you've got my number. What  
else have you noticed?

Vivian looks Joey up and down before nodding to a guy across  
the room.

VIVIAN  
You see him?

Joey nods.

VIVIAN  
He's just divorced his wife. She's  
usually here but is absent for the  
second time, and so is his ring.

Vivian keeps going - on a roll. She signals with her pointer  
finger without moving her hand.

(CONTINUED)

VIVIAN

That woman down the bar who's on her third glass? She's fighting her eating disorder with a hard drink.

Joey smiles, but cuts to the quick.

JOEY

And what about me?

Vivian almost says something but holds her tongue.

JOEY

Loaded question. But it's only fair that I get to try and learn about you. Over coffee after the show?

Vivian blushes.

VIVIAN

O.k.

The lights flash for the end of intermission.

JOEY

Hold that thought. Meet you after the show, out front.

VIVIAN

O.k.

Vivian heads back in. Joey watches her. The sound of the room drops off, and all he can see is her. Just like that the moment is over - and he calls Sal.

JOEY

Sal, what can I do to make it up?

SAL

Glad to hear you're all for it. I'll let you know.

Joey puts his phone away, smiles, and walks back in.

**INT. MAFIA HQ - CONT.**

Sal looks at his phone, smiling, puts it away and walks up to Leo.

SAL

I talked to Joey the other day. About being late.

(CONTINUED)

LEO

Where the fuck was that cocksucker?

SAL

He had a family emergency boss. He was at the hospital all night - his Ma had a heart scare.

LEO

I don't give a fuck what he was doing, when we call, he answers.

SAL

I told him Leo, trust me, he knows. Those fucking doctors are Nazi's about people having phones on - some nurse stood there while he turned it off.

LEO

He's distracted. I want you to keep an eye on him and see what the fuck is going on.

Sal hides his displeasure.

SAL

(under his breath)  
Goddammit Joey.

**EXT. FOYER - CONT.**

Vivian stands in the foyer, her coat in her arms, looking around. She looks at her watch, tapping her foot. Vivian puts on her coat and starts to leave when Joey appears.

JOEY

Running away so soon?

VIVIAN

I thought you weren't coming.

JOEY

I always keep my word. Want to go?

Joey smiles, and Vivian gives in. He holds open the door for her and they walk out. The door slowly closes as they walk off screen.

**EXT. CAFE TABLE - CONT.**

Vivian and Joey sit in an awkward silence at the table. Vivian butters a roll as Joey fiddles with his silverware. Neither looks directly at the other.

VIVIAN  
So. Where do you work?

JOEY  
In Brooklyn.

Beat.

VIVIAN  
But what do you do?

Joey thinks on how to answer.

JOEY  
I visit people.

VIVIAN  
What, like therapy?

Again Joey is stumped.

JOEY  
No. My boss wants me to visit people, so I go see them.

VIVIAN  
What do you talk about?

JOEY  
We don't really talk.

Vivian cracks a smile, thinking Joey coy.

VIVIAN  
So what do you do?

Joey fiddles with the table cloth.

JOEY  
I can't really talk about it.

VIVIAN  
Why not?

Joey looks up at Vivian.

(CONTINUED)

JOEY  
I just can't.

VIVIAN  
That's pretty weird. Why can't you  
talk about it?

JOEY  
Part of my job is not talking about  
it. Is that o.k.?

Vivian thinks it over.

VIVIAN  
For now, as long as it's nothing  
crazy.

JOEY  
It's not crazy at all.

VIVIAN  
Good, but you know I can only go so  
far on "you talk to people."

Beat.

JOEY  
And you?

VIVIAN  
I'm afraid I can tell you all about  
it.

Joey smiles.

VIVIAN  
I'm a music teacher at an  
elementary school.

JOEY  
Really?

VIVIAN  
Ten years now. But I studied music  
theory.

JOEY  
Did you ever perform?

VIVIAN  
Oh, you know, piano growing up. But  
I always liked listening to it, and  
trying to dig a little deeper into  
what it's doing.

(CONTINUED)

JOEY

Like what?

She thinks for a moment.

VIVIAN

Well, just music alone, without lyrics, can tell whole stories with how it's played.

JOEY

I hadn't even thought about that.

VIVIAN

Maybe I'll teach you.

JOEY

Maybe. And how's teaching?

VIVIAN

I love it.

JOEY

It makes you happy?

VIVIAN

Of course. I couldn't do it if it didn't, trust me. Don't you like your work?

JOEY

I guess.

VIVIAN

Do you dislike it?

Joey shrugs.

VIVIAN

How can you not know how you feel about it?

JOEY

I don't really feel any particular way. And I've been doing it longer than you've been teaching.

Vivian sits back.

VIVIAN

Do you like this restaurant?



JOEY

It's o.k.

VIVIAN

So you like it?

JOEY

I guess. I don't like it or not like it.

VIVIAN

Ok, something more personal. Do you like your family?

JOEY

I love my sister.

VIVIAN

Ok. So she makes you happy?

Joey stops for a second. Vivian leans in close. Will Joey open up?

JOEY

Well, we're not very close. But we talked the other night.

VIVIAN

And?

JOEY

And what she said, it was hard to hear. I got pretty choked up for the first time.

VIVIAN

Since when?

JOEY

First time in a long time.

VIVIAN

What happened?

JOEY

I- no I can't.

VIVIAN

Tell me.

JOEY

You'll laugh, but I think this one piece of music helped me.

(CONTINUED)

VIVIAN

What do you mean?

Joey chuckles to himself - he's laying all his cards on the table but keeps going.

JOEY

I don't know. Before I went to the concert that first night, I was sort of turned off. And the music, I think it's helping me.

BEAT.

VIVIAN

You're serious?

Joey nods. He knows what he's saying is incredulous.

VIVIAN

Wow. I'm not sure how that works. You're not pulling one over on me?

She leans back, a little uncomfortable.

JOEY

No. I swear. Honestly, I'm dealing with it the best I can. That's why I talked to you today.

VIVIAN

Why's that?

JOEY

I wanted to. I thought it would be good for me.

VIVIAN

But we just met.

JOEY

And I'm happy so far.

Vivian grins to herself. The waiter brings out their food and puts it on the table. They just look at their plates, neither making the first move.

JOEY

So besides going to the orchestra and teaching kids, any other interests, maybe a pet?

Vivian actually laughs to herself.

JOEY

What?

VIVIAN

It's nothing...well, I actually was at the pet store the other day after reading all the benefits of having a pet, but in the end I decided to not get a cat.

JOEY

Why not?

VIVIAN

I don't want to be the cat lady.

JOEY

Cats are nice.

Vivian nods left to right.

VIVIAN

Yea. But the single teacher with cats?

JOEY

So one cat means cat lady?

VIVIAN

It'd only be a matter of time.

The conversation lulls. Vivian picks at her food.

JOEY

We don't have to, you know.

VIVIAN

It's ok Joey. I'm comfortable in silence.

Beat.

JOEY

Why do you love music so much?

Vivian thinks for a long time, contemplating her words.

VIVIAN

When I sit down, and those first notes reach me, it's like I'm finally hearing something. Everything else was just noise.

(CONTINUED)

JOEY

And it makes you feel what?

VIVIAN

It matters what you do with the music. You can be happy or sad in the moment, but you always feel better after.

Joey thinks on this. He dwells on things from long ago and the more recent past.

JOEY

What if you don't do anything?

VIVIAN

Not everything will speak to you. But if you aren't open to feeling something, then your never getting the full experience.

JOEY

I wonder if my sister got to experience that when she was in Austria.

VIVIAN

Your sister was in Austria?

JOEY

Yes. She went to a lot of concerts. I wonder what that would be like, being able to go all the time, in the same city.

VIVIAN

You can do that here.

JOEY

But it's so different. There it's more removed. Old, but a new start.

VIVIAN

Yes. It's probably quite the place to visit.

JOEY

I guess we should eat.

Vivian smiles.

(CONTINUED)

VIVIAN

I guess so.

They pick up their forks and start eating. Across the street Sal sits in his car, watching. He doesn't look happy.

**MONTAGE - VARIOUS**

Elgar's Cello Concerto in E Minor, third movement, fades in.

A.) INT./EXT. RUSSIAN RESTUARANT - DAY - Joey and a group of gangsters stand outside a restaurant. Joey stands outside getting himself in the zone, and we follow Joey inside where he grabs the first guy he sees and slits his throat.

He keeps going and throws the knife across the room into the chest of another guy who goes down. Joey moves fast behind the bar, pulls out a pistol with his left hand (silenced) and shoots two guys sitting at the bar twice in the chest.

Four guys further back in a booth start to pull out their guns and Joey shoots them both twice each as well, and grabs the shotgun hidden under the bar.

He moves towards the back where there's a swinging door with portholes, a guy coming from the other side. Joey kicks the door in, blasting. As the door swings back and forth we see Joey killing everyone.

We end on Joey's blood spattered face, frozen in the moment.

B.) INT. BANK - DAY - Joey walks into a large bank complete with marble floors and grandiose architecture. He shakes a manager's hand and holds a small bag in his other.

We follow him back to the safe deposit boxes as he opens the smallest size and puts in two stacks of bundled cash.

C.) INT. JOEY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT - Joey walks over to his book shelf, and we see as he puts a few small objects (lighter, handkerchief, knife, teacup, and pearl necklace) into the violin case he took from Arthur Thomas.

He puts up a small map of Austria and travel guide books, then puts on a record and listens - it takes some time for him to relax.

D.) INT. MUSIC STORE - DAY - Joey and Vivian walk down the rows and look at various items, smiling at each other as they go along.

(CONTINUED)

E.) INT. CORPORATE OFFICE BUILDING - DAY - Joey walks into an elevator with a tattooed Russian gangster whose face we recognize.

The doors start to close, and Joey reaches up towards the camera - getting his target's attention. We cut to a few floors up as the doors open.

The Russian lies dead, strangled, as Joey exits.

F.) INT. BANK - DAY - In quicker cuts we see Joey at the bank again shaking hands but now he's holding a small attache case.

He pulls out a larger safe deposit box and puts in four stacks of cash - filling the box up. He smiles to himself.

G.) INT. WATERFRONT - NIGHT - Joey and Vivian stand alone at Battery Park, where lights are hung in the trees. They dance to the music of the montage, in the throes of new love.

H.) INT. JOEY'S APARTMENT - DAY - Joey puts five more totems into the violin case: the broach, small statue of liberty, placard, pocket watch, and trophy.

He puts up a large map of the grand hall and program guides of various orchestras that covers several shelves, then puts on a record on and paces the room, tense and jittery until finally calming down.

I.) INT. SCHOOL - DAY - Vivian teaches her music class. She starts smiling to herself, getting caught up in her own happiness. A knock on the door brings surprise flowers.

She reads the card from Joey, holding the flowers close.

J.) INT. RUSSIAN MOBSTER'S HOUSE - NIGHT - Joey squats behind some trees on the perimeter of an important Russian gangster's house.

We see guards and a meeting inside, and others inside are having a meeting. Joey strides up from the side and kills the two Guards. He slides a door open and guns down the two guys eating at the table.

Joey disappears but up in the corner of the house the last remaining gangsters pull out their guns and head for the door. The lights turn off as we wait for the action.

A volley of muzzles flash, signaling Joey working his way through the house. We think the carnage is over until a man gets thrown out of the window and lands on the patio.

He writhes on the ground as Joey makes his way back downstairs and out the original door - shooting the guy he threw out of the window in the head as he goes.

K.) INT. JOEY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT - Joey puts the keychain, shot glass, AA coin, ashtray, and harmonica in the violin box.

Then in a rush he pushes the rest of the totems inside. He plays a record, then sits on the ground and holds himself, rocking back and forth, head buried in his knees.

L.) INT. ORCHESTRA - NIGHT - Vivian and Joey sit at the Orchestra. Joey is in a tux and Vivian in a stately gown, and they are arm in arm watching the performance.

Vivian slowly lowers her head onto Joey's shoulder, and then Joey slowly puts his head against Vivian's.

M.) EXT. VIVIAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT - Joey kisses Vivian, and makes a move for the door. But we see as she holds up her hand and gently shakes her head, going inside alone.

Joey watches the door close, slowly pats his fist on the banister, and then turns and leaves. Sal watches from his car.

N.) INT. MARIA'S APARTMENT - DAY - Joey knocks on the door of a slightly run-down building. We wonder if he's going to kill another person, but instead Maria opens the door and is shocked to see Joey standing there.

She lights up in a smile and pulls him into a hug.

O.) EXT./INT. CHURCH - DAY - Joey and Sal and a bunch of the guys pull up to a Church as the montage music starts pulling in heavy organ music.

They go to their trunks, pull out shotguns and pistols, and walk up the steps of the Church. Inside we see a Russian Orthodox wedding is in mid-session.

We cut to a medium shot of Joey, and in a SnorriCam rig we watch as Joey walks from person to person, blasting away - his face intermittently lit up from the shotgun blasts.

He slowly gets covered in blood, and we hear the faint echoes of screaming. We see other guys in the background killing people as well as Joey walks up to the altar.

He reloads his shotgun and shoots, then stands there in a daze. Over his shoulder a bunch of the guys are leaving, and as Joey stands zoned out a bullet rips through his arm.

(CONTINUED)

Sal steps up and shoots off camera and looks at Joey. Joey snaps out of it and when he turns we see the bride holding the dead groom in her arms.

As Joey's car pulls out from around the corner, his head leaning against the glass, flashing red and blue lights sweep across his face, and we see two patrol cars pulling up to the steps of the church.

P.) INT. BANK VAULT - DAY - Joey stands inside the bank vault. Out of focus deposit boxes are behind him. A light from reflected metal shines up on his face.

Joey fills the last of two large deposit boxes, and we see that some of the money has blood stains on it. Joey closes the boxes, slides them into the wall, and hangs the key around his neck.

**INT. TRAVEL AGENCY - DAY**

Joey opens the door and a small bell chimes. Two desks are pushed up against the wall, complete with stacks of paper and older computer monitors.

JOEY

Hello?

O.C. VOICE

Be right up.

Joey turns to the left and looks at a world map blown up and hung on the wall. Pictures of couples and solo travelers are pinned on various continents.

O.C. VOICE

Soon it will be your time.

JOEY

What?

He turns and sees the travel agent standing practically right next to him. Joey does a double take - the travel agent looks like the Stoker from his dream.

Even though Joey never saw the man's face completely, the travel agent has the same build, the same hair, but now he's wearing a short sleeved collared shirt and slacks.

His voice is still gravelly and commanding.

(CONTINUED)



TRAVEL AGENT (STOKER)  
Just something we believe in here.  
What can I do for you Mister...?

The Stoker extends his hand and Joey takes it, still staring at the travel agent, who doesn't seem to notice.

JOEY  
Have we met?

TRAVEL AGENT (STOKER)  
I don't believe so sir.

JOEY  
Are you sure, maybe on the ferry?

TRAVEL AGENT (STOKER)  
I've never been on a ferry boat  
sir. Can't stand boats of any kind.

Joey nods, still not totally convinced.

BEAT.

TRAVEL AGENT (STOKER)  
Did you want something?

JOEY  
I - I want to plan a trip.

TRAVEL AGENT (STOKER)  
Of course you do. Please take a  
seat. Now most people like to do  
things on their own, but then you  
can't beat the experience we can  
offer.

The Stoker walks over to the first desk and sits. Joey slowly takes his.

TRAVEL AGENT (STOKER)  
Where would you like to go?

Joey looks over to the wall.

JOEY  
I was thinking Europe.

TRAVEL AGENT (STOKER)  
Wonderful. Anywhere in particular?

(CONTINUED)

JOEY

Austria.

The Stoker looks over at the wall as well.

TRAVEL AGENT (STOKER)

Beautiful country.

Joey looks at the Stoker.

JOEY

You've been?

The stoker nods his head.

TRAVEL AGENT (STOKER)

Sure have. Traveled through both times I went to Europe. Absolutely loved it. Just yourself traveling?

JOEY

No. Me and my...me and one other person.

The Stoker nods and types in a few things into his old computer.

TRAVEL AGENT (STOKER)

And when were you thinking of going?

JOEY

Well, I want to be able to go at any time. Is that possible?

TRAVEL AGENT (STOKER)

Open ended departure? Sure, you just go up to the airline and get the ticket when you want to go.

JOEY

But you can arrange places for us to go, recommend things to see?

TRAVEL AGENT (STOKER)

Yes. What kind of activities?

JOEY

Concert halls, performances, things like that.

TRAVEL AGENT (STOKER)  
A cultured man. Very good. Tell you  
what, let me grab you a guide book  
from the back, it has a whole  
section on the performing arts in  
Austria.

The Stoker gets up and heads towards the back. We see he is  
wearing the same Tan boots from Joey's dream. After a moment  
he comes back.

TRAVEL AGENT (STOKER)  
Here we are. Soon you'll be in  
total bliss.

The Stoker hands him the book.

TRAVEL AGENT (STOKER)  
Here you are.

Joey takes the book.

TRAVEL AGENT (STOKER)  
I'll be seeing you again.

Joey sweats at these words.

JOEY  
What?

TRAVEL AGENT (STOKER)  
When you come back and have a  
better idea of what you want to do.  
We'll line up cities, get you  
tickets to shows, train passes. The  
works. Next week, same time?

Joey stands and starts to back away.

JOEY  
That's fine.

TRAVEL AGENT (STOKER)  
Don't be scared. It seems  
impossible, but you'll be able to  
get through it.

JOEY  
What's impossible?

TRAVEL AGENT (STOKER)  
Planning the trip, pulling the  
trigger - going away.

JOEY

Right. I have to go - I'll see you later.

TRAVEL AGENT (STOKER)

See you soon.

The Stoker raises his hand in farewell and Joey scurries out of the office. The Stoker has half a smile on his otherwise emotionless face. The door closes and Joey is gone.

**EXT. BOUTIQUE SHOP - DAY**

Joey and Vivian walk along Park avenue. They come upon a high end store filled with upscale traveling gear and clothes.

Joey and Vivian look a little out of place amongst the multitude of passerby in fashion savvy clothing and a certain air of opulence.

Joey stops Vivian and turns towards the store.

JOEY

I wonder what's in here.

VIVIAN

I don't know, travel stuff?

JOEY

Let's take a look.

VIVIAN

Wha-

Joey pushes inside. A saleswoman starts to walk towards them from the back of the room.

SALESWOMAN

Hello sir. Can I help you find something?

JOEY

Maybe in a minute. We're just going to take a look right now.

Vivian comes to his side as the security guard watches them.

VIVIAN

Joey, are you looking for something?

(CONTINUED)

JOEY  
Let's find out.

They walk down the aisle on the right - one of two - and look at the various wares. Luxury goods all, leather suitcases and attaches, bespoke trenchcoats, etc.

This store has everything you need without looking crowded. Joey looks at each of the items, and comes to a stop at a small leather purse with thin tan leather handles and gold metal trimmings. He slides it up Vivian's arm.

JOEY  
Very classy.

Vivian does a small turn like a model.

VIVIAN  
You like? Just something I use everyday.

She looks down at the price tag.

VIVIAN  
And I could do it for only six thousand dollars.

Joey gives off a low whistle.

JOEY  
All right then. Six it is.

Joey grabs the bag and heads towards the saleswoman.

VIVIAN  
Joey - no, what are you doing?

JOEY  
We'll take this bag please.

SALESWOMAN  
Very good sir, an excellent choice.

Vivian whispers in Joey's ear.

VIVIAN  
Joey, what are you doing? That's way too expensive. I won't take it.

JOEY  
Nonsense. Only the best for you.

VIVIAN

But I don't even need a bag.

JOEY

Maybe, but if you were to suddenly go on a surprise vacation you'd want something nice, wouldn't you?

Joey turns to Vivian and smiles. She reads his look and smiles back.

VIVIAN

What are you planning?

JOEY

No spoilers. (to saleswoman) And can you monogram that with initials VF?

SALESWOMAN

Yes sir. We can do it right here in the store.

JOEY

Excellent.

The saleswoman starts ringing up the order.

**INT. MARIA'S APARTMENT - LATER**

Joey and Vivian walk up to Maria's apartment and knock on the door. Vivian has her new bag as Maria opens the door, surprised.

MARIA

Hello Joey, and you brought a friend. Hello, I'm Maria, Joey's sister.

VIVIAN

Yes of course he's told me all about you. I'm Vivian.

MARIA

Please come in, thank God I always over cook. I love your bag!

VIVIAN

Oh thanks, Joey actually--

(CONTINUED)

JOEY  
Loves it too.

They shuffle in and Maria walks over to the stove.

MARIA  
So are you two...?

Joey turns to Maria.

VIVIAN  
Yes.

MARIA  
Is it serious?

Vivian sneaks a glance at Joey.

JOEY  
Yes.

Maria stands and looks at her brother and gets emotional.

MARIA  
That is just so-

She walks forward and hugs Vivian - catching her off guard. Maria steps back and wipes some tears out of her eyes.

MARIA  
Sorry about that. Joey, I need you to go down to the corner and get me some more milk and some Burrata.

JOEY  
Now?

MARIA  
Yes now. It'll give me a chance to talk to Vivian about you behind your back.

Joey looks at his sister, but off of Vivian's nod he heads out the door. Maria takes on a more relaxed, confident pose - a different persona almost - and lights up a cigarette.

MARIA  
So, tell me about yourself.

VIVIAN  
Well, I'm a school teacher, I don't know if Joey's told you.

(CONTINUED)

MARIA

No, he hasn't.

Vivian balks, but smiles and keeps going.

VIVIAN

We met a few weeks ago at the Orchestra.

MARIA

How serious are you two?

VIVIAN

Well, we're taking it slow...physically, but I just love being with Joey and getting to know him.

MARIA

So you two haven't...?

Vivian rubs the back of her neck.

VIVIAN

No.

MARIA

Why not? You're both adults.

VIVIAN

Yes, but I've had a tendency to get caught up in my relationships. I want to make sure I don't get hurt.

MARIA

Sweetheart, trust me. Joey's not one to do anything lightly. Ever.

VIVIAN

He's so serious sometimes isn't he? But he has such amazing dreams of going to Europe and Austria, which I think it would be just amazing to go to as well.

Maria squints her eyes at Vivian and tamps some ash.

MARIA

Is that right?

VIVIAN

Well I love teaching but to gallivant across such an amazing

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)



VIVIAN (cont'd)  
country experiencing new music by  
such talented people. What could be  
better?

MARIA  
That's amazing. Has Joey said  
anything about you two going?

Vivian looks out the window.

VIVIAN  
No, but I think he's planning a  
trip.

She offers up her bag.

VIVIAN  
He just got this, and it was so  
expensive. But then he said  
something about a surprise trip and  
I--

MARIA  
You love him?

BEAT.

VIVIAN  
Yes. Yes I do.

Maria tamps some more ash and stirs the pot of food on the  
stove. She then turns back to Vivian.

MARIA  
How much do you know about Joey,  
really?

VIVIAN  
Not very much. He's very private.

MARIA  
Yes, he is. Just be sure that you  
love him so much that whatever you  
may learn about him, it won't  
matter.

VIVIAN  
What do you mean?

Maria steps over to Vivian and puts her hand on her forearm.  
She looks hard into Vivian's eyes. Beat.

(CONTINUED)

MARIA

He's a broken man Vivian. I don't want to scare you off - that's not what this is. I love my brother, but it's only fair to you that you know he's had a hard past, and I don't know if he'll ever get over it.

Vivian is at a loss for words, and just then Joey knocks on the door and walks in. Maria changes persona's in an instant.

MARIA

Finally, ages we've been waiting.

JOEY

You two getting along all right?

MARIA

Of course we are, right Viv?

Joey steps over to Vivian, who is still processing, but she perks up.

VIVIAN

Absolutely.

MARIA

(to Joey)

She's a keeper.

Maria smiles at Joey and turns back to cooking, and Joey stands by Vivian, who looks down in faltering confidence one more time.

#### **INT. ORCHESTRA BAR - NIGHT**

Joey and Vivian walk into the MMC bar. It is empty except for the bartender and a lone patron. On the TV a prime time news report comes on.

Although we don't hear the reporter we see lower thirds mention a scourge of murders in organized crime. They look at the TV, and Joey quickly looks over the drinks.

The young patron is a cop in a suit - his badge is on the counter, and he looks over at Joey and Vivian.

COP

Hey, sweet thing, want to have a drink on me?

(CONTINUED)

Joey and the bartender look at the cop. Vivian rolls her eyes. She whispers into Joey's ear.

VIVIAN  
Order for me while I go to the  
restroom?

Joey nods.

COP  
Not up for it sweetheart? No  
problem. Your guy can still have a  
drink on me.

The bartender gives Joey a look, who nods approval. Joey raises his glass to the cop and drinks it in one go.

COP  
My kind of guy. Can't trust a guy  
that doesn't take a free drink.

The cop struggles to get his words out, but Joey nods to him.

COP  
My pleasure. Another for me too.

The bartender hesitates. The cop pulls out a pill bottle and carefully ticks out two large yellow tablets.

COP  
What? It doesn't matter. I'm off  
duty.

Joey says nothing, the bartender serves the drink, and the cop quickly downs it.

COP  
Another.

The bartender gives him a look - not moving. The cop puts his index finger on his badge.

The mood is tense, but the bartender gets him his drink before moving down the bar, and the cop looks at Joey.

COP  
Mandatory leave means I get a  
break. Required for all police  
officers who kill in the line of  
duty. Can you believe that?

The atmosphere changes - the cop is still bombastic, but he stops fidgeting with his drink.

(CONTINUED)

COP

Most cops go their whole career  
without even firing their weapon.  
Of those that fire, know how many  
kill somebody?

He doesn't look over at Joey, but holds his thumb and  
forefinger close together.

COP

In the academy they train you not  
to hesitate. You have a threat, you  
eliminate it. End of story.

Joey takes a half step closer as the cop's voice lowers.

COP

They teach you how to shoot, where  
to shoot, to keep going while the  
threat is still active.  
To...disassociate.

Joey holds his empty glass.

COP

I know what I did was right. Even  
though they told me to, if I hadn't  
of shot him, he would have killed  
that girl. They told me to, but it  
was my decision. I saved her life,  
I know it.

The cop chuckles to himself.

COP

But I keep seeing his face, not  
hers.

BEAT.

COP

A stranger in the street, in a  
magazine. My reflection. I'd never  
killed somebody before you know.

Joey looks at this man, who can't take his eyes of his  
drink. The cop continues his confession.

COP

He won't leave me alone. I asked  
the doc, and he said it can happen.  
Psychological imprinting,  
survivor's guilt, whatever it is.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

COP (cont'd)  
But I'll tell you what scares me -  
going to sleep.

The cop looks over at Joey smiling, as though sharing a darkly humorous joke.

COP  
What happens when he follows me  
there? Where I am supposed to go?  
The doc says even if that does  
happen, eventually it should pass.

The cop looks back at his drink, and shudders in laughter.

COP  
But what if it doesn't?

The cop drinks. It seems the whole room is silent, waiting for him to finish.

COP  
How can I -

The cop chokes up and can't finish. He sees Vivian coming in the mirror and snaps out of his anguish to leer at her.

COP  
Come on, you know you want to...

Joey's jaw clenches and holds himself back, then walks to Vivian with their drinks and leads her out of the bar.

**INT. ORCHESTRA FOYER - CONT.**

Joey walks up to Vivian.

VIVIAN  
Where were you?

JOEY  
I was talking to that man.

VIVIAN  
What was wrong with him?

JOEY  
He was having a bad day.

VIVIAN  
But in public like that.

(CONTINUED)

JOEY

He said he was on leave.

A shout sounds off on the other side of the room, and we see the cop stumble out of the bar and out the front doors.

VIVIAN

What for?

JOEY

He killed someone. In the line of duty. He's tore up.

VIVIAN

Oh my goodness. How horrible.

JOEY

He was ordered to do it. It's just a part of his job.

Vivian looks at Joey.

VIVIAN

How callous. How can he live with himself?

JOEY

I don't know. But I have a surprise for you.

Vivian cracks a smile - instantly forgetting the cop.

VIVIAN

What is it?

JOEY

We get to go backstage and meet some of the musicians.

VIVIAN

What? How'd you manage that?

JOEY

Don't worry about that. Just worry about what you're going to say to Gaspar - the Maestro.

Vivian steps up and wraps her arms around Joey's neck, slowly pulling him in for a kiss. They break.

JOEY

Let's go.

**INT. BACKSTAGE - CONT.**

Joey and Vivian stand together as musicians shuffle by. They are accompanied by an MMC aide who flags down a freshly beaten Gaspar as he's leaving the stage.

AIDE

Mr. Kovic. I'd like to introduce Ms. Barnes and Mr. Vestri. They are very ardent supporters of the NYC orchestra, and would love to make your acquaintance.

Gaspar has a fresh black eye on his face, clumsily hidden under some foundation. He walks a bit slowly. No one says anything.

GASPAR

(With a refined Eastern European accent)  
Hello, Madame, Monseieur.

VIVIAN

Mr. Gaspar, I can't tell you what an honor it is to meet you. Really, we come to see you every week, and your performance is always the highlight of the show.

GASPAR

Thank you very much. That's very kind.

Gaspar looks to Joey, who doesn't say anything.

VIVIAN

(to Joey)  
Say something.

She nudges him, and Joey extends his hand. Gaspar shakes it.

JOEY

Real honor.

Joey looks at Gaspar's bruises, and Gaspar quickly smiles.

GASPAR

Can you believe it? I was mugged earlier this week.

Joey grimaces - knowing fresh bruising when he sees it.

(CONTINUED)

VIVIAN

Oh my god, that's terrible. Isn't it Joey?

JOEY

Yes.

Gaspar shrugs it off, but is twitchy and looks past them.

GASPAR

Alas, I'm sorry but I must be going. Thank you so much for coming.

VIVIAN

Thank you Mr. Gaspar. Really. I love your work.

Vivian is all a twitter, and Joey is stolid. Gaspar walks away, and the Aide pushes forward.

AIDE

(in background)

Now let's meet some of the horn section.

Joey hesitates, and looks back at Gaspar limping away.

**INT. ORCHESTRA - FOYER**

Joey and Vivian are at the coat check getting their things. They head towards the door, holding their coats.

JOEY

So, I'll call you tomorrow?

Vivian looks at her feet and holds her purse over her lap.

VIVIAN

No.

JOEY

No?

Joey looks at Vivian. She smiles.

JOEY

Alright.

Joey steps behind Vivian and helps her with her coat. He looks over his shoulder and sees - The Stoker - in a tuxedo holding a champagne glass and talking to a small group of people.

(CONTINUED)



Joey drops the coat off Vivian's right shoulder, and the Stoker looks over at Joey and raises his champagne glass.

JOEY  
I'll be right back.

Joey walks over to the Stoker as Vivian watches in concern. The people around the Stoker walk away, almost as if on demand.

JOEY  
Hello.

STOKER  
Hello.

JOEY  
What are you doing here?

The Stoker looks around at his surroundings.

STOKER  
Seeing a show.

JOEY  
You come to the Orchestra?

STOKER  
Sometimes. Many do.

Joey looks at the Stoker, who stares right back. The mood changes - we enter in to a surreal state.

STOKER  
Time is running out.

BEAT.

JOEY  
What time?

STOKER  
Soon, it will be over. But it'll be alright.

Joey is flushed, and stares at the Stoker.

JOEY  
What are you talking about?

Vivian's hand turns Joey around.

VIVIAN  
Are you coming?

STOKER  
Good night Joey.

The Stoker walks away, leaving Joey totally out of it.

VIVIAN  
Who was that man?

JOEY  
I - he, we met once before. Nobody  
really. Shall we go?

VIVIAN  
Yes.

They start walking out the doors. Joey goes over the  
conversation until

JOEY  
(sotto) Joey...

He turns back towards the Stoker - how did he know Joey's  
name? Vivian pulls him forward and we--

DISSOLVE TO:

**EXT. VIVIAN'S APARTMENT**

Vivian and Joey walking along the sidewalk, arm in arm. We  
revolve around them to see a car slowly driving a few yards  
back.

Still moving around Joey and Vivian come to the building's  
steps. We hold as they go up and disappear into the door,  
and we hear the car's brakes.

We dolly to the right of the car, but we can't quite make  
out the passenger. We push in on the hood with with rain,  
and the figure lights a cigarette - revealing Sal.

**EXT. SAL'S CAR - CONT.**

Hours have passed, a pile of cigarette butts by Sal's car  
indicates as much. He looks at his watch, and when the  
minute hand strikes midnight Sal takes out his phone and  
calls Leo.

(CONTINUED)

LEO  
And?

SAL  
He's not coming.

LEO  
Both of them.

SAL  
Now?

LEO  
(menacingly)  
Yes.

Sal looks up at the fourth floor apartment.

SAL  
O.k.

LEO  
Her first, so he can watch.

Sal is about to speak but the line goes dead.

SAL  
(sotto)  
God dammit Joey.

He gets out of the car and puts out his last cigarette, then goes to the trunk and opens it. We can't see what Sal's doing at first but he we hear the shuffling of plastic and when he comes up he's wearing latex gloves.

He pulls out a strange looking gun and a small piece of metal pipe. Sal grabs a black piece of cloth and slides it over his head so that it rests at his neck.

He closes the trunk and walks up the stairs, then pulls up the black bandana to his nose before going in the front door.

He calmly goes to the elevator, holding the gun in his right hand and the pipe in his left. The elevator comes - no one is on it. Sal steps in and presses the button.

Inside the elevator he bobs his head and slowly twirls the pipe. The doors open - nobody is on the floor. Sal gets out and walks all the way down the hallway.

It's a miracle no one has seen him yet, and he comes to Vivian's apartment - # 425. Sal gingerly leans the pipe against the wall, and kneel to pick the handle.

(CONTINUED)

He makes quick work, but puts his gear away and goes to the two lights on the wall near Vivian's door and breaks the bulb with a small screwdriver.

Sal walks back to the door, picks up the pipe, and opens the door without a sound. He closes the door almost all the way and looks around.

Clothes are strewn on the floor starting in the kitchen which is half of the living room - it's a small one bedroom NY apartment. Sal goes to half-open bedroom door.

He slides in, and waits to make sure nobody is awake. Vivian and Joey hold each other in slumber, not a care in the world.

Sal holds up the strange gun at Joey and fires - a tranquilizer dart. Joey's eyes snap awake - but the toxin has done its work and he can't move, but can still see.

Sal switches the gun to his left hand and the pipe to his right, and walks over to Vivian. No lights are on, Sal is practically a shadow, but Joey can see Sal's figure.

Sal raises the pipe in his and, Joey's eyes nearly pop out of his skull - he knows what's about to happen. Sal takes a big breath and right before he swings his phone vibrates.

He pulls it out - reads a text - and slowly lowers the pipe. Joey lies paralyzed, eyes tearing up and veins bulging. Sal walks around the bed and pulls out the dart.

Sal slowly backs up, completely silent, and like that, he's gone.

Minutes pass, then an hour, and the agent works its way out of Joey's system. His feet slowly twitch, then his fingers, and bit by bit he forces himself to move. He is livid.

He smooths Vivian's hair, then gets up out of bed, still naked, goes to his jacket and pulls out a gun. He walks to the door to the hallway and pulls it open.

He sees the broken lightbulbs, closes and locks the door, and then puts on his clothes. He watches Vivian sleep for a minute, kisses her forehead, then leaves.

**INT. JOEY'S APARTMENT -CONT**

Joey gets to his apartment, pacing, like an animal in a cage. He goes over to the record player, almost puts on a record, stops, gathers his things and opens the door.

Sal stands there waiting for him.

BEAT.

SAL

You missed the meet Joey. This is the second time you weren't where you were supposed to be. You're distracted.

Joey freezes - he wasn't expecting Sal to know so much.

JOEY

Distracted by what? So I missed one meeting.

Sal steps into Joey's space.

SAL

I don't know what Leo is going to say, but you had better hope he's too worried about the Russians than to deal with you. Get your shit together, we're going in.

JOEY

I can't right now.

SAL

Yes. You. Can.

BEAT.

Sal pleads to Joey with his eyes, and even though Joey is still furious at what happened to him earlier that morning, he gives in. Joey nods, and they head out the building.

**INT. VIVIAN'S APARTMENT - CONT.**

Vivian smiles in her sleep. She wakes up gradually with the rising sun. After a long stretch she looks over and sees Joey is gone. She freezes, listening for him.

Vivian looks on the floor for Joey's clothes that aren't there, then on the nightstands for a nonexistent note. Vivian grabs her phone - no missed calls.

(CONTINUED)

She gets out of bed and goes into the other empty room. She opens the door, hoping maybe Joey just stepped out. She slowly closes it, then sits on the couch. She calls Joey.

It goes straight to voicemail. She grabs a pillow, hugs it tight, and her head drops. The tears come slowly, naturally, and Vivian cries, taking in deep quiet breaths.

**INT. MAFIA HQ - CONT.**

Joey and Sal walk up to the glass doors outside of Leo's office.

SAL  
Wait here.

Leo sits waiting for Sal to walk up to him.

SAL  
He was at his apartment, passed out from a real bender.

Leo looks past Sal at Joey standing behind the glass doors.

LEO  
And before that?

SAL  
He was at the Orchestra again, got to see his idol. A violin player named Gaspar - I know because he owes the Gambini's.

LEO  
How much?

SAL  
Close to a million.

Leo arches his fingers, and turns back to the window.

SAL  
So, what do you want to do? Boss?

Leo thinks for a moment.

LEO  
I'm going to buy his debt.

SAL  
The violin player's?

LEO  
Yes.

SAL  
Why?

LEO  
Bring in Joey.

Sal turns to the door and waves Joey in. Joey opens the door and walks with a certain trepidation. Leo turns to him, as Joey sits down.

LEO  
Sal tells me you missed a meet.

JOEY  
Yes.

LEO  
Why?

Joey looks to Sal.

SAL  
Like I said he was drunk-

Leo holds up his hand, silencing Sal.

LEO  
I want to hear it from him.

JOEY  
I took it too far, don't know when.  
Woke up this morning, and there was  
Sal.

LEO  
Is that right?

JOEY  
Yes.

LEO  
You seem fine now.

Joey shrugs - it's not that easy to make him sweat.

LEO  
So what now?

(CONTINUED)

JOEY

Boss?

LEO

I told you no fuck ups. What should I do?

JOEY

I don't know.

Sal can't believe what he's hearing.

LEO

You don't know? Well maybe we should just kill you.

Joey knows Leo means it, but he isn't fazed.

JOEY

You could.

Leo pulls out a gun and aims it at Joey's head. Joey doesn't flinch. Leo cocks the hammer. Joey looks almost resigned.

BEAT.

LEO

But then how would I replace a man of your talents?

Leo lowers the gun. Joey says nothing.

LEO

You're going to wait for my call to tell you what you need to do.

Joey doesn't move - but Sal nods to Joey - and Joey nods to Leo.

LEO

Good boy. Now get the fuck out of my office.

Joey turns and leaves, but as he's walking out he comes to a realization.

JOEY

(sotto)

Vivian.



**EXT. MAFIA HQ - CONT.**

Joey calls Vivian - she doesn't pick up. He hails a taxi and we

CUT TO:

**EXT. VIVIAN'S APARTMENT - CONT.**

Joey runs up the steps and buzzes Vivian's apartment. There's no answer. He holds the speaker button.

JOEY

Vivian? Vivian are you there?

Inside Vivian still sits on the couch holding the pillow.

JOEY

Vivian I'm so sorry - I had to leave this morning, I should have told you but things happened all at once. Please Vivian if you're there let me in.

Vivian walks over to the speaker box.

JOEY

It won't happen again Vivian I swear. I'm back now, I'm back.

Vivian presses the button - Joey goes silent from the static.

VIVIAN

Where were you?

JOEY

I...

Joey doesn't want to lie to her.

JOEY

I was doing something for work.

VIVIAN

Doing what?

JOEY

Vivian you know I-

(CONTINUED)

VIVIAN

Right, can't talk about it. Why is that?

JOEY

I know you're mad at me, and you should be. But please if you let me up I can explain.

VIVIAN

You can explain right there.

JOEY

I got scared last night.

VIVIAN

Scared - of what?

JOEY

I had, a dream, and something terrible almost happened. I went outside to get some air, and then my boss called because he wanted to talk to me. And that's the truth.

VIVIAN

Why should I believe you?

JOEY

Why shouldn't you?

BEAT.

Vivian wipes the tears from her face.

JOEY

Let me up? I'll make it up to you. I promise.

Vivian cracks a small smile.

VIVIAN

You should have called, texted, anything.

JOEY

Yes.

Nobody speaks, and the silence stretches out.

JOEY

Vivian?

BUZZ - Joey gets let in and he rushes inside. He gets to Vivian's apartment, knocks on the door, and as soon as it opens he hugs her. She's caught off guard, then hugs Joey back.

**INT. ORCHESTRA - NIGHT - CONT.**

Joey is again at the Orchestra, Vivian at his side, seeing the world through rose colored glasses. The music drifts along in the background, inconspicuous. As the song continues, we hear a screech of a violin bow.

Joey tilts his head in discomfort, and looks out for the transgressor. They play on. When what sounds like an off-key flute chord rings out, Joey flinches again.

He looks at Vivian, and she looks back at him, puzzled.

No one else in the crowd seems to have heard, Vivian included, and Joey peels his eyes out on the players to be sure. The music keeps going, on and on, and just as Joey's eyes start to glaze over it happens again.

A shrill note from one of the horns, laced with the sound of something more like a scream. Joey stares at the orchestra, trying to eye all the players at once and piece together what is going on. He looks at Vivian.

VIVIAN  
(whisper)  
What is it?

JOEY  
(whisper)  
Did you hear that?

VIVIAN  
Hear what?

JOEY  
They messed up.

A woman behind them leans forward.

WOMAN  
Shh!

He looks hard at the man on his left, who finally looks over to see what's the matter. Joey waits expectantly.

(CONTINUED)

JOEY

Did you hear it?

The man harrumphs and turns away, as Joey is forced to do.

Joey stares hard at the ground, waiting for it to happen again, but the orchestra crescendos and comes to a finish.

The crowd rises and applauds, but Joey stays seated, still staring at the ground. He twists the program in his hand as the applause ends and people filter out.

Vivian looks with concern and puts her hand on Joey's back.

VIVIAN

Joey? Are you all right?

Joey perks up. Yea, yea I'm fine. They get up to go.

VIVIAN

So, can I see your place?

Joey doesn't respond.

VIVIAN

Joey?

VIVIAN

Joey, did you hear me?

JOEY

What? Sure, that'll be great.

She smiles.

VIVIAN

Great. Let's go.

JOEY

I have something to do first though, can you meet me there?

VIVIAN

What do you have to do?

JOEY

Something for work. It'll only take an hour.

Vivian doubts this, but says nothing.

(CONTINUED)

VIVIAN

Sure, I'll see you there.

Vivian walks away first, and Joey looks at her go, then back to the musicians clearing the stage.

**INT. JOEY'S APARTMENT - LATER THAT NIGHT**

Joey sits in his high backed chair, eyes closed, totally relaxed. The gun and garrote are on the table.

"Il Stagioni" softly plays. We slowly push in on Joey's face. The strings rush in as the horns give way to a bellowing cry.

As we keep getting closer to Joey, flashes of his nightmare flicker in his mind. The little girl, the Stoker, what the Stoker said.

Joey flinches, closes his eyes tighter, trying to squeeze those thoughts out of his head. The mother's screaming from the nightmare intermittently crops up.

The music goes in and out with the screams and the Stoker's words. But then it sounds like the needle drags across the vinyl before the the music devolves to white noise.

Joey slowly opens his eyes, looking at the ceiling. He looks over at the violin case full of the totems, then turns back to the record.

It spins normally, but he hears white noise.

JOEY

Shit.

The white noise continues to play, and we pull away as Joey brings hands together, rubbing his knuckles. We rest in the corner of the room, waiting for what happens next.

Joey's head falls, hiding his face, but he's crying. Someone knocks at the door.

VIVIAN

Joey?

JOEY

Vivian, is that you?

VIVIAN

Yes, I'm at the door.

(CONTINUED)

Joey gets up and lets Vivian in - on Joey's door we see a piece of paper has been taped to it, but we can't read what it says. She can see he is distraught.

VIVIAN

Joey, you have something on the door - what's wrong?

Joey starts to speak, but his tongue gets caught in his throat.

JOEY

I can't...

Vivian closes the door behind her.

VIVIAN

Why not, what's wrong?

JOEY

Please don't ask me Vivian, please.

Vivian starts to tear up. She can see the mental anguish in this man, remembering what Maria said.

VIVIAN

Sit down.

She guides Joey to his chair.

VIVIAN

I'll fix you a drink.

JOEY

No.

VIVIAN

Are you sure? Maybe water.

JOEY

What? No, just don't.

She looks over at the record player, which has come to an end, with the disc slowly spinning about.

VIVIAN

I'll put something on.

Joey sighs and throws his hand up - he knows it will be useless for him. Vivian chooses something soft and slow.

She sees the shelves laden with Austria paraphernalia. She puts her hand to her lips.

VIVIAN  
You really were-

She stops and looks at Joey, who can only bleakly smile. She traces her hand over the books, maps, the personal items.

She reaches the end of the shelf and sees the violin case. In one movement she says

VIVIAN  
I didn't know you played-  
and opens the case but Joey cries out

JOEY  
No!  
but it's too late - she sees all the items, foremost a picture of the little girl in the blue dress. Vivian steps back from the case.

VIVIAN  
What's wrong?  
Joey leaps over to her.

JOEY  
That's private.

VIVIAN  
Why - it's just a bunch of trinkets...and a picture of a little girl.

Joey slams the case shut.

JOEY  
It doesn't matter. I think you should go.

VIVIAN  
What?

Joey kicks it up into high gear.

JOEY  
Get out goddammit!

VIVIAN  
No.

JOEY

What?

VIVIAN

No, I want to know what's going on with you. I want to help.

JOEY

You can't help me!

Joey screams, and Vivian takes a step back - she is afraid of Joey for the first time.

JOEY

Go!!

VIVIAN

Fine.

Vivian collects her purse from the counter.

VIVIAN

If I go, I'm not coming back. I don't want to see you again.

Joey hears what she says, but he doesn't really digest it.

JOEY

What? Because of the case?

VIVIAN

That's not it. That's your business. But something is going on with you, and if you don't want to let me in I don't want to waste any more time. You've never told me about your work, or anything about you. That's not how relationships work.

JOEY

Vivian please. I want to tell you, but you wouldn't understand.

VIVIAN

I could try. Just tell me anything.

Joey looks at Vivian square in the eye, thinking fast. His mouth moves to speak several times. Vivian waits - and then she's gone, and Joey stands alone in his apartment.

The moment hits him - and he grabs the violin case and throws it to the ground with both hands. The items go sprawling out. Joey goes into a rage.

(CONTINUED)



He picks up the whole record playing set and throws it across the room, he pushes the shelf to the ground and starts kicking it to pieces.

He sees the totems, and falls to his knees in front of them. He picks them up and starts throwing them across the room or breaking them apart.

He keeps going until he is bunching the shelf and the case, as the picture of the little girl rests beside him. He comes to a stop, blood on his knuckles, on his hands and knees.

He's breathing hard. He's lost Vivian, music isn't helping him anymore, and he is haunted by his past.

He looks at the wreckage of his apartment. He gets up and goes to the sink to wash his hands. He pulls out the bits of glass and runs the tap.

When he lowers his hands to wash them, the pipes shutter and the water stops flowing.

Joey looks at the faucet, not remembering the notice that his water would be shut off. Joey starts to laugh, a little at first, then maniacally.

It's all too funny, and he grabs one of the liquor bottles out of the cabinet and starts chugging. He gets maybe half way through the bottle before he chokes.

He spills some of the drink on him, and then wobbles away towards his room. He pukes, then falls to the ground, and slowly closes his eyes while trying not to move.

Joey's world slowly goes dark, and then he's asleep.

**INT. MAFIA HQ - DAY.**

The next morning Joey shows up at HQ with crudely applied bandages to his knuckles and a terrible hangover. He walks up to Leo's office and sees Sal and Leo talking.

On Leo's desk a newspaper is spread out with headlines covering the death of Russian mobsters. Leo hands Sal a piece of paper and Sal looks at it.

He asks Leo a question and shows dismay. Leo answers with a violent gesture and waves Sal out. Sal exits the office.

JOEY  
What did he say?

Sal blows off the question and goes back to the elevator.

(CONTINUED)

SAL  
Come on, we have work to do.

**EXT./INT. - APARTMENT - CONT.**

Joey and Sal pull up to an apartment building on Park avenue. They go up the steps and slip in as someone is coming out.

The building has a winding center staircase where you can see all the way up to the tenth floor. As they are heading up Joey hears the echoing notes of a violin.

He smiles - always happy to hear someone playing. They turn on the fourth landing and head down the hall - the music is getting louder.

At the end of the hall the two men stop at the door - #12 - whoever is playing is behind it. Joey puts his hand up to the number.

JOEY  
Number 12?

Sal motions for Joey to be silent, and picks the lock. He pushes the door open and we see a man with his back to us.

Sal walks up, and in a flurry of movement he punches the guy in the back of the head and grabs the violin as it falls. He turns the guy over and Joey sees that it is Gaspar.

SAL  
Tie him up Joey.

JOEY  
What?

SAL  
I said tie him up. He owes the boss a million, and it's time to collect.

JOEY  
What? I would have known about that.

SAL  
Would you have? Remember your place Joey, and tie him to that chair.

Joey is in crisis, staring at Sal, who stares right back. Beat. He puts Gaspar in the chair and ties him with a lamp cord.

(CONTINUED)

Sal fills up a glass of water, brings it back and throws it in Gaspar's face. Gaspar slowly comes to, still stunned by the blow.

SAL

Gaspar. You owed the Gambini's one million dollars. Today Leo Costa bought that debt. We work for Leo. We're here to collect the money, all of it, right now, or we're going to kill you.

Joey looks at Sal.

GASPAR

What, I...I don't have it. Who has a million dollars on them?

SAL

That's not my concern, either you have it or you don't.

GASPAR

Please, I need more time, up the vig to anything you want, I'm good for it I swear.

((to himself) )

None of this would have happened of Thomas would have given me the money.

JOEY

Thomas?

SAL

Joey, it appears Gaspar is unable to settle his debts. You know what to do.

JOEY

Thomas who?

Joey steps up to Gaspar.

JOEY

Who goddammit?

Joey shakes Gaspar.

GASPAR

I won a million - he was supposed to deliver it to me but he disappeared with all of it.

(CONTINUED)

Joey remembers. Arthur Thomas was the man he strangled to death at the beginning of the film.

JOEY

Oh God.

This is all happening so fast. Joey can't believe this is happening. His mind is racing as he steps up to Gaspar.

JOEY

Sal, if he says he'll pay more why don't we tell Leo, he'll want to know.

SAL

Joey, I'm ordering you right now to kill him. That's straight from Leo.

JOEY

But what about the extra money?

SAL

He doesn't care about the money.

Joey's hand hangs limp. The moments draw out as Gaspar pleads for his life. Joey can't even look at him.

SAL

Do it Joey!

Joey is jolted into grabbing his gun. His hand is visibly shaking. He slowly points it at Gaspar.

GASPAR

Wait, wait - I met you the other night!

SAL

Pull the trigger.

Joey doesn't move. Gaspar pleads for his life.

GASPAR

You said you were a fan. Don't do this to me.

Joey is almost crying - maybe even choking down tears.

SAL

Kill him. Now!

BEAT. The room freezes in silence as Joey decides what to do. Joey turns to Sal.

(CONTINUED)

JOEY  
I'll pay his debt.

GASPAR  
Oh thank God...

Sal wasn't expecting that.

SAL  
What?

Joey lowers his gun and Gaspar crumples before peeing his pants from the stress and seemingly passing out.

JOEY  
I'll pay for him.

Sal pulls Joey aside - he's doing his best for Joey with what he has.

SAL  
It's not that easy Joey. Even if you pay, the boss wants you dead, and he'll find an excuse to get rid of you. This is just to fuck with you, hoping you'll trip up so he can kill you. I know what you've been saving up for. You're so close Joey, and Vivian is waiting.

Sal needs to convince Joey to kill Gaspar, because he knows Leo will only accept Gaspar's death or Joey's - not the money.

Off of Sal's silence Joey goes to Gaspar and begins to untie him. Sal thinks it's over, and reaches for his gun. He pulls it out slowly and starts to raise it at Joey.

Gaspar comes to and screeches at Sal's gun. Joey doesn't pause to think - he whirls around and shoots Sal in the leg. He takes Sal's gun and puts it to Sal's head.

JOEY  
I'm done with killing, Sal. This is me sparing your life, remember your place.

SAL  
What hope do you think you have? You think you'll be safe in Austria? He'll find you, and he'll kill both of you.

Joey shrugs, and knocks Sal out.

(CONTINUED)

JOEY

Gaspar, you need to leave the country, tonight, and never come back.

GASPAR

Yes, yes of course, thank you, thank you.

JOEY

Just make it.

Joey walks out the door, then starts jogging down the stairs, and finally runs out the door.

**EXT. GASPAR'S APARTMENT - CONT.**

A third gangster - Leo's insurance - is waiting outside Gaspar's apartment. He pulls out his phone and dials a number.

Joey sees the guy and heads towards him. Just as the phone picks up the gangster squeals.

GANGSTER

Boss, Sal didn't come -

Joey grabs the phone and breaks it, then knocks the guy out.

**EXT. VIVIAN'S APARTMENT - CONT.**

(Sal wakes up in Gaspar's apartment just as Joey gets to Vivian's place.) He gets past the front door, and bangs wildly on the door to her place, hoping she's there.

JOEY

Vivian!

He keeps banging on the door and she opens it holding a baseball bat.

VIVIAN

Joey?

Joey charges in.

JOEY

Vivian thank God. I don't know how else to say this, but you're in danger.

(CONTINUED)

VIVIAN

What?

JOEY

The people I work for are coming for you, and they are going to kill you. And then they're going to kill me.

VIVIAN

What in God's name? What are you talking about goddammit?

JOEY

I....I-

Joey decides to bite the bullet.

JOEY

I'm a criminal. I work for the Costa family. You've probably heard about them in the news. I did something today that I wasn't supposed to, and now they are coming for me. They know about you, and they're coming for you.

Vivian takes a step back, thinking all this through.

VIVIAN

That's crazy. I don't believe you.

Joey thinks hard, trying to figure out the best way to explain this. He unbuttons his shirt to the chest and traces his hand along the scar at his sternum.

JOEY

He stabbed me - just missing my heart.

Vivian goes quiet. He opens up the shirt to show his right flank.

JOEY

He shot me two times, through and through.

Joey gets emotional and he rolls up his sleeve to show his arm.

JOEY

He threw boiling water.

(CONTINUED)

He pulls down his collar exposing his scar, nearly crying now.

JOEY  
He tried to  
(chokes up )  
cut my throat.

Vivian retreats from Joey, also crying.

VIVIAN  
Why didn't you tell me?

Joey takes out his gun and sets it on the table.

VIVIAN  
How could you do those things?

JOEY  
I'm sorry Vivian. I'm so sorry. But  
what matters right now is that you  
come with me. We have to go - now!

VIVIAN  
I'm not going anywhere with you.  
I'm calling the police.

Joey is at a loss - he needs to convince Vivian to move her ass. He closes the door and rips the phone out of the wall.

JOEY  
You can't do that.

Vivian freezes.

JOEY  
I'm not proud of what I've done -  
it's been tearing me apart - but I  
love you, and I have to save you.

VIVIAN  
(cornered)  
This is crazy, I'm going to the  
police. They'll protect me.

JOEY  
They'll still get to you. Please  
Vivian.

Joey calms down, steps up to Vivian with his hands up.

(CONTINUED)



JOEY

Please. I can't let them hurt you.

Vivian can't decide what to do.

VIVIAN

Oh Joey, why'd you have to tell me?

Joey steps towards her, and gently places a hand on her arm.

JOEY

I know I lied. I'm sorry. But if you love me like I think you do, I hope you'll get past it, if only for these next few moments, when I could lose you - the **one** thing I care about.

Vivian looks at Joey.

JOEY

I'm going to do whatever it takes to protect you and make up for what I've done. I don't know if you feel the same way about me, but if you feel anything, we have to go.

BEAT.

Vivian makes her decision. She nods.

VIVIAN

Damn you.

JOEY

Grab your money and your passport.

VIVIAN

That's it?

JOEY

Yes - no time.

VIVIAN

Where will we go?

Joey grabs Vivian by the hand and pulls her out the door. They walk hurriedly down the stairs and when they get to the lobby doors Joey looks out the glass.

Sal is getting out of a car with three guys - he sees Joey at the window.

BEAT.

Sal orders the men to chase after them. Joey grabs Vivian and they run for the back door. They reach the end of the hall and hear the glass from the front door breaking before rushing out in to the alley.

**EXT. ALLEY-CONT.**

A goon appears at the the right end, so Vivian and Joey run left towards a dog-leg turn.

They round the corner and pause as cars whip by in rush-hour traffic down the street - almost getting hit by a car.

**EXT. STREET-CONT.**

Joey looks around for a cab, but there's not one in sight. He pulls Vivian headlong into traffic, dodging a skidding car in one lane that swerves and crashes into oncoming traffic and waiting for a semi to rush past in the next.

Sal limps around the corner - he guessed the right way to follow, and his crew comes out of the alley and sees their targets reaching the other end of the street.

They run into the boxed up street - all the cars have stopped, so they get there in seconds. Joey and Vivian have turned down the opposite sidewalk, running full speed.

One of the faster gangsters blazes ahead and catches up to the lagging Vivian. He reaches his hand out - Vivian screams - and Joey stops, turns, and sends the guy flying.

They keep going as the other two guys catch up. Vivian bounds to the corner of traffic going in a new direction and holds her hand up. A taxi swerves right over. She and Joey jump in.

**INT. CAB - CONT.**

JOEY

Drive!

CABBIE

Where to?

JOEY

Just go until I say stop.

(CONTINUED)

The cabbie pulls away from the curb just as the gangsters get there. Joey and Vivian look out the rear window and sees as Sal comes around the corner and picks up the two pursuers. Joey looks ahead down the street.

JOEY

Left up here.

Joey looks back again. Sal's black sedan is speeding towards them maybe 20 cars back. The cabbie makes a turn left and just makes the light. Sal is trapped by traffic.

JOEY

Right!

The cabbie goes down the block then turns right. Joey looks up the street at people hailing cabs. He sees a couple that are passable for he and Vivian.

JOEY

Pull over by that couple.

The cab stops and Joey and Vivian get out.

JOEY

(to the couple)

Take ours.

The couple smiles and looks at Joey before climbing into the cab. Joey and Vivian keep walking down the street and into a plaza. Vivian starts to look behind them as their cab pulls away.

JOEY

Don't look.

Vivian turns her head, and as they walk past camera we see Sal's sedan weave through traffic in pursuit. Joey and Vivian keep going and blend in with the crowd.

Joey leads them over to an awning with columns at the corner of a building. He backs Vivian into the column and stands close, looking over her right shoulder for any signs of Sal or his men.

VIVIAN

What are we going to do?

Joey looks at Vivian and smiles.

JOEY

We need to get my money from the bank.

(CONTINUED)

VIVIAN

Where's it at? Can't we do that  
when we get over there?

Joey shakes his head and chuckles.

JOEY

It's all cash in a safe deposit  
box. I thought it would be safer  
that way.

VIVIAN

Where is it?

JOEY

Downtown. I'm sure Sal knows where  
it is.

Vivian slightly shakes her head. Joey puts both of his hands  
on her shoulder.

JOEY

I'm not going to let anything  
happen. Ok?

Vivian looks up at him. She nods.

JOEY

Let's go.

They walk away from the corner and back to a street corner.  
Joey spots a subway entrance and they head to it.

**INT. SUBWAY - CONT.**

Joey and Vivian get on the subway with their heads on a  
swivel, always expecting Sal or worse to pop up. The train  
gets going as they stare away from each other.

VIVIAN

All those things you talked about  
when we first met. I thought you  
were being crazy. You were telling  
the truth?

JOEY

Yes.

VIVIAN

All that talk about not knowing how  
you felt about...what you do?

(CONTINUED)

Joey doesn't answer right away, taking his time to collect his thoughts.

JOEY

What I've done has decided how I feel.

VIVIAN

What's it like, having..?

JOEY

It never used to affect me.

VIVIAN

And now?

JOEY

Like I said, things changed - I thought for the better. I don't know how to get past it.

VIVIAN

That violin case - the things inside. What were they?

JOEY

(sotto)

I wanted to remind myself of what I did - to try and feel something. But once I could, I couldn't face them.

They're station comes up. Vivian looks at Joey, hoping he'll keep going. But Joey is only too happy to stop talking. They get to the stairs and see it is a piano staircase.

A small trickle of pedestrians moves through, and at the bottom a little girl is playing on the same few steps.

Her father watches from several steps up. As Vivian and Joey near we see the little girl is wearing a blue dress and black stockings and has black hair.

She looks strikingly like the girl from Joey's dream, and her father looks like a domesticated Stoker complete with glasses and sweater vest.

Joey freezes. The girl stands watching him - waiting. She holds a black pinwheel in her left hand.

GIRL

It's alright. Come on.

(CONTINUED)

Vivian charges up the steps but when Joey takes his first step the girl jumps in sync with him. Joey pauses, but the girl waits again.

Joey steps up - and the girl jumps with him. Vivian turns to watch Joey caught up in this moment. The girl's father takes a step down to get level with Vivian.

Joey takes a step down - and the girl mirrors his actions.

VIVIAN  
Joey, we have to go.

GIRL  
(to Vivian)  
He'll be done soon.

Joey takes steps up and down with his feet, and the girl does as well, laughing all the while.

VIVIAN  
(softly)  
Joey, it's time.

The girl's father holds out his hand and the girl stops on the stairs. The girl gives half a frown and looks to Joey, who frowns as well before motioning her to go.

She runs to her father and they disappear up the steps. Joey stands still watching them go. Vivian comes down and pushes him up out of the exit.

**EXT. STREET CORNER - DAY**

Across the street stands Joey's bank. They are about to head towards it when the girl rushes back up to Joey and hands him the pinwheel. Joey takes it.

GIRL  
It'll be all right. We can play  
more next time.

She has a smile on her face you can't quite understand - both omniscient transitioning to the fulminant naivete of a child.

Joey smiles back before the girl runs off. Vivian looks at the little girl and how awkward it all seems.

VIVIAN  
Did you know that girl?

(CONTINUED)

Joey doesn't answer as he twirls the pinwheel. He pockets it as he and Vivian go to the bank. A black sedan pulls up as they head in the doors.

Sal and his thugs look through their windows. Sal drives away just as Joey looks over his shoulder. They head in to the bank.

**INT. BANK - CONT.**

A bank manager walks up.

MANAGER

Good to see you again sir, would you like to access your safe deposit boxes?

JOEY

Yes. I also need to cut a cashier's check and share ownership of my boxes with my sister.

MANAGER

Of course sir, is this her?

The manager looks to Vivian. Joey taps his foot in anxiety.

JOEY

No, this is my -

VIVIAN

-girlfriend.

Joey smiles.

MANAGER

Unfortunately sir she will need to be here to sign on for the box.

JOEY

Fine, then I'd like to sign on Vivian.

The manager looks to Vivian and Joey nods.

MANAGER

Excellent sir, follow me.

They head down the stairs towards the safe. Sal and his men come in through the entrance and flank the exits.

(CONTINUED)

Down in the safe Joey pulls the key out from around his neck and goes to his boxes. The manager takes the two large boxes and third smaller one out and puts them on the table.

Joey opens the two large boxes.

JOEY

Take the money from these and put them into a traveler's check for me.

MANAGER

Sir? That's quite a bit of money.

JOEY

Do it. And get the ownership form for this other box. We need to leave in 5 minutes.

MANAGER

Right away.

The manager walks away. Joey opens up the last small box which is almost filled with cash. He fills his pockets.

JOEY

Do you have something to write with?

Vivian hands him a pen and paper.

JOEY

If something happens to me I want you to make sure Maria gets this box.

Joey leans over and starts writing a note.

VIVIAN

What are you talking about?

JOEY

I've always been sure I can handle a job. But now, these guys, Sal - I'm not sure. He's my friend, but he's a killer. Just like me. So please, promise me you'll tell Maria?

VIVIAN

I promise.

We see fragments of what Joey has written.

(CONTINUED)



"Dear Maria, I love you. Thank you for caring. Please forgive me. You were right about deserving happiness. I have finally found mine. Remember me as a better man than what you've known. Love, Joey."

Joey folds up the note and places it on top of the money.

JOEY

Let's go.

Joey starts to close the box, pauses, then takes the pinwheel out of his pocket and places it gently in as well. They hear sets of footsteps coming down the stairs.

Joey puts his arm in front of Vivian and guides her back into the safe. He holds his index finger in front of his mouth.

The steps echo off the marble walls. Joey pulls out his gun and holds and slips into a patch of shadow in the hallway. He holds it up at the approaching pair of legs.

They get closer. Joey cocks the hammer. Vivian stops breathing. The manager and another bank officer come down. Joey quickly puts away his gun.

MANAGER

Here's the form sir. And Ms. -?

VIVIAN

Barnes.

MANAGER

-all Ms. Barnes has to do is sign the form, then you sign over your approval.

Vivian steps up and the manager hands her a pen. Joey signs as well, and the bank officer nods his approval.

JOEY

And the check?

The manager pulls it out from under his folder.

MANAGER

Here you are, one traveler's check redeemable at any of our affiliates around the world for five -

Something crashes to the ground from upstairs. Joey grabs the check and he and Vivian head upstairs. Sal waits, his guys by the exits. They come face to face. Beat.

(CONTINUED)

SAL  
(sotto)  
I can't stop.

Joey takes it in. Sal winks at Vivian. She looks at him confused, then gets it.

JOEY  
I know. Thank--

Vivian steps up.

VIVIAN  
(screaming, frightened)  
Please, just take the money. Don't hurt us.

She takes her purse and shakily hands it towards Sal, then grabs onto Joey. One of the bank tellers looks over.

VIVIAN  
Please, take it and go. We don't want any trouble.

A security guard walks over, his gun drawn. Sal's guys look at each other, totally at a loss. Vivian starts to go to her knees and pulls Joey down with her.

SECURITY GUARD  
Freeze!

Another security guard walks up with his gun drawn as well. Sal's guys quickly walk out their respective doors.

Vivian starts crying and going into hysterics, and some unseen teller hits a silent alarm and the bank goes into lockdown.

SECURITY GAURD 2  
Put your hands up now!

Sal smiles at Vivian and puts his hands up.

SECURITY GAURD  
Back away and put your hands on your head.

Sal complies. Vivian starts to scurry backwards and pulls Joey along with her. The security guards close in around Sal who has gone to his knees with his hands behind his head.

In all the confusion Joey and Vivian get up and head for the door. They burst out the door and see that a cop car has pulled up.

(CONTINUED)

VIVIAN

Please help - he's still inside.  
He's waving a gun in the air like a  
maniac.

The cops surge up to look inside. Vivian and Joey are  
shuttled aside by a beat cop and disappear into the crowd.  
They hail a taxi and get in.

**INT. CAB - CONT.**

JOEY

La Guardia!

He looks up the street as the other two gangsters close in.

VIVIAN

Drive goddammit!

The cabbie steps on it and the car zooms off just as the men  
were about to reach it.

**INT. BANK - CONT.**

Sal has two guns in his face. Then one of his guys comes up  
and grabs one of the security guys from behind and slams him  
down to the ground.

In the confusion Sal pops up and disarms the second guard,  
delivering a crushing blow to his throat and moving in one  
stride towards the door.

SAL

(to his guys)  
Carry me out.

GOON

What?

Sal punches himself hard in the nose, starting an immediate  
outpouring of blood. He leans in to his guys and they carry  
him out the doors and past the cops who are just now coming  
in.

SAL

(slurred by blood)  
He attacked me..

**INT. CAB - CONT.**

Vivian and Joey look out the back window and see Sal come out the front windows holding his bloody nose - and the cops push him through as well.

The black sedan driven by the fourth guy pulls up and Sal and the two others get in. Sal takes the wheel and floors it.

He rear ends the cab, backs off, then brushes along side it. One of the windows rolls down and a gangster leans out with a gun and points it at the tires.

CABBIE

WHOA!

The cabbie slams on the breaks and Sal's car whizzes by. Sal stops and the gangster with the gun gets out and points it at the car.

JOEY

Drive!

CABBIE

No way pal!

JOEY

Move!

VIVIAN

Please!!

Joey takes out his gun, fires a round through the glass at the gangster and clips his leg. He points the gun at the cabbie.

BEAT.

The cab's tires spin out on the asphalt and they're off like a shot. Sal tries to cut them off but the cabbie hangs a right and weaves through traffic.

They cross the bridge in to Queens, and Joey looks behind them. No sign of Sal's car.

He breathes easy and grabs Vivian's hand. The cabbie eyes Joey's gun, which has descended to his side. He makes a quick cross and closes his eyes.

VIVIAN

Wait!

(CONTINUED)

The cabbie jerks into the wall towards the end of the Queensboro Bridge. They hit the median and go horizontally down the street, until - WHAM - another car t-bones the cab and pushes it down the street.

Glass goes flying, Vivian screams, Joey pushes her head down and the cabbie keeps his eyes closed. More cars start to pile up until everything comes to a stop.

Joey's world is all out of focus. His vision goes in and out as Vivian desperately tries to wake up up.

Sound is only a high-pitched whine, and Vivian drags him into the street, smacking him as hard as she can.

**EXT. BRIDGE - CONT.**

On the last strike Joey snaps out of it and gets up. They look at all the wreckage, and far down the line they see Sal stand up out of his car.

They shake their heads in disbelief, and head the other direction. Joey has a slight limp - he's definitely not in top form.

They reach one of the towers of the bridge. It has scaffolding on it and Joey looks down.

JOEY

We'll have to climb down.

VIVIAN

No - I can't.

JOEY

Yes you can.

Joey pushes Vivian forward and she inches her way over. Joey looks back to see Sal and his crew are only a hundred yards away.

JOEY

Quickly.

Joey heads over the wall and lands hard on the scaffolding. They come to an ancient iron door that is locked from the inside.

Joey kicks it. It doesn't move. He kicks it again, and they hear a screw pop. Sal and the others reach the ledge and see Joey, who kicks the door with all he has left and it just opens. They push their way through as the gangsters start to climb down.

Joey and Vivian reach the street at ground level. They see a park and head towards it.

**INT. LEO'S CAR - CONT.**

Leo is on the phone with Sal. We hear Sal giving him instructions and then Leo directs the driver.

**EXT. PARK - CONT.**

Joey and Vivian run down a sidewalk by the water and into the trees. An unseen violin player busks nearby as daylight wanes.

Sal limps along as the other three gangsters come out of the tower and see Joey and Vivian.

They're closing in - and Joey and Vivian know they're on a dead end route.

VIVIAN  
We're trapped.

JOEY  
Keep going!

They try all the doors of the empty buildings, but they are all locked. They head into the trees, but the gangsters are close behind.

They keep running but two bullets rip into the ground on either side of them. Joey and Vivian stop and hold up their hands.

The gangsters form a circle around the couple and wait a minute as Sal limps forward. Joey is thinking hard - judging the situation and whether or not to act.

SAL  
Your gun Joey.

The gangsters tighten up their aim. Joey doesn't move. Sal hangs his head. He pulls out his gun and aims it at Vivian.

SAL  
Now.

Joey reaches for his gun.

(CONTINUED)

SAL

Easy.

He pulls it out and throws it towards Sal. Sal eases over to the gun and picks it up. He walks towards a pair of benches by a walking path nearby.

The gangsters motion for Joey and Vivian to follow.

SAL

Sit down.

Joey is confused.

JOEY

Just get it over with.

SAL

*Please sit down.*

One of the thugs shoves Vivian and she stumbles to a sitting position, then points his gun directly at Joey's head until he sits down.

Sal sits down on the opposing bench and checks his phone, and then gingerly touches his swollen nose.

BEAT.

JOEY

What are you waiting for?

Vivian is huddled up against Joey, whimpering softly.

SAL

Boss wants to deal with you himself.

Joey blanches. He knows Leo's predilection for dispatching people.

JOEY

Just me?

Sal looks at Joey and shakes his head, a sadness in his eyes.

SAL

I tried to tell you Joey. Her too.

Vivian moans and burrows more into Joey. The minutes drag on, and Joey slowly relaxes into the bench, realizing the futility of the situation.

(CONTINUED)

A car door closes in the distance. Everyone turns towards the sound and the subsequent pat click, pat click of Leo heading towards them.

Leo and another gangster reach the circle of people. Joey looks Leo right in the eyes, and Leo looks perfectly calm.

LEO

Joey. And Vivian Barnes, I believe?

Vivian doesn't say anything. Leo looks at Sal and tilts his head to the right before walking off.

SAL

Let's go.

He heads towards Leo and the gangsters stand behind Joey and Vivian and follow them as well.

They all move in silence as the waves gently lap against the walls of the concrete foundation. They reach the end of the small strip of land.

Leo stares off into the distance. In the background looms the lit up skyline of Manhattan. Everybody waits for the old man.

Leo takes something out of his coat pocket, takes his coat off, and sets it on the concrete. He turns towards Joey and Vivian.

LEO

So, the reliable soldier finally went rogue. After all these years.

Leo takes a step forward.

LEO

I know you're not afraid Joey. You know what's coming next.

Leo takes another slow step forward, leaning on his cane. Joey tenses up and lowers his center of gravity. He's poised to move at any second.

LEO

If there's one thing I can't tolerate, it's disloyalty.

Leo steps forward again.



LEO

I have to ask. What changed?

Joey looks at Vivian and then to Sal, before returning his gaze to Leo.

LEO

No? Sal, what do you think?

SAL

Who knows. Maybe it all caught up with him.

LEO

Joey, crack up? Never would have believed it.

Leo steps closer - he's just a few feet away now.

LEO

But then you have done terrible things, or should I say one terrible thing. Haven't you?

Leo bores his gaze into Joey and gets right up to his face.

The music starts - barely more than a whisper. It starts to panic, wondering what Joey is going to do.

The music swells, and in slow motion we look as each gangster holds Joey in his sights, Vivian holding onto Joey, Sal staring at his boss, and Leo baiting Joey to do something stupid. Everything freezes.

Joey looks over to Vivian, picks up her chin, and kisses her.

JOEY

Forgive me.

BOOM - in one movement Joey pushes Vivian down and begins to "reach" for a gun on his leg as the bullets fly. Barely more than a second goes by and Joey falls to the ground.

VIVIAN

NO!!

Leo steps back, then looks at the guy who fired. He pulls out his gun and shoots the man. Vivian goes to her knees and holds Joey's head in her hands.

Blood starts to run out of his mouth and he reaches his hand up to wipe it away. Vivian catches his hand.

(CONTINUED)

VIVIAN

Joey?! Oh God Joey no, please!

Leo watches as Joey slowly dies. Joey makes eye contact with Leo, and smiles before looking up at Vivian's face. He dies. Vivian gasps and shakes.

BEAT.

Leo starts to walk away towards the car and looks at his men.

LEO

Take care of it.

Leo's attendant steps up and grabs Leo's coat and follows him back. Another henchman steps up and points his gun at Vivian.

SAL

Wait.

The thug looks at Sal.

SAL

I'll do it.

Vivian looks up at Sal. She's covered in Joey's blood, which has slowly started to pool around him. Sal speaks to the two remaining guys.

SAL

Go on.

They pause.

SAL

Now goddammit!

Sal waits and listens as the footsteps slowly dissipate. His eyes glaze over, not with tears, but with a certain indifferent sadness.

He holds up his forefinger to his lips while looking at Vivian. Then he points to the ground and winks.

Sal shoots two rounds into Joey's body and Vivian screams into Joey's chest before "collapsing."

Sal walks up to her still form.

(CONTINUED)

SAL  
Get the money and run.

Vivian looks him in the eyes.

SAL  
You can never come back.

Sal starts to walk away.

VIVIAN  
(sotto)  
Why?

Sal shrugs and walks away.

The final image mirrors the opening of the film. As an unseen violinist starts to play in the distance, Vivian stays still as Joey's blood seeps out.

After what seems an eternity she gets up and cradles Joey's head in her hands. We push in on Joey's face. Vivian cries openly, and during the slow push in she closes his eyes, her tears falling in his cheeks.

His visage exudes what could be happiness, if not a certain peace - a faint grin frozen on dead lips.

THE END.