

SPEED

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - TWILIGHT

A highrise in downtown L.A., framed tall against the mountains. People stream out of the front door, leaving work.

CUT TO:

INT. BASEMENT

In the near darkness of basement, a security guard makes his way into an inner cellar. His flashlight finds a man in work clothes bent over a panel, his back to the light.

GUARD

Hey. This area's restricted.

The man doesn't look around. We can just almost see his face as he talks.

MAN

Yeah, I, uh, got called in ...
some of this wiring got screwed up.

GUARD

Nobody called it down to me. I'm
gonna have to see a work order.

MAN

Yeah ... Just one second...

CLOSEUP ON HIS HAND

reaches into his toolbox.

He rises, turning, and A KNIFE IS SHOVED THROUGH HIS EAR. It is pulled back out with calm efficiency. The man turns, wide-eyed, hand to his ear. Mouth open in silent protest. Out of his hand drops the work order. He slumps over. Dies.

HOWARD FISK takes off the guard's hat. Dripping knife aside, he is an ordinary-looking man. His face is dead calm, only his eyes betraying the sea of hate behind it.

He drags the body into a dark corner, grabbing a duffle bag from out of the shadows. Then checking his watch, he goes to the panel and begins making adjustments of his own. WE PAN over to the door of the panel. It reads: ELEVATORS.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE TOWER - ELEVATOR BANK - 42ND FLOOR

It's the end of the day and people are waiting for the elevator. The doors open, it's already crowded inside. People groan, shuttle on. A YOUNG EXEC moos. A few people laugh.

INT. ELEVATOR

The young exec's FRIEND presses the LOBBY button, even though it's already lit. The young exec nods.

YOUNG EXEC

Thanks for pushing that, Bob. You never know -- the light's on, but maybe it's really broken.

FRIEND

Oh shut up.

A SWEATY MAN, 50s, overweight, presses tighter into the corner beside his SECRETARY. Pats at his brow with a hankie.

INT. ELEVATOR SHAFT

The elevator descends quickly.

ELEVATOR CABLES

Something wired to the cables, just above the elevator car -- a slab of white putty, a black box, wires. A small red light flashes on the black box a split second before it EXPLODES.

THE CABLES

Whip and snap up the shaft like retreating snakes...

INT. ELEVATOR SHAFT

... Blackout.

VOICES

What the hell?

INT. ELEVATOR SHAFT

The elevator drops fast. The voices yell.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EMERGENCY BREAKS

Pop out, dig into ratchets in the shaft walls. Sparks shoot out. The elevator shudders to a halt.

YOUNG EXEC

Jesus, Bob. What button did you push?

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE BUILDING - EVENING

A car comes SCREECHING to a halt near the front of the building, a red and blue light flashing on top. The door is thrown open and SWAT officer JACK TRAVEN steps out from behind the wheel almost before the car has stopped. Jack heads straight for the entrance as HARRY TEMPLE, his older partner gets out the other side and follows, tossing Jack his flak jacket. Jack puts it on without ever taking his eyes off the entrance as they make their way through police cars, fire trucks and various uniforms. WE SEE these two are a team, and that when they move, Jack takes the lead.

We are still TRACKING with Jack and Harry as WE SEE two more SWAT guys emerge from another car, fall into step. Another team joins them as they enter the:

INT. LOBBY

Just as another pair burst in through another set of doors finally eight SWAT members all wordlessly sync, walking with Jack and Harry until the whole unit stands in front of:

CAPTAIN HERB MCMAHON, 40s, on the PHONE...NORWOOD, his technical assistant, looks at BLUEPRINTS with BAGWELL, a middle-aged guy with "building maintenance supervisor" on his worksuit.

Then McMahon hangs up the phone, addresses the group.

MCMAHON

What we have is fifteen people on the express elevator just below floor thirty. Included among them is Louis Tremain, chairman of Nu-Tech and owner of this building.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MCMAHON (cont' d)
Bomb took out the cables. Bomber
wants three million dollars, or he
blows the emergency brakes.

HARRY
What's our clock?

NORWOOD
He gave one hour, which leaves us
with twenty-three minutes exactly.

A COP
Anything else that'll stop the
elevator from falling?

JACK
The basement.

BAGWELL
That's the truth.

MCMAHON
The city is looking to avoid that
event. They're gonna release the
money.

HARRY
(not really asking)
We can't just unload the
passengers.

MCMAHON
Bomber's wired the elevator doors
and the hatch to trigger the bomb.
Which seats him in the crazy but
not stupid section.

JACK
(raises his hand,
smiles)
Harry volunteers to examine the
device.

HARRY
(glaring at Jack)
Right.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MCMAHON

Fine. You two check it out.

OTIS

Nearest access panel's on the 32nd floor, in the hall by storage.

MCMAHON

I want reports only. We're in a holding pattern.

(to two others)

Worthy, Briggs. Secure the base area. No one in or out the back.

(to others)

The rest of you confirm building evac. Move.

HARRY

(to Otis, as McMahon is still giving orders)

What about the other elevators?

BAGWELL

In an emergency, all passengers cars go to the nearest floor and shut down.

JACK

(smiles)

Looks like we're walking.

CUT TO:

INT. STAIRWELL

COMBAT BOOTS thunder up a metal staircase. Jack and Harry sprint up the stairs.

CUT TO:

INT. ELEVATOR SHAFT

Blackness. Sounds of a power drill, muffled, through a wall. A three-by-three foot metal access panel is lifted away; light enters the shaft.

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CONTINUED:

Jack and Harry crawl through and stand on top of the elevator, Jack addressing the passengers while Harry checks out the bomb. Jack has to raise his voice to be heard.

JACK
Ladies and gentleman, this is the
L. A. P. D.
(reactions; relief,
confusion)
There's been an elevator
malfunction. Just relax and we'll
have you out of there as soon as
possible.

Harry stands, gives Jack a significant look.

JACK
(smiling)
Am I lying?

HARRY
(into a mike at his
chin)
Confirm on the secondary device.
C4, molded to the brakes.
(to Jack)
What do you think?

JACK
You're the expert. I just work
here.

HARRY
It's pretty solid.

JACK
Anyone we know?

HARRY
I don't recognize the work. But
he's a pro.

MCMAHON
(voice over)
Traven, Temple. Hold position.
We're waiting to hear back from
him. Stay on idle.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Jack looks at his watch.

JACK
Shit.

HARRY
They're cutting it close.

JACK
I don't like it.

HARRY
What's to like? Mac said hold.
We hold.

But Jack is getting real fidgety now. He looks at his watch.

HARRY
(to distract him)
Okay. Pop quiz, hot shot.
Uh...terrorist in a crowded room,
five pounds of dynamite. He's got
a deadman's stick; he lets go, it
blows.

JACK
How close am I?

HARRY
Twenty feet.

JACK
Taser. Put enough volts in him,
he won't let go for an hour.

HARRY
...uh, fifty feet.

JACK
Nice try.
(Alternate)
Blow me!

HARRY
Okay. Airport. Gunman with one
hostage, using her for cover.
(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

HARRY (cont'd)
 He's almost on a plane, you're a
 hundred feet away.
 (a moment)
 Jack?

Jack is looking at the access panel. There is a moment
 before he comes back to Harry's train of thought: Then:

JACK
 Shoot the hostage.

HARRY
 What?

JACK
 Take her out of the equation. Go
 for the good wound and he can't
 get to the plane with her. Clear
 shot.

HARRY
 You're deeply nuts, Jack. Shoot
 the hostage...

JACK
 (enough already)
 This is wrong. He's gonna blow it
 anyway.

HARRY
 Why?

JACK
 I don't know. Gut feeling.

HARRY
 Well, right now Mac still outranks
 your gut, so we sit.

JACK
 How much do you think that
 elevator weighs?

HARRY
 (he's at it again)
 Christ, Jack...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Jack starts out of the shaft. Harry follows.

JACK
Maybe we can do something about
those hostages.

HARRY
We're not gonna shoot 'em, right?

OMITTED

CUT TO:

EXT. ROOF - DUSK

Jack bursts out of a roof access door and starts looking for something. Harry follows him. Jack runs over to the edge of the roof where there is a WINCH used by window-washers. Large, heavy-duty.

JACK
No, we just take 'em out of the
equation.

CUT TO:

INT. ELEVATOR - SAME TIME

The passengers, white with terror, fidget.

CUT TO:

INT. ELEVATOR HOUSING SHED

Jack and Harry lug cable from the winch into the elevator housing on the roof.

HARRY
You sure it'll hold?

JACK
(confident)
It'll hold.
(to convince himself.)
It'll hold.

Harry looks at his watch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HARRY
Six minutes.

OMITTED

CUT TO:

INT. LOBBY - SAME TIME

Captain McMahon paces with his walkie talkie, talking to the brass at city hall.

MCMAHON
We can't GET any more time! He's
not talking. We need goddamn
money NOW.

CUT TO:

INT. ANOTHER PLACE - SAME TIME

Fisk has a radio set-up, is listening in on the various police exchanges. He suddenly hears sounds of Harry and Jack echoing down the elevator shaft.

HARRY
Pop quiz, hot shot. Psycho rigs
an elevator to drop thirty
stories...

CUT TO:

INT. ELEVATOR SHAFT

Jack is being lowered headfirst on a rope down the center of the shaft. He holds the window-washing cable with a hook on its end. He and Harry are speaking through their microphones.

HARRY
...What do you do?

JACK
Something else, right?

He continues down. The elevator approaches. Jack comes to the elevator car... He signals and Harry stops.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jack looks leery at the C4 by his feet. Quietly secures the hook to part of the elevator's frame.

JACK
Tell me again, Harry: why did I take this job?

HARRY
Come on. Thirty more years of this and you get a tiny pension and a cheap gold watch.

JACK
(excited)
Cool.

ANOTHER PLACE

Fisk listens. What are they up to?

HOUSING SHED

Harry looks down the shaft one more time and runs out to:

EXT. ROOF

Harry runs over to the window washing winch. He flips a switch and the winch starts pulling in the cable.

INT. SHAFT

Jack watches as the extra cable starts unspooling, pulled up. He starts climbing for the access panel.

EXT. ROOF

The winch spools in cable.

INT. HOUSING SHED

Harry looks down at the elevator.

ANOTHER PLACE

Fisk listens, hears the winch faintly. He fingers a small box with a plastic button and a timer counting down. Three minutes left. We notice that the hand fingering the box is missing its thumb.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The hand starts moving more agitatedly. Fisk's face registers growing concern. Two minutes fifty-three seconds.

With sudden violence, he jabs the button.

INT. ELEVATOR

Jack takes one final look down. There is still a bunch of slack cable lying on the elevator. On the bomb, a tiny red light comes one.

Without hesitation Jack HURLS himself through the access panel as the bomb BLOWS.

INT. ELEVATOR

The passengers SCREAM as the elevator shakes, begins to drop.

EXT. ROOF

The cable snaps tight --

INT. HOUSING SHED

-- nearly slicing Harry in two. He dives to the floor.

THE ELEVATOR

Plummets. Comes to an abrupt stop. Springs slightly on the cable...

INT. LOBBY - NEAR THE ELEVATOR BANK

Everyone listening to the TWANGING of the cable echo down the shaft.

BAGWELL

Usually they fall down now.

INT. HALL

Harry bursts in from the stairs.

HARRY

He's early!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JACK
Let's get them off.

EXT. ROOF - THE WINDOW-WASHING WINCH

The weight on the cable is starting to pull it from its foundation. It groans and starts to crack -- can't bear this weight for long. The wheels start to come off the track. Then with a loud bang, the winch breaks free, flies across the roof and comes to a stop at the door to the elevator machine room.

INT. HALL

Jack and Harry look at each other. And BOLT.

ANOTHER FLOOR - JACK AND HARRY

Emerge from the stairs, race over to the elevator access panel...

HARRY
(into mike)
Mac! We need people on 28 now!

THE WINDOW WASHING WINCH

Gives a bit more under the strain of the cable...

THE ELEVATOR

It drops a few inches. People yell, gasp, cry.

JACK AND HARRY

Get the last screw out of another access panel. They can see the bottom two feet of the elevator doors. With a grunt they pry open the doors. People's feet and the sounds of panic.

JACK/HARRY
On the floor! Hands and knees!
Let's move it!

A WOMAN lies down. Jack and Harry grab her hands, pull her out. Then another. They pull out the CEO.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CEO
What the hell is all this?

Two more SWAT guys arrive and help pull.

THE WINCH

About to break free...

JACK AND HARRY

...Pull out two more people...

THE WINDOW WASHING WINCH

...Rips through the door frame, wedges against an ENGINE...

THE ELEVATOR

...Drops sharply. Oh God... But then it stops, now with only the top three feet of the elevator showing.

THE CABLE

Is being held by what's left of the platform -- some slats of splintering wood and lengths of bending metal. It's giving way slowly, an inch at a time.

JACK AND HARRY

Now pull people up to get them out. They see the elevator sinking, the opening closing. Two and a half feet. Two feet. They have one woman to pull out. She's halfway... her legs still in...

THE CABLE

Pulls free as the mass of wood and metal finally gives way.

THE ELEVATOR

Drops.

JACK AND HARRY

Pull the woman as hard as they can as the huge metal box flies down, shooting out sparks --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HER LEGS

Sliding out as the top of the car races down on them -- she's not gonna make it --

ELEVATOR SHAFT

The elevator drops like a rock, trailing cable. It drops so far that it disappears from sight. A huge sound when it hits bottom.

INT. MAIN LOBBY

McMahon and the other SWAT and bomb guys are almost knocked off their feet by the impact reverberating throughout the building.

ELEVATOR DOORS

In the lobby buckle out from the air concussion.

INT. HALL

The woman, terrified, looks down at her legs. The elevator just clipped off her high heel. Jack and Harry exchange a look.

The other SWAT guys usher the rescued passengers to the stairwell as Jack and Harry lean against the wall, a little out of breath.

JACK
Is your watch slow?

HARRY
(shaking his head)
He jumped the gun. We had three minutes.

JACK
Why does he do that? He's blowing three million.

HARRY
Maybe he couldn't hold his wad long enough. It's a common problem among middle-aged men, although I myself --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JACK

He's here.

HARRY

He could've blown that thing from Pacoima.

JACK

No, he knew we were up to something. He's close by.

HARRY

He's not gonna corner himself in the building. We evacuated anyway.

Jack does not reply, and Harry sees he's convinced. So he thinks.

HARRY

So he'd want to be here, but he'd want to be mobile.

(click)

The elevators.

JACK

Passenger cars were stopped, right? They checked 'em out.

HARRY

What about the freight elevators?

INT. BY FREIGHT ELEVATOR

They get to the freight elevator doors, pry them open. They look down.

The freight elevator is stopped five floors below them. They can hear movement in the elevator.

JACK

Will the mystery guest please sign in...

jack slides down the elevator cable.

HARRY

Jack, we don't even know if --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

But he's gone. After a moment's hesitation, Harry follows, climbing down rungs.

INT. ELEVATOR SHAFT

Jack and Harry move down the shaft.

THE FREIGHT CAR

...as Jack arrives. Pulls his 9mm Glock and steps from the rungs lightly onto the car. HARRY right behind him. The car sinks slightly from their weight.

Jack points at the hatch cover on the elevator roof. Harry nods and pulls his Glock. He and Jack kneel by the hatch cover. Jack grabs the handle. Harry makes the countdown hand signals. Three, two --

A shotgun BLAST nearly takes their heads off, splintering part of the hatch cover. Both men jump back. A second shot right by Harry's foot sends him jumping away, he steps on the hatch cover and it gives away. He falls into the elevator, hitting his head badly.

JACK

Harry!

We HEAR Harry being knocked out by the butt end of a rifle.

INT. ELEVATOR

Fisk's finger pushes a button on a control panel.

JACK

Sprawled out as the elevator starts to rise. Another shotgun blast takes out a plate-sized chunk right next to him.

Jack wants to return fire, but hears Harry yelling in pain and doesn't know where to shoot. Another blast right next to him keeps him prone in the corner. He senses something and looks up.

HIS P. O. V.

The elevator barrels toward the ceiling of the shaft.

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CONTINUED:

JACK

With no other choice, jumps feet first through the pen hatch.

INT. ELEVATOR

Jack comes crashing down into the elevator, lands hard. The air is thick with shotgun smoke. The few lights not shot out flicker. Jack looks up and is transfixed. He's looking into...

THE BARREL OF A SHOTGUN

He hears a voice out of the smoke.

FISK

I don't suppose anybody would pay three million just for you.

Fisk chuckles. Then a loud, dull click. Another click. The shotgun is empty.

JACK

Brings his gun up fast.

JACK

Drop it!

The gun drops. Through smoke and flickering light, Jack gets a good look at Howard Fisk. Fisk is calm, his arm around the still groggy Harry. In his hand is a deadman's stick. His coat opens enough for us to see he has sticks of dynamite roped around his chest.

FISK

Pop quiz, hotshot. Terrorist holding a police hostage. He's got enough dynamite strapped to his chest to blow the building in half. What do you do?

INT. LOBBY

McMahon screams into his walkie talkie.

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CONTINUED:

MCMAHON

I want location on those goddamn shots! Briggs! Where is Jack and Harry?

NORWOOD

Sir, we got movement in the freight elevator.

McMahon looks at him, puzzled.

INT. ELEVATOR

Jack keeps steady aim at Fisk.

JACK

There's gonna be fifty cops waiting for us in the basement.

FISK

Standard flanking deployment, right?

Fisk opens the elevator control panel. Wires feed into a small box Fisk has hooked up. Fisk hits a couple of buttons.

FISK

Maybe we'll just get off on the third floor.

INT. LOBBY

The elevator indicator light stops at the third floor.

MCMAHON

Third floor! Let's move it!

The SWAT cops run.

INT. ELEVATOR

Ding! The elevator reaches P1.

FISK

Well, end of the line. This day has been a real disappointment, I don't mind saying.

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CONTINUED:

JACK
Why, 'cause you didn't get to kill everyone?

True hatred flashes in Fisk's eyes.

FISK
There'll come a time, boy, you'll wish you never met me.

JACK
I'm pretty much there already.

Fisk starts to back up, dragging Harry with him.

FISK
See, I'm in charge here! I drop this stick, they pick up your friend with a sponge.

ANGLE ON HARRY

The Deadman's stick right before his eyes.

FISK
(to Harry)
Are you ready to die, friend?

HARRY
Fuck you.

FISK
(warily)
In two hundred years we've gone from 'I regret that I have but one life to give for my country' to 'fuck you.'

HARRY
Go ahead! Drop the stick!

JACK
(to Harry)
Shut up!

FISK
Man, we got all the balls in the world right here!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JACK
Give it up!

Fisk drags Harry out. Jack doesn't know what to do.

Harry looks at Jack. He barely mouths the words.

HARRY
Shoot the hostage.

Jack can't move. Fisk and Harry head toward swinging doors that lead to the garage. Jack watches, gun trained on Fisk.

HARRY
Do it.

He shifts aim and **BLASTS** Harry in the leg. Harry goes down and Fisk can't take him anywhere. Almost laughing with disbelief, Fisk lets go, starts running.

Jack starts shooting through the pipes and crates. One of the shots grazes Fisk in the neck, spins him back to face Jack. Even then, Fisk has this strange grin on his face.

FISK

STUMBLES through the doors.

JACK

Runs after him, reloading as he does...

THE DOORS

...Swing back and forth. They slow. Stop.

A HUGE EXPLOSION

Blasts out from the garage. Rips the doors from their hinges. Lights go out. Plaster and cement flies.

JACK

Is knocked fifteen feet back into the far wall. He lies still.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. CITY HALL MEDAL CEREMONY - DAY

The elevator hostages and cops in attendance. Jack and Harry stand to one side of the podium in full dress uniform as the Mayor gives a droning speech. Harry has a cane.

MAYOR

...the dedication and bravery that make L.A.'s finest truly her finest. Fifteen citizens owe their lives to this team, and particularly the two officers we are here to honor... Thanks to them, the only life taken by a terrorist's bomb was his own...

ANGLE ON JACK AND HARRY

Eyes front. Harry quietly fumes.

HARRY

You shot me...I can't believe it...they're giving you a medal for shooting me, you little prick...

The Commissioner pins on Harry's medal. There is applause. The Commissioner moves to pin on Jack's medal and we:

CUT TO:

INT. FISK'S GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

WE SEE the ceremony on TV, a close-up of Jack's face as the audience applauds again, somewhat louder. PULL OUT TO REVEAL a bank of four TVs, all showing the same shot of Jack. The TVs are all fairly old, not fancy.

Fisk sits before the screens, stone faced. Slowly, loudly, he applauds.

CLOSE UP ON HIS HANDS

Again WE SEE it; no left thumb.

EXT. FISK' S HOUSE

We hear the clapping as WE SEE his house in the twilight. A completely unremarkable suburban home, flanked by two more just like it.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR - THAT NIGHT

The local cop dive. The cops sit clustered at a few tables, celebrating. McMahon is standing, making a toast.

MCMAHON

Okay. Okay. Here's to harry, for his quick thinking, his grace under pressure and his brave and selfless act...

Many "Here here"s.

MCMAHON

...and to Jack, for shooting Harry, which God knows we've all wanted to do for some time.

Laughs. McMahon quiets them.

MCMAHON

No. Okay. You know what it is: To the guys, for doing your job and not getting dead. Mazeltov.

Everyone drinks. McMahon sits as Jack is called upon to speak.

COPS

Speech! Jack, a toast! Come on.

He doesn't want to, but he stands.

JACK

Okay. Um, I'd like to thank all the little people --

Many boos.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JACK
 -- I'm fuzzy on names, but I know
 you're all very tiny. Harry,
 you're a god... Uh, I don't
 know... here's to... tiny pension
 and a cheap gold watch.

"Here Here"s. Everyone drinks.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BAR - LATER

The dregs of the occasion. The few that are left are fairly soused. McMahon and Jack are at the bar, talking. The bartender, SANDY, pours them each a shot.

SANDY
 Here you go. Thirty-fifth round
 is on the house.

JACK
 (to Mac)
 Nobody wanted me to be a cop. My
 dad said if I wanted to prove
 myself as a man I should sell
 tires like him.
 (to Sandy, re: shots)
 His is bigger than mine.

Harry sits at the table with a few cops, including ROBIN, a female cop. He vaguely paws at her as she stands.

HARRY
 Come here. Come on, hey, sit on
 my lap. Sit on my lap and do a
 dance.

She fends off his hands.

ROBIN
 (good naturedly)
 Piss off, Harry. You're married.

HARRY
 I am?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON JACK AND MCMAHON

MCMAHON

That's what this job is. It's those moments when everything compresses and it's just you and him. That moment. Other jobs are just typing. And that's what real people don't understand about cops.

JACK

That we're psychotic.

MCMAHON

Yes. Well put. That was your problem with what's-her-name. What was her name?

JACK

(thinks a moment)

Debbie.

MCMAHON

Debbie.
(remembering)
Donna!

JACK

Oh. Right.

ANGLE ON HARRY

Is looking at a picture of his wife in his wallet.

HARRY

This is my wife? She's gorgeous!
I'm going home! I'm gonna get
some.

He staggers up and over to Jack as McMahon heads for the john.

HARRY

Jaaaaaack.

JACK

(imitating him)

Haaaaarry. Druuuuunk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HARRY

(puts his arm around
him)

Jack... You know what we are?
We're the two luckiest guys in the
world. Got the bad guy and didn't
lose any civilians.

JACK

We're good.

HARRY

(dead serious, in his
face)

We're lucky. Understand it, Jack.
We were dealing with a total
psycho; he could have blown us up
anytime. I got a bullet in me --
six inches off the mark and they
give the medal to my wife.

JACK

Harry, man, we won. We got him.

HARRY

Do you listen? I'm not gonna be
backing you up for a long while,
so you gotta start thinking.
Guts'll get you so far, and then
they'll get you killed. Luck runs
out, Jack. Sooner or later.

A moment, as Harry's words sink in. Harry's said his
piece: he pulls himself up, swaying. Jack helps him.

HARRY

I'm gonna go home and have some
sex.

JACK

Harry, you're gonna go home and
throw up.

HARRY

Well, that'll be fun too.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

As they EXIT FRAME we:

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Jack's airy Venice loft apartment. Very clean, slightly industrial in look. A large model of a sailing boat proudly displayed in one corner, the other corner holds a complete entertainment center. Sports equipment is carefully placed along one wall.

Jack wakes up lying on top of his covers, wearing shorts and a tee shirt. He looks much the worse for wear. The TV is on by the bed, the Today show blaring at Jack. He sits slowly up and regards the TV with a bleary eye.

JACK

Katie...Love me, Katie. Bryant
will never respect you the way I
do.

Wincing from a hangover, he pulls on his sneakers. Gets up, grabs some aspirin that he chews like candy, going for the door and the CAMERA TRACKS ALONG, leading him as he heads out...

EXT. JACK'S HOUSE

...the door and starts slowly down the street, jogging, picking up speed, the bleariness leaving his face and we are still leading him along as he starts sprinting, running flat out down the sun-baked street.

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S BATHROOM - LATER

Jack stands under a steaming hot shower, face to the water.

CUT TO:

EXT. STARBUCKS - A LITTLE LATER

Jack is exiting with a cup of coffee as BOB parks his bus across the street and runs to the cafe.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOB
Hey, Jack. You look like a side
order of hash.

JACK
Thanks, Bob.

VINCE
The boy was up late celebrating.

VINCE has Bob's coffee ready; they make the exchange like
clockwork.

Jack heads for his car as Bob crosses back to his bus.

BOB
Wild party, huh?

JACK
I don't remember that well. Can't
have been too great; I woke up
alone.

BOB
Yeah, well, last time I partied
like that I woke up married.

Bob hops in the bus and takes off. Jack puts his breakfast
on the top of his car as he digs for his keys.

THE BUS

explodes.

JACK

half-turns as the shock wave knocks him off his feet. Car
alarms wail. People run. The bus carcass burns, twisted
metal and flaming plastic where Bob was. Jack moves
forward on instinct, but there's nothing he can do and the
flames force him back.

As Jack stares in shock, we notice a **PHONE RINGING**, getting
louder as it filters into Jack's consciousness. Suddenly
it dawns on him and he turns, dreamlike, and walks to the
phone. Picks up the receiver.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FISK

What do you think, Jack? You think if you can find all the driver's teeth they'll give you another medal?

JACK

Jesus...

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. FISK'S CAR

A big old American car. He has it parked a block or two away. He speaks on a cellular.

FISK

Twenty second delay on the Deadman's stick. I'm in the airduct when it blows. Did you think I wouldn't have prepared? I spent two years setting up my elevator job. Two years. I invested myself in it. You couldn't understand the commitment I have. A child, Jack, you're a child. You ruin a man's life's work, and then you think you can walk away? You got blinders on, to the world. But I got your attention now. Didn't I, Jack?

JACK

Why didn't you just come after me?

FISK

Oh, now you're getting a swelled head. This is about my money, the money I'm due, which I will get. Three point seven million dollars. That's was my original sum, plus interest compounded quarterly and expenses. None of this had to happen, Jack. I hope you realize that. That bus driver could have gone home to his wife and children tonight.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FISK (cont'd)
How long do you think it'll be
before they start worrying about
him? He's so late coming home...

JACK
(nearly losing it)
When I find you, man, I'm gonna
kill you all over.

FISK
Pop quiz, hotshot. There's a bomb
on a bus. Once the bus hits fifty
miles an hour, the bomb is armed.
If the bus drops below fifty, it
blows up. What do you do?

Jack is still lost.

FISK
What do you do?

Jack pauses, accepting the challenge.

JACK
I'd want to know what bus it was.

FISK
You think I'm going to tell you
that?

JACK
Yes.

FISK
(smiles)
Very good.
(smile vanishes)
Now there's rules, Jack; we have
to do this right. No one gets off
the bus. If you take any of the
passengers off, I will detonate
it. If I don't get my money by
11:00 a.m., there is also a timer.

Jack looks at his watch. It's 8:05

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JACK
We can't pull that money in time --

ANGLE ON FISK

FISK
Focus, Jack! Your concern is the bus. Don't try to call, you'll find their radio is down. It's Number 2525, running downtown from Venice. It's at the corner of Lincoln and Pico. Should be heading onto the freeway right about...

ANGLE ON THE PHONE

Swinging on the line. Jack's already gone.

FISK
... now.

SMASH CUT TO:

JACK'S CAR

Tires squeal as Jack pulls out.

CUT TO:

EXT. BUS STOP

The bus is pulling away. ANNIE, an attractive twentysomething in an Arizona tee shirt and casual clothes, bolts after it. It is a good half block away by the time she reaches it. She runs alongside, yelling at the driver, mimes begging, smiling, praying.

SAM, the driver, finally relents. He stops and opens the door.

SAM
This look like a stop to you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNIE
 (hopping on)
 You're a saint, Sam. You're a
 good, kind man and people will
 write songs about you one day.

She smiles at him, chewing on a wad of gum. He starts up again as she digs in her pockets for fare. She comes up with bills.

ANNIE
 Do you have any change?

He rolls his eyes as:

ANGLE ON THE BUS

It pulls onto the freeway.

INT. THE BUS

Annie is exchanging money with MRS. KAMINO, an Asian office worker.

ANNIE
 Thanks. I have all this change at home, but I always forget...

MRS. KAMINO
 That's okay.

She deposits the change and makes her way to the middle of the bus. She waves to ORTIZ, a large repairman.

ANNIE
 Hey, Ortiz.

ORTIZ
 Annie.

She plops herself down in front of DOUG STEPHENS, an obvious tourist.

STEPHENS
 First time in L. A.?

ANNIE
 No, I live here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEPHENS

No, I mean mine. Well, that's just funny -- you heard me wrong. I'm sightseeing. I hate to use the word 'tourist', but --
 (holds up his map and camera)
 -- It's not like I can hide it!

ANNIE

Not really.

STEPHENS

You know, it took me three hours just to get here from the airport. I got so lost. L.A. is one large place. But you live here, you probably don't notice. I'm such a yokel. There; I said it.

While he is saying it, Annie quickly sticks her gum on her seat.

ANNIE

Oh! There's gum on my seat! Oh, eww.

She stands, points.

ANNIE

(as if teaching him the word)

Gum.

Thus excused, she makes her way back to the front. She sits by HELEN, a middle-aged secretary. Smiles vaguely at her.

ANNIE

Mornin'g.

HELEN

You're lucky, you know. Sam wouldn't stop for just anyone.

ANNIE

Yeah, well, if he'd be late once I wouldn't have to catch him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HELEN
Not out Sam.

EXT. SANTA MONICA STREETS - DAY

Frustrated, Jack weaves in and out of traffic, honking, yelling... Turns onto Lincoln in a controlled four-wheel skid.

EXT. BUS (MOVING) - FREEWAY

The bus is picking up speed.

EXT. FREEWAY ON-RAMP

Jack speeds up the on-ramp almost sideswiping a new Black XJ-12 Jaguar convertible. The DRIVER screams at Jack.

INT./EXT. BUS (MOVING) - FREEWAY

The bus in traffic, picking up speed. The speedometer reads 45 and climbing.

A few passengers are talking; others are reading -- a day like any other day. Annie looks at her watch, addresses Helen.

HELEN
Oh I just couldn't drive on the freeways anymore. I would get so tense. This way I can just relax all the way to work.

ANNIE
Well, I love my car. I miss my car.

HELEN
In the shop?

ANNIE
Nnnhyyeah.

HELEN
Do you work downtown?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNIE
 Uh-huh.
 (off Helen's
 expectant pause)
 I'm a graphic designer.

HELEN
 Really? Where do you work?

ANNIE
 Uncle Salty's Seafood Hut.

Helen nods understandingly.

ANNIE
 (as a perky waitress)
 Try the shrimp fries, only fifty
 cents extra.
 (as a human)
 Anyway it's only temporary, till
 I can get enough money together to
 shoot myself.

EXT. FREEWAY

Jack is frantic, weaving in and out of traffic.

INSERT - BUS SPEEDOMETER

almost touches 50... then eases off.

There's a traffic jam ahead and the bus slows down.

Passengers groan.

ANNIE
 (to Sam, re: cars)
 Can't you go over them?

EXT. FREEWAY

Jack grins. It's going to be okay.

EXT. THE FREEWAY

A half-mile ahead, there's an accident blocking the three
 right lanes. There are flames on the road and a POLICEMAN
 is trying to direct traffic.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Traffic is backed-up a hundred yards from the accident and is tunneling through the one open lane -- the far left lane.

Jack sees the bus. It is mired in the jam as well. But it's all the way over to the left, fifty yards from Jack.

Jack pulls his car over onto the right shoulder, stops and gets out. He hurries for the bus. It's a race against time, as the bus is heading for the choke point, building speed as the cars funnel through ahead of it.

Jack gets to the bus, just as it's about to go past the accident. He runs along beside it, knocking on the bus door.

JACK
Stop! Open up!

MRS. KAMINO
That guy really wants to get on
the bus.

ANNIE
(dryly)
Can you blame him?

SAM
Get off the doors, man! Wait for
the next one.

JACK
L. A. P. D. ! Stop the bus!

But he is barely audible from inside. He pulls his badge out of his back pocket, but is bumped by a passing car in the right lane, and drops it.

HELEN
Maybe you should let him on, Sam.

Annie gives a concerned look.

Sam speeds up to get away from Jack as Jack retrieves the badge.

A young Hispanic, RAY, watches Jack chasing the bus. He looks around at everyone nervously. Says nothing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Jack tries to get in front of the bus, but Sam doesn't slow down, so Jack has to get out of the way.

The bus is getting away. He's running as fast as he can. He tries to pull the rear doors. No go. The doors slip from his grasp. He pounds futilely on the last plastic side panel, and the bus is gone.

Jack staggers, doubles over, exhausted.

Cars honk at him, swerve around him.

Jack looks back. His car is a half mile back, still in thick traffic, not an issue. Jack stops out in front of the oncoming cars.

JACK

Stop!

We hear brakes screeching and a man yelling.

JAGUAR OWNER

What the fuck?

THE JAGUAR OWNER, late 20s, curses Jack from behind the wheel of his brand new XJ-12 CONVERTIBLE. Jack flashes a badge.

JACK

LAPD. Get out of the car.

JAGUAR OWNER

Oh, Jesus, not again.

(to Jack, pissed)

This is my car, okay? I own this car. It is not stolen.

Jack pulls his gun.

JACK

It is now.

Jack opens the door.

JACK

Move over.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

The man hesitates a second, then gets up and climbs over the center console into the passenger seat. Jack holsters his gun, jumps in and steps on it.

JAGUAR OWNER

You scratch this puppy, we're gonna have words.

INT. THE BUS

Sam accelerates. We hear the automatic transmission downshift.

INSERT - SPEEDOMETER

45 and climbing...

JACK

Chasing the bus, weaving in and out of traffic honking, flashing the Jag's lights. The car's owner holds on with white knuckles and eyes closed.

INSERT - BUS SPEEDOMETER

46, 47...

JACK

Catches up to the bus. He lays his hand on the horn.

SAM

Looks down from the bus at Jack. Double takes. It's the same guy who was running after the bus! And he's yelling something.

ORTIZ

Man definitely has a hard-on for this bus.

Ray watches the car with growing unease. He gets up and goes to the rear of the bus, slumps way down.

JACK

Trying to be heard above the engine noise.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JACK
I'm a cop!

Sam's eyes narrow. He opens the window.

SAM
What?

Jack flashes his badge.

JACK
L-A-P-D. There's a bomb on your
bus!

JAGUAR OWNER
(shocked)
There's a -- fuck!

SAM
I can't hear you.

JACK
There's a bomb on the bus.

Sam shakes his head -- he can't hear Jack.

Jack looks around. Sees sheet music on the back seat.

JACK
Grab that, willya? I need
something to write on.

The Jaguar Owner hesitates a beat, then grabs the sheet
music.

JACK
I want you to write on the back in
big letters. Bomb on bus.

JAGUAR OWNER
Is this for real?

JACK
Just write it.

The Jaguar Owner starts to write. Jack accelerates
sharply, snapping the Jaguar Owner's head back. The Jaguar
pulls in front of the bus...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ON THE BUS

Sam and the passengers are looking out at Jack, wondering what the hell is going on.

INSERT - SPEEDOMETER

48, 49...

JAGUAR

The Jaguar Owner holds the sheet music up. The wind RIPS it from his hands.

SAM

looks up as the sheet music PLASTERS against his windshield: BOMB ON BUS. Sam stunned. Then the wind WHIPS it away. Sam breaks into a cold sweat...

INSERT - SPEEDOMETER

48, 49, 50.

UNDER THE BUS

A mass of slabs of white putty wired to a black box. A red light comes on, blinks. The explosives are armed.

TWO OTHER SMALLER BOMBS

Also under the bus, are armed. We don't see exactly where they are. They are just one cake of C-4 apiece.

INT. THE BUS

Sam's eyes go wide.

SAM'S FOOT

Instinctively eases off the gas.

BUS SPEEDOMETER

Dropping 55, 54, 53...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JACK

Sees the bus slow. He looks down at the Jag's speedometer. It reads 55.

JACK

No!

Sam looks at Jack, the bus continuing to slow. Jack motions for him to speed up.

JACK

Speed up!

SAM S FOOT

Holds the pedal steady.

THE BUS

The speed levels off. Sam looks questioningly at Jack. Jack yells as loud as he can.

JACK

FIFTY! STAY ABOVE FIFTY!

Sam hears him. He looks at Jack -- does he mean what he thinks he mean? Jack nods. Sam trembles a little.

SAM S FOOT

Presses down on the gas pedal, accelerating.

JACK

Driving intently. The owner has his cellular phone out.

JACK

470-8000. Ask for Detective Harry Temple.

JAGUAR OWNER

Harry Temple. It's urgent.

He listens a moment, then hands the phone to Jack.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JACK
Harry.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. POLICE STATION

Harry at his desk; a sleepy morning. Robin and SWAT Cop #1 are working in the b.g.

HARRY
You better not be calling in sick,
'cause I dragged my ass out of --

JACK
He's alive.

HARRY
What?

JACK
The bomber, Harry. He's back.

McMahon and Norwood burst in, in mid-conversation.

NORWOOD
He hit one in Venice already.
Fire chief says there's nothing
left.

MCMAHON
Temple! We just got a ransom
demand from your dead terrorist!
Says he rigged a city bus.
Where's Jack?

HARRY
Where do you think?

EXT. FREEWAY - JACK

Is driving like a maniac. The Jaguar fishtails on the shoulder, car horns blaring at him. Jack gets back alongside the bus -- now on the bus's right, by the door. He's worried. The traffic is already thickening.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ON THE BUS

Sam hears a honk and looks out the passenger door.

Jack has pulled the Jag around to that side. He's driving on the shoulder, yelling at him. He can't make him out.

Sam flips the door control.

JACK
Drive straight. Stay in this lane.

SAM
What?

JACK

Looks around. How to do this? He looks at the Jag's door -- it's a problem. So he speeds ahead of the bus, opens the door, swings it wide. The wind tries to push it shut but he holds it.

JAGUAR OWNER
What are you doing?

JACK
Are you insured?

JAGUAR OWNER
(panicked)
Why?

But Jack is already slamming on the brakes.

JAGUAR OWNER
Shit!

THE JAGUAR'S WHEELS

Smoke.

THE BUS

Comes up fast, smashes into the door, rips it off.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ON THE BUS

Everyone looks in amazement as the Jaguar, minus the door, slows beside the bus.

JACK
Keep straight!

JAGUAR

JACK
Take the wheel!

He stands on the edge of the seat as the owner scrambles to get into it. Jack prepares to jump. He's just about to. But...

SAM

Some YAHOO in front of him is going forty. He has to swerve.

JACK

Yells, leaps from his car. It doesn't look like he's going to make it. His right hand grabs the bottom of the handrail at the front of the bus. Jack howls. His shoulder is wrenched.

HIS FEET

Are dragging over the pavement.

THE JAGUAR

The owner is struggling to get control of the car. He can't do it in time. The Jag plows into the big yellow water-filled collision barrels at an off-ramp.

The driver, unhurt, cranes to see if Jack made it okay.

JACK

Pulls himself with one arm, up onto the bus steps.

INT. BUS

Jack catches his breath, looks up. Dusts himself off. Everyone on the bus is staring at him. Jack holds up his badge. Ray looks around him, concerned.

JACK
Everyone, I'm Jack Traven,
L. A. P. D. We got a
slight...situation on the bus
here...

Annie rises from her seat.

ANNIE
What's going on? Are you crazy?

JACK
Ma'am, if you'll please sit down,
we can deal with this in an
orderly --

ANNIE
But what are you --

JACK
Ma'am.

His tone is so stern she sits right down. Jack makes his way down the bus, looking at everyone.

In the back, Ray starts sweating as Jack approaches.

His hands reach for something under his coat.

JACK
...If everyone will just stay in
your seats and remain calm and
quiet, then we'll be able to
defuse the...problem. So, sit
tight.

Ray suddenly leaps out of his seat.

RAY
Get away from me!

He levels a gun at Jack. Instinctively Jack whips his own out, and the two are at close range stand-off. Ray looks more scared than anything. There are a few screams.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JACK
I don't know you, man. I'm not
here for you. Let's not do this.

RAY
(to Sam)
Stop the bus!

JACK
He can't.

RAY
Shut up!

He moves forward. Jack backs up, slowly.

TERRY
(to Ray)
Stay cool, man.

RAY
(to Sam)
Stop the bus!

Sam looks around, unsure what to do.

JACK
Look. I'm putting my gun away.
(he does, slowly)
Okay? Okay? Listen. I don't
care about your crime. Whatever
you did, I'm sure... that you're
sorry, and so it's cool now. It's
over.
(he drops his badge
on the ground)
And I'm not a cop right now. See?
We're just two cool guys. Just
hanging on the bus.

Despite the fumbling manner of Jack's speech, his tone does
have a hypnotic lull. Ray looks like he might lower the
gun.

Ortiz jumps him.

JACK
NO!!!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

He rushes forward as Ortiz and Ray struggle. A SHOT goes off, everyone ducking and screaming. A second shot.

The driver's partition SHATTERS. Sam lurches to one side, hit in the back.

HELEN

Sam!!!

The bus swerves sickeningly as Sam slumps over. Annie dives for the wheel, Helen to help Sam.

Jack moves in and with two crunching blows disarms and subdues Ray. Simultaneously:

ANNIE

(to Helen)

Move him!

HELEN

He's bleeding!

ANNIE

I've got to stop this thing!

Jack spins around.

JACK

NO! Stay above fifty!

ANNIE

We've got a wounded --

JACK

You slow down and this bus'll explode!

Silence. Annie looks briefly back at Jack, sees he's not kidding. She looks back at the speedometer, which is almost under 51. Pushes her foot on the accelerator. Jack addresses everyone as he handcuffs Ray to a pole.

JACK

There is a bomb on this bus. If we slow down, it'll blow.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JACK (cont'd)
 (clicks on one cuff)
 If anyone tries to get off, it'll
 blow.
 (clicks on the other)
 Wide eyes, some quiet tears.
 Terry stands up.

TERRY
 Oh, this is bullshit! Nobody's
 gonna -- This is some joke!

JACK
 (in his face)
 Are we gonna have a problem now?

A moment. Terry backs down.

HELEN
 He's bleeding bad! I don't know
 what to do. There's all this
 blood...

Mrs. Kamino pulls off her sweater, going over and wrapping
 it around Sam's shoulder.

JACK
 We're only gonna make it through
 this if everyone stays calm and
 sits down.
 (to Ortiz)
 That means you, Gigantor.

Terry moves to help lay Sam out more comfortably. Jack
 goes over to Annie. She is staring straight ahead, death
 grip on the wheel: she's terrified.

ANNIE
 This is great. A bomb on wheels.

JACK
 Ma'am, can you handle this bus?

ANNIE
 Sure. Sure, I can do this. It's
 just like driving a really big
 Pinto.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

JACK
(not amused)
Can you handle it?

ANNIE
(bridles)
I'm fine. What's the plan, is there a plan?

JACK
(taking the cellular
from his back pocket)
Just for you to drive. We're okay for now. Just stay above fifty.

She takes a breath. Calms herself. He dials.

ANNIE
You're a cop, right?

JACK
That's right.

ANNIE
Then I should probably tell you:
I'm just taking the bus 'cause I had my driver's license revoked.

JACK
What for?

ANNIE
Speeding.

He allows himself a grin as he dials.

EXT. HELIPAD

Norwood and McMahon board a police chopper. It lifts off.

EXT. FREEWAY

The bus races along. High above it we see the local news helicopters, cameras trained on it.

INT. FISK'S ROOM

All four TVs are on, playing all the different newscasts. Fisk sits, watching the various helicopter shots of the bus.

We focus in on channel 7, the newscaster's voice rising from the general cacophony.

CHANNEL 7 ANCHOR
Apparently a member of the
L. A. P. D. SWAT team boarded the bus
just minutes ago...

FISK
Would that be you, Jack?

CUT TO:

INT. BUS

Jack on the phone.

JACK
Where do we start?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. POLICE STATION

Harry at his desk. Robin and SWAT Cop #1.

HARRY
Okay... Check the speedometer. Has
it been fucked with,
loosened... any wires?

Jack checks.

JACK
No, it's clean.

HARRY
Then it's gonna be under the bus.
Probably rigged to one of the
axles.

JACK
I can't get under the bus right
now, Harry. It's kind of in
motion.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sam makes a grunting sound in Jack's direction.

HELEN
Officer? Hey, Officer Traven.

She beckons to Jack, who kneels by Sam.

SAM
There's... access panel... in the
floor.

He points to the center of the bus.

JACK
(into phone)
Hold on.

He goes over and unscrews the panel, pulls it aside.
Pavement rushes beneath him. He hands the phone to
Stephens.

JACK
Hold on to this, please. Tell him
what I see.

Stephens takes the phone nervously as Jack sticks his head
down through the hole. It is dark and cramped down there.

JACK
Okay, there's a wad right here,
pretty big...

STEPHENS
(into phone)
There's a pretty big wad...

JACK
Brass fittings... I think I can
reach the circuit wire.

STEPHENS
He can reach the circuit wire.

HARRY
Don't. That'll be a decoy.

HARRY
What else?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JACK

Hold on...

It's hard to see very far with tanks and pipes. Jack lowers his head even further down. From his P.O.V., the undercarriage closer to the front comes into view.

JACK

Fuck me...

There is an obscene mass of plastique stuck to the front. Detonators, wires, a jerry-rigged timer built around a gutted gold wristwatch. A lot of the gold plating has flaked off, dull grey beneath.

STEPHENS

(translating)

Oh darn...

Jack pulls himself out of the hole, grabs the phone.

JACK

Harry, there's enough C4 on this thing to put a hole in the world.

HARRY

(worried)

All right, be calm like me. What else?

JACK

Three triggers. One on the axle I can't really see. Cellular remote and a timer, running off a wristwatch.

Something about that bothers Harry.

HARRY

What kind of watch?

JACK

Too far to see. Gold band, fairly cheesy.

ANNIE

Officer...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JACK
What's on your mind, Harry?

ANNIE
Traven, NOW!

Jack races to the front, looks out the window with Annie.

THEIR P. O. V.

Ahead, a domino tide of red brake lights washes back.

JACK
Get on the shoulder.

Annie nods, veers onto the right shoulder, blasting past the slowing traffic. But then they see...

THEIR P. O. V.

A half-mile ahead, there's a STALLED CAR being rolled onto the back of a TOW TRUCK on the shoulder. Behind it, there's an OFF-RAMP.

ANNIE
Get off or stay on?

JACK
(thinks)
Shit.

Annie tries to squeeze the bus between the tow truck and the slow lane. She hits the car on back, sends it FLYING over the front of the truck. She keeps going, sideswiping several cars.

ANNIE
Jack... What now?

JACK
Off. OFF!

Annie steers off the freeway at the last second, onto the exit ramp.

EXT. THE BUS

Roars down the off-ramp, slamming into the water barrels. Far ahead, cars are stopped at the light. The ramp is a single lane. The bus jumps the curb, taking out roadway signs, reflectors and car mirrors.

INT. THE BUS

For the next few minutes, whenever she doesn't need to use both hands to drive, her hand is on the horn.

JACK
Everybody hold on!

Annie's hands and feet are in constant motion.

The passengers are knocked about, yelling.

Jack and Annie's faces -- uh-oh. They see...

A RED LIGHT

At the bottom of the ramp. Cross traffic.

ANNIE'S FOOT

Hesitates over the brake, then...

JACK'S FOOT

Stomps on the gas.

THE BUS

Rockets through the intersection. Cars fishtail, nearly colliding.

INT. THE BUS

Sam winces. Helen holds his hand.

Jack and Annie stare at...

INSERT - SPEEDOMETER

It dips close to 50, rises...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JACK AND ANNIE

Share a look of relief, look ahead.

The street is clear for a half-mile.

EXT. STREET - FAR AHEAD

Unbeknownst to them, a WOMAN, 30s, pushes a BABY CARRIAGE along the sidewalk. She is talking to another woman.

INT. THE BUS

A moment's respite. The cellular rings.

JACK

Yeah... Mac, where've you been? We had to bail on the freeway, we're in the city!

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. CHOPPER

McMahon is looking out the window. He has a map of the city on his lap.

MCMAHON

I can see you, Jack.

ANGLE ON MCMAHON'S P. O. V.

The bus charges through the maze of streets.

MCMAHON

Keep going straight. We're trying to clear the roads for you. We'll get you out, Jack.

He consults the map closely, trying to pinpoint the bus's location.

THE BUS

Barrels down the streets.

INT. FISK' S ROOM

As Fisk watches, eating a baloney sandwich on white bread and a glass of milk. WE SEE that three of the TV's have the bus on them, but the fourth one is turned to a football game.

INT. POLICE STATION

Harry looks at the things on his desk; evidence from Fisk's last job, lined up and tagged. Robin is standing nearby with SWAT Cop #1.

ROBIN

I don't get it.

HARRY

A watch is a shitty timer. Why use it? What's he saying?

ROBIN

Lots of people have watches, Harry.

ROBIN

This guy has no M.O. Bombers fall in love with one kind of bomb and they're very monogamous. This guy uses C4, dynamite, different trigger every time, now he throws in this watch.

ROBIN

He's an encyclopedia. Knows every kind of bomb.

HARRY

(slow realization)

And everything we do to dismantle them. Robin, I want to look at files from the last, say, ten years.

ROBIN

We did the mug shots, Harry --

HARRY

No. I wanna look at cops.

EXT. A STREET NEAR THE BUS

Cars cruising to an intersection are overtaken by a screaming black & white. It reaches the intersection and turns, screeching, halting in front of traffic and blocking the intersection.

The cars slam on their brakes, nearly hitting the patrol car. The passengers barely have time to curse before the enormous bus ROARS by, going the other way.

INT. THE BUS

The passengers watch the city streets fly by, panic volume turned high.

ANNIE

SEES a GARBAGE TRUCK back out in front of the bus.

ANNIE

Pulls the wheel hard left.

THE BUS

Swerves into oncoming traffic. The bus dodges oncoming cars, trucks and other buses, bumping a few. A Lincoln peels off the side of the bus, goes flying.

EXT. THE STREET

The two women wave goodbye. Woman #1 pushes the baby carriage toward the curb.

INT. HELICOPTER

Mac still looks at his map.

MCMAHON

You got about...ten more blocks
and there'll be some units
waiting. Follow them straight,
then there's a left at the T.
You'll head onto the 105 freeway.
It's not in use yet; it'll be
empty.

INT. THE BUS

JACK
Right.

EXT. STREET - THE BUS

Continues on.

THE WOMAN AND THE BABY CARRIAGE

Steps out from behind a van right in front of the bus.

ANNIE AND JACK

Horror. It's too late. Annie shuts her eyes.

THE BUS

Smashes into the baby carriage as the woman pushing it jumps clear.

JACK AND ANNIE

Her eyes are shut. She screams. Jack can't help but look.

JACK'S P. O. V.

SLOW MOTION. The baby carriage is knocked seventy feet in front and to the side of the bus, sailing through the air.

JACK

His eyes following. He grimaces as...

THE BABY CARRIAGE

Hits the pavement. But then... a hundred empty soda and beer cans explode out of it.

INT. THE BUS

Jack smiles.

JACK
There's your baby.

Annie opens her eyes, looks in the sideview mirror.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HER P. O. V.

The woman is running after the bus, shaking her fist, stopping to pick up the cans.

Annie sighs with relief.

ANNIE
Looks just like you, honey.

THEIR P. O. V.

Here at last are the patrol cars, which start up, leading the way.

INT. THE BUS

Everyone watches the streets. After a few blocks...

THE PATROL CARS

Come to the on-ramp. The bus follows when...

A GROUP OF SCHOOL KIDS

Walk blithely in front of it -- Annie is forced to SWERVE and continue on the street parallel to the freeway.

ANNIE
(panicked and pissed)
Why aren't they in school?

JACK
(into phone)
Mac, we're boned!

INT. CHOPPER

MCMAHON
I saw. Keep straight.

He consults the map.

INT. BUS

Patrol cars pull in front of it again, leading it.

INT. CHOPPER

MCMAHON

Jack, there's another entrance in about two miles. You've gotta make an ugly turn, though.

JACK

How ugly?

ANNIE

(worried)

What's ugly?

Jack listens a moment more on the phone.

JACK

(to Annie)

We got a hard right coming up. At the construction site.

Annie looks out the window. The construction site is far away but visible. Annie can't even see the road to turn on.

ANNIE

This is a dead end.

JACK

(staring out, not convinced)

There's a turn...

There is a turn. Way ahead, the first patrol car takes it -- and nearly wipes out. Another follows, with all attendant screeching.

ANNIE

I can't make that!

JACK

Keep left.

ANNIE

But it's --

JACK

Keep left! You take it wide!

ANNIE

We're gonna tip over!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A beat.

JACK
Everyone on this side of the bus!

The passengers hesitate.

JACK
Now!

The passengers all scramble, squeeze in by each other. They look at each other, scared. Ray strains to get over, cuffed.

JACK
Move! Move! As far over as you
can! Hurry!

Annie eases the accelerator off as far as it is safe. The turn is fifty yards away.

JACK
(quietly, into the
phone)
Mac, you better clear the site.

He turns back to Annie.

Annie arcs out to flatten the turn as much as possible.

ANNIE
Hold on!

She turns the wheel and dives into the turn. The passengers are thrown. Most hold on.

The bus tires screech on the pavement. One wheel lifts off the ground for a second.

Some passengers scream, most hold their breath.

Annie strains against the steering wheel to hold it steady. She's losing it.

Jack grabs the wheel and pulls it with her, holding the turn. The bus wheel comes back down onto the pavement.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Annie and Jack bring the bus back into line. They made it. Jack turns back to the passengers, smiling.

JACK
As you were.

INT. BUS

As the passengers untangle themselves, Helen looks white as a sheet.

HARRY
Good lord, we might have...I can't think...

STEPHENS
(helping her sit)
It's okay. If you need to, you go right ahead and vomit.

EXT. THE BUS

Reaches the on-ramp, shoots up through the saw-horses and they're on.

THE CHOPPER

Touches down nearby. Mac gets out, talking to Norwood as he tries to fold the map.

MCMAHON
I want choppers up ahead, make sure there's nothing obstructing the freeway. We got a window here; let's keep it open.

INT. THE BUS

A moment of respite.

ANGLE ON ANNIE AND JACK

JACK
Ma'am, you did very well.

He looks at her. Drops the hostage talk, smiles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JACK
 Actually, you were incredible.
 I've never seen driving like that.

ANNIE
 Annie.

JACK
 What?

ANNIE
 ...is my name. Annie. As opposed
 to ma'am.

They smile at each other for a moment. Annie looks back at the road.

JACK
 I'm sorry?

ANNIE
 Why is all this happening? Did we
 bomb this guy's country or
 something?

JACK
 It's just a guy that wants money.

Annie looks at Jack.

ANNIE
 No... I don't buy it. This is not
 a good way to make money. Odds
 are, we should be dead already.
 What's this guy's deal?

JACK
 (after a beat)
 A while back this guy held some
 people for ransom. It went sour,
 and now he's a little pissed at me.

ANNIE
 Then what does this --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JACK

It's a game. If he gets the money, he wins. If the bus blows up, he wins.

ANNIE

So what happens if you win?

JACK

Then tomorrow we'll play another one.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE STATION

Harry and Robin lean over a computer worked by SWAT Cop #1. On the screen, a series of faces flash by.

SWAT COP #1

We got no match for that description. No one's lost a thumb, at least for the last ten years.

RAY

He could be from anywhere.

SWAT COP #1

I can't access all that --

HARRY

Forget the files.

(to Robin)

I want you to go through the pension fund. This guys drawing disability. He may not be L. A. P. D. But he's living here now.

She goes.

HARRY

(calls out)

I want pictures!

(to himself)

I've seen this asshole.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE BUS

McMahon pulls up next to it on the back of a flat bed.
Jack comes out on the steps to talk to him.

MCMAHON

Let's start unloading the
passengers.

JACK

Can't do it, sir.

MCMAHON

No time for stunts, Traven. We
get those people out of harm's
way --

JACK

I got orders.
(indicates news
choppers)
We move these people, he'll see.
Crazy not stupid, remember?

Mac accepts it, scowling.

MCMAHON

Harry's working on finding this
guy. We think he may be a police.

Norwood leans out of the cab of the truck.

NORWOOD

It's him. He wants to talk to
Jack.

JACK

Give him the number.

He steps into the bus, look at Sam.

JACK

How is he doing?

MRS. KAMINO

The bleeding is less, but...

Her look tells him Sam doesn't have much time.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HELEN

Are they going to help us?

STEPHENS

Sure they are. They're the police. Hey, your taxes are paying their salary. If we die they gotta take a pay cut!

Helen blanches.

STEPHENS

I mean...

The phone rings. Jack puts it to his ear.

INTERCUT WITH:

FISK

JACK

Yeah.

FISK

Jack, I think we have trust, but it looks on the TV like you're trying to get those passengers off the bus.

JACK

You gotta let me have one.

FISK

Now, we went over the rules...

JACK

Come on, as an act of faith. We got an injured man here. The driver's been shot.

FISK

(chuckling)

Jack! Tell me you haven't been shooting the passengers. I thought it was customary for a police officer to shoot the bad men?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JACK
Hey, get in range.

FISK
No one gets off.

JACK
Come on! This guy has no time.
It'll grease the wheels with the
money men if you show a little
charity. There's still gonna be
plenty of us to kill.

FISK
Okay, son. You can try unload the
driver. Tell the wildcat behind
the wheel not to slow down,
though, or he won't get the chance
to bleed to death. And Jack...

JACK
Yeah?

FISK
Don't slip.

INT. BUS

They hang up. Jack crosses to the passengers.

JACK
We're gonna get the driver off.

HELEN
Just him?

JACK
For now.
(to Ortiz)
Gigantor.

ORTIZ
(standing)
Ortiz.

JACK
Ortiz, I'm gonna need your help.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ORTIZ

Okay.

HELEN

(no one is listening)

What about the rest of us?

MRS. KAMINO

You have to keep him straight or
I think the wound will tear.

JACK

(into walkie talkie)

McMahon, he's letting us unload
the driver. Pull up alongside us.

He bends over to grab Sam's feet.

JACK

(to Sam)

How're you feeling?

SAM

Like I've been shot.

Jack lifts, so does Ortiz at the head. Sam groans with pain and Ray rushes in to support his middle. He and Ortiz exchange a look. They walk him to the doorway.

McMahon's truck is right next to them. Jack stands on the bottom step, yells to the SWAT guy on the truck.

JACK

We gotta keep him straight!

The SWAT guy nods. Jack inches out farther. He holds Sam's legs with one hand and the railing with the other, leaning out toward the truck. The pavement rushes by underneath him. The SWAT guy grab Sam and slowly, the exchange is made.

Jack steps back into the bus, where Mrs. Kamino is wiping up blood.

JACK

I think he's gonna be --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HELEN

Wait!

Helen suddenly leaps out of her seat and rushes to the door. Her face is etched in panic. She comes to the last step, hesitates.

JACK

No!

He rushes to the front.

Helen stands. The SWAT guy waves for her to jump.

INT. FISK'S ROOM

Fisk sees this on TV. He punches a button on his cellular.

UNDER THE BUS

The small bomb directly below Helen. Red light comes on.

THE FRONT STEPS

Explode. SWAT guys are knocked off their feet, Jack is knocked into Annie and the bus swerves. Helen falls. Jack grabs at her too late, the bus bumps sickeningly, as Jack almost falls, grabbed by the lady in Catwoman's glasses.

For a moment, nothing. Jack sits back on the floor of the bus at Annie's feet, staring at the hole that was steps. Annie is nearly hyperventilating, her eyes locked on the road.

FISK

Watches on the TV. Smiles.

FISK

Interactive TV, Jack. Wave of the future.

THE BUS

More silence.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON ORTIZ

Completely shocked. This guy ain't fuckin' around.

A woman starts crying, quietly.

Finally:

JACK
 (into the walkie
 talkie)
 McMahon, get those fucking
 choppers off my ass!

Ortiz takes his jacket off, puts it around Mrs. Kamino's
 shoulders.

ORTIZ
 Here.

MRS. KAMINO
 Thanks you. I'm a little cold.

STEPHENS
 (quietly and politely
 hysterical)
 Jesus. I can't be here. I
 can't -- this bus is -- this is
 the wrong bus... for me to... I
 can't die here.

ORTIZ
 Hey, shut up, man! I got a wife!

STEPHENS
 (in his own world)
 You do?

TERRY
 (curious, but with a
 little attitude)
 So if you have a wife and I don't,
 does that mean that I'm expendable?

ORTIZ
 What are you talking about? The
 guy's just talkin' crazy, gets on
 my nerves!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

And then all at once:

STEPHENS

I think I have the right to be a
little upset after all we've --

ORTIZ

(to Ortiz)

What are you staring at everybody
for, poking your nose in, let us
die in peace, you --

RAY

Let's stop all this bullshit,
we're just making more trouble --

TERRY

(to Ortiz)

I'm interested to see how long
before the mighty caveman comes to
the surface and starts throwing
rocks at people's heads --

As the din rises:

JACK

Hey, can that shit! Jesus, it's
like a school bus!

He looks at Annie. She is shaking with the effort not to
cry.

JACK

(kneeling by her)

Are you okay?

ANNIE

No.

JACK

What do you need?

She takes a moment. Jack brushes hair from her face.

ANNIE

When that bomb went off...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JACK

I know.

She shakes her head.

ANNIE

When it blew, I thought that was it, I thought that was the bomb and I was dead, and... when I saw her fall under the bus, I was...

This is not an easy thing to say.

JACK

You were glad you were still alive.

ANNIE

(it's true)

Oh God, I'm sorry.

JACK

Don't be. You should be glad. We all are. That doesn't mean you don't care. It means you're a human being.

ANNIE

She looked so scared...

JACK

She was scared. She was a nice lady who didn't deserve to get killed. But Annie, if she'd gotten off he would have killed us all. He's the asshole, Annie, the guy who put us here. Remember that. Okay?

She nods, shakily.

ANNIE

(a little embarrassed)

Do they teach you how to talk nice to hysterical hostages in cop school?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

JACK

No, it's mostly tying square knots
and how to build fires, stuff like
that.

She smiles a little.

JACK

We should be okay for a while.

INT. THE TRUCK

Listening on a headset, Norwood's face goes dazzling white.

NORWOOD

Oh my God. Are you sure? How far?
(to McMahon)
Sir, we have a serious problem.

MCMAHON

What?

NORWOOD

This freeway isn't finished.

MCMAHON

What are you talking about?

NORWOOD

The choppers caught is about three
miles ahead. There's a section
missing.

MCMAHON

But... It's on the map! It's
finished on the goddamn map!

NORWOOD

I guess they fell behind.

MCMAHON

Fuck! You're fired, everybody's
fucking fired. How big a section?

NORWOOD

Fifty feet, at least.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MCMAHON
 (to Norwood)
 Get me closer.

He gestures for Jack to come to the door.

The flatbed truck...

VEERS

...right next to the bus.

MCMAHON
 Jack, there's a gap in the road.
 It's big.

INT. THE BUS

JACK
 You're kidding.

MCMAHON
 Fifty feet, it's in the
 interchange, somewhere after the
 next turn.

JACK
 What do we do?

MCMAHON
 We gotta get them off someway.

JACK
 There's a gap in the road. Couple
 of miles up.

Various reactions. Groans, fear, tears. People look at each other, realizing these are the last faces they're going to see. No one knows what to say, except maybe Ortiz.

ORTIZ
 You can always count on the cops,
 man...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON JACK AND ANNIE

ANNIE
Oh God, oh no...well, what if I,
uh, shift to neutral and keep the
engine revving high?

JACK
He'd've thought of that.

ANNIE
Well, what, then?

They're waiting for his answer, which he doesn't have. He thinks.

JACK
Floor it.

ANNIE
No.

JACK
Yes! It's an overpass, there
might be an incline. Floor it!

She nods. The bus starts picking up speed.

The speedometer climbs above sixty.

Jack starts toward the back of the bus. The passengers are silent, terrified. He looks at their faces as he passes.

JACK
I want everybody to hold onto the
seat in front of them, or
whatever's nearest. Heads down.
(to the lady with
presents)
Put that stuff under your seat.

STEPHENS
(scared)
Is this really gonna work?

Jack looks at him a second. What do you say?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JACK
Definitely.

He comes to Ray, unlocks his cuffs. Ray looks pretty small.

RAY
I didn't mean to shoot that guy.

JACK
(not unkindly)
Keep hold of the seat in front of
you.

Which means, for now, apology accepted. Jack moves back to the front.

Jack looks out the window -- the signs and barriers are approaching.

JACK
Everybody hold on!

People grab rails, cling to them, heads in their laps. Ortiz takes a cross from under his shirt, palms it.

MCMAHON

Watches from the truck, stopped on the empty freeway, along with the other SWAT cops. Some mumble prayers...

THE GAP IN THE FREEWAY

The bus is coming in fast, getting faster.

INSERT - THE BUS SPEEDOMETER

66, 67, 68...

INT. THE BUS

Terry is sitting by Ray.

RAY
I never shot nobody before... Jesus
I hope that guy doesn't die...

Terry looks like he's going to throw up. Mrs. Kamino is quietly crying. We hear various mumbled prayers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Stephens is in a near fetal position, clutching his map like a religious icon.

ANNIE'S P. O. V.

They screaming at the gap.

INSERT - BUS SPEEDOMETER

... 70, 71...

ANNIE

Yells, shuts her eyes.

JACK

Pushes Annie down, covers her body with his, and puts his hands over hers on the steering wheel trying to hold the bus straight.

EXT. THE BUS

Hits the gap going 73. It's airborne. The front end starts to dive. The front wheels hit the concrete edge of the far side of the gap hard.

INT. THE BUS

Jack, Annie, the passengers -- all thrown forward.

EXT. THE BUS

The tires don't burst. The wheels roll up onto the freeway surface, keep moving. The tail end of the bus is still in mid-air, dropping fast. The undercarriage hits the concrete, scrapes, sheets of sparks and horrible grinding.

INSERT - SPEEDOMETER

60, 59, 58... dropping fast.

THE BUS

The rear wheels hit the edge of the gap very hard.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ON THE BUS

Passengers near the back are tossed into the air. Windows shatter. A seat is ripped from its mooring.

THE BUS

Keeps on rolling.

MCMAHON AND THE SWAT COPS

All cheering, whooping it up.

JACK
(to Annie)
Are you okay?

ANNIE
I'm okay. I'm all right.

Jack stands, addresses the passengers.

JACK
Is everybody okay?

They're bruised, dazed, bleeding -- but whole. A muted chorus of "yeahs", followed by some boisterous whoops and even applause. People laugh, hug, high five. People who were crying are now laughing and crying. Terry kisses Mrs. Kamino (but only if they're sitting by each other).

ORTIZ
You're the man, Annie, you are the man.

TERRY
(beaming)
We are way out of control.

ORTIZ
Goddamn! Yes!

He high fives (or some such display) the person next to him.

Only Stephens hasn't moved, still in his fetal position. He slowly opens his eyes. Smiles wanly as he looks around him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

STEPHENS

I felt we would make it.

Jack smiles, big. He looks at Annie. A trickle of blood is running from her forehead. He kneels by her, beaming at her with honest admiration.

JACK

I think you missed your calling...
 (dabbing at the blood
 with his sleeve)
 ... You should have been a pilot.

She smiles, too. Jack sees something ahead. Gets an idea. He has to act fast.

JACK

Get off! Now! Get off this --

ANNIE

What?

She hesitates a second too long for his liking, so he grabs the wheel, pulls it hard right.

Passengers yell as they are tossed to the side.

THE BUS

Swerves over sharply onto an exit ramp.

FREEWAY GAP

McMahon gets into the SWAT police van with Norwood.

MCMAHON

(to Norwood)

Where the hell's he going?

TIME CUT TO:

EXT. AIRPORT ROAD

A sign reads "LAX cargo entrance." Annie drives the bus toward the airport gate. The helicopters veer off, away from the air traffic.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JACK
Head there.

She is, but a patrol car appears, partially blocking the entrance she's headed for. She swerves to miss it, heads toward an exit with tire shredding spikes.

ANNIE

Turns hard. Passengers are thrown off their feet.

THE BUS

Swerves back for the entrance.

ONE OUTSIDE REAR TIRE

Nicks the last of the spikes, but doesn't burst.

ANNIE
Never a dull moment.
(to herself)
Please God, send me a dull
moment...

EXT. AIRPORT

The bus turns onto a taxiway adjacent to a runway as a 747 thunders overhead.

INT. GMS SUBURBAN

On the freeway.

COP
He's at the airport.

NORWOOD
The airport? There's thousands of
people --

MCMAHON
That's my boy, Jack. He should be
able to circle around the runways.
Buy us some time.

NORWOOD
We can't fly in there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MCMAHON
Neither can the news boys.
(to the driver)
Let's move! Back to the exit!

The GMC Suburban pulls out. Norwood points out the airport on the map. Mac looks.

NORWOOD
Tell him to head here. There's a road there circles the freight terminals. Should be perfect.

MCMAHON
Let's hope they built it.

INT. THE BUS

Stephens looks out the window.

STEPHENS
(unhappy)
We're at the airport.

TERRY
Yeah, so?

STEPHENS
I've already seen the airport.

EXT. AIRPORT

Mac's van follows where the bus went.

ANGLE ON CHOPPERS

Hovering near the airport, they give up and fly away.

INT. BUS

The phone rings. Jack picks it up.

JACK
Hello.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GMC SUBURBAN

Enters airport through the same gate as the bus. Flies by the gate guard who points out the direction the bus went.

INTERCUT WITH:

FI SK

FI SK

Very exciting, Jack. Some close calls, but you've done all right for yourself.

JACK

What do you want?

FI SK

Money, Jack. I wish I had some loftier purpose, but in the end I'm just like you and me. I'd like large nonsequential bills in two clear plastic bags. Unmarked. Can you remember all that?

JACK

What are you telling me for?

FI SK

I want you to help me get it before it gets too late. I don't like negotiators, Jack. They talk to you like they're your best friend, and they don't know you. Why do they mess with me, do they think I'm doing this for fun?

JACK

Aren't you?

FI SK

Oh, that's not fair, Jack. You don't know how I feel about this. You don't know about me.

FI SK

(after a moment)
They don't think that.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JACK

(voice raised)

Do you want this money? Come on, show me your commitment. Let me get on the ground.

(a beat)

Just me. That's not against the rules.

FISK

All right. I'd like you back in ten minutes or less.

JACK

Fine.

FISK

Jack, nothing tricky, now. You know I'm on the top of you. Do not attempt to grow a brain.

Jack hangs up. Annie has heard the bulk of the conversation. A GMC Suburban pulls up next to the bus, McMahon, Norwood and SWAT Driver ride alongside.

ANNIE

There's a plan now, right?

JACK

Could be.

(to the group)

Everybody sit tight. I'm getting off for a minute.

Some conversation.

TERRY

What for?

MRS. KAMINO

(over him)

Do you think that's a good idea?

STEPHENS

Are you just gonna leave us here?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ORTIZ
(reasonably)

I would.

JACK
Don't worry... I won't go far.
(to Annie)
Just keep circling. You'll be
fine.

Annie looks at him. She knows she may not see him again, but she's gonna be brave.

ANNIE
(a little weakly)
Don't forget about us, okay?

They look at each other for a moment. Jack tenderly brushes her hair from her face. He's never gonna forget her.

Jack turns to the doorway. He motions for the truck to come in close.

He jumps. For a moment everyone is silent on the bus. The host has left the party.

JACK AND MCMAHON

talk as the GMC Suburban veers off the road and the bus charges off in the distance behind them. They pass a news van, cops keeping the news people from filming.

MCMAHON
The choppers are gone, Jack; let's
dump the passengers now.

JACK
No way. He's ready for that.

MCMAHON
But how is he --

JACK
I don't know how. I just know he
is. He's been a step ahead of me
every time. If we unload he'll
take them out, I guarantee.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

MCMAHON

Where does that put us?

JACK

I got to try to dismantle that bomb.

MCMAHON

That's not an option.

JACK

What would you do if the bus was standing still?

MCMAHON

Jack, it's not.

INT. THE BUS - ANGLE ON TERRY AND RAY - MINUTES LATER

They sit near the back.

TERRY

So, what'd you do, man?

RAY

What?

TERRY

Why'd you go apeshit before?
What'd you do?

RAY

Nothing, man. Leave me alone.

TERRY

Come on! Was it a gang thing,
what?

RAY

Nothing!

(after a moment)

I stole the gun, man. You know.
From my cousin.

TERRY

What for?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ray looks sidelong at Terry. He's either being defensive or lying.

RAY
Home protection.

ANGLE ON THE FRONT

Ortiz and Stephens are standing at the front with Annie.

ORTIZ
I'm telling you, Annie, the guy's
somewhere jerking off.

ANNIE
He didn't have to get on in the
first place, Ortiz. And get your
ass behind the yellow line. I
have faith.
(to herself)
I have faith.

STEPHENS
What's that?

They all look out at something pulling in front of them.
Their eyes go wide.

ANNIE
Oh my good he is insane.

ANGLE ON THEIR P. O. V.

A truck has pulled in front of them. Attached to the back
is a low wooden dolly. Jack is standing on it in his SWAT
gear, with a headset and a bunch of tools.

ON THE TRUCK

McMahon is on the back of the truck. He has a headset as
well.

MCMAHON
We're not gonna be able to keep
this steady for long.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JACK
I just need a few minutes. If I
can't do it by then I can't do it
at all.

MCMAHON
All right.

JACK
(into headset)
Harry. You with me?

HARRY
(o. s.)
All the way.

MCMAHON
Okay, this is it. Don't get dead.

Barely a moment between them, and then Jack is lying down
on the dolly.

ANGLE ON ANNIE

Watching the dolly inch closer.

ANNIE
(slowly, as it sinks
in)
This is a really bad plan.

STEPHENS
Have faith, sister.

Jack smiles at Annie, gives her the thumbs up.

ANNIE
Oh, Christ.

ORTIZ
Just keep it steady.

ANNIE
Gee, thanks for the tip.

The truck slows a bit and the dolly inches closer to the
bus. Jack lies completely flat as the bus approaches.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

He starts to disappear under the bus. Annie squints with concentration. McMahon looks on, concerned. Jack looks straight up, keeping as calm as possible as the bus covers his head.

UNDER THE BUS

Jack inches under the bomb. He speaks (always into the headset, until stated otherwise) to McMahon.

JACK
Okay, tell them to hold here.

He looks up at the bomb. From his P.O.V. the bomb is so close it fills our line of vision. There are wires running from the timer to various detonators. Also a few covered wires of different colors sticking in one end of the timer and out the other.

INT. POLICE STATION

HARRY
What do you see?

JACK
It's pretty standard. Timer's looped to the remote, then feeds out.

HARRY
Then we gotta try to bypass the remote current with the battery. Can you find the trip wire for the remote?

JACK
I don't know. I got a few choices here.

HARRY
Black and red?

JACK
And green.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HARRY

Okay. Listen. I'm guessing he's not going to use standard copper for the remote. Too weak. I'd use a fiber alloy. I need you to look at the wire.

JACK

It's covered.

HARRY

I know. You gotta cut off the sheath. But don't cut the wire.

JACK

Right.

HARRY

Start with the green.

He has to work slowly. He's so close to the bus he can't look at his tools; he feels for them and brings them up to his chest.

He palms an exacto and carefully starts scraping away at the green plastic covering.

The bus hits a tiny...

BUMP

and Jack SLIPS, goes stock still as sweat drips down his forehead. He looks at the knife. It has gone halfway through the wire. Very, very slowly, he pulls it out.

He scrapes some more at the sheath, revealing a silverish wire: not copper.

JACK

Bullseye.

HARRY

Great. Clip on the battery and run it to the lead wire.

He palms the battery, clips one end to the silver wire with the alligator clip. He searches out the lead wire. He finds it, a cloud crossing his expression.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JACK
I can't bypass. It'll fire.

HARRY
Collapsible circuit.

JACK
Yeah. Shit! This thing is airtight.

Harry is thinking when Robin enters, moves toward him with a printout, speaking.

ROBIN
Howard Fisk, Atlanta P.D., bomb squad, retired to Sun Valley in 1989 when a small charge left him with fingers numbering nine.

And on that last word she reaches Harry, turning the printout for him to see and Fisk's picture stares us in the face.

HARRY
That's out scumbag.
(into walkie talkie)
Jack, we found him!

ROBIN
We can get to his place inside of fifteen minutes.

HARRY
Jack! Get out of there and sit tight! We're going after the source.

JACK
Watch your back.

Harry jumps up and they move out.

JACK
Mac! Pull me out!

MCMAHON
(o. s.)
Roger that, kid. Hold on.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ANGLE ON THE TIRE

That was scraped by the claw... a piece of outer rubber peels off and flies into the:

DOLLY WHEEL

which catches, stops.

JACK

As the dolly is almost pulled out from under him

THE CABLE

Is running past him now, skittling over the pavement, sparking, whipping around. And it's heading for a rear wheel. If the cable gets pulled under the tire...

JACK

Reaches for the cable, to pull it back. Too late.

THE CABLE

Hits the wheel and is sucked under in a flash.

JACK AND THE DOLLY

Are snapped toward the wheel.

INT. THE BUS

ANNIE

God!

STEPHENS

Did we hit him? What happened?

RAY

He's not behind us!

Annie and Ortiz look at each other. They're dragging him

Ortiz RACES for the center panel, starts unscrewing it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MCMAHON' S AIRPORT VEHICLE

moves alongside the bus. McMahon tries to see what's happening to Jack. He looks pretty concerned.

UNDER THE BUS

Jack tries to get a grip on the undercarriage, but his fingers can't find purchase. So he grabs the screwdriver and stabs it up into the undercarriage. It digs in. He stops, and the dolly is yanked out from under him.

THE DOLLY

Hits the rear wheel, is pulled under and destroyed.

JACK

holds onto the screwdriver. Liquid sprays down on him. He coughs, reaches out, grabs a hydraulic line and pulls himself away from the spray. His shoes skid over pavement at 50 m.p.h. Jack looks around, sees light coming from the hole in the floor, three feet away. He reaches for the hole. He can't make it.

JACK

Hey!

Ortiz sticks his head down.

ORTIZ

Man, can you reach me?

He reaches for Jack, but there's no way.

ORTIZ

Hold my legs!

INT. THE BUS

Terry and Ray grab Ortiz's legs. Stephens and Mrs. Kami no grab them.

UNDER THE BUS

Ortiz is halfway through the hole. He reaches for Jack.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ORTIZ

Come on!

He grabs him. Jack lets go the screwdriver, grabs Ortiz's shoulder.

INT. THE BUS

Slowly, painfully, Jack is pulled in. He hunches over, in pain.

JACK

Thanks.

TERRY

Are you okay?

He nods.

STEPHENS

Any luck with the bomb?

JACK

Yeah, it didn't go off.

Ortiz dusts him off. Oddly enough, he is smiling.

ORTIZ

You may be a psycho, man, but you got some big round balls.

JACK

That's very... gross, Ortiz.

He goes over to Annie.

ORTIZ

Can't even pay the guy a compliment.

JACK

How you doing?

ANNIE

You scared the shit out of me, Jack. Other than that, I'm pretty lousy. What's that smell?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JACK
(realizing)
It's gas.

ANNIE
We're leaking gas?

JACK
We are now.

ANNIE
What, you needed a challenge?

ANGLE ON GAS GAUGE

It starts dropping, barely perceptibly.

MCMAHON

on the back of the airport vehicle, is relieved when he sees Jack surface inside the bus. He gives a thumbs-up sign to Jack and his vehicle falls back.

EXT. STREET

Harry's car and another unmarked fire up the street with much attendant screeching.

INT. BUS

Jack and Annie nervously regard the gas gauge.

JACK
(into walkie talkie)
Mac? Can you get a fuel truck to pace us here? We're losing gas.

MCMAHON
I'll see what I can find. How much time?

JACK
I don't know. Ten minutes. It's not good.

ANNIE
Is that gonna work?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JACK
I don't know.
(to himself)
Come on, Harry. Save my life.

CUT TO:

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE

Harry and the others pull up quietly across the street. He and Robin emerge from his car, two other SWAT guys from the second car. One is SWAT Cop#1. They go to the front of the house in standard formation. They stop at the windows by the garage. The venetian blinds are still down -- can't see in.

Harry motions for two to go around the back. He takes Robin around the side.

There is a door here. Robin is about to try the knob but Harry GRABS her hand, shakes his head. He motions for her to go around the back, which she does.

He tries the window and it gives. It's clean, no wires. Harry goes in first. He climbs slowly, pulling his wounded leg in. He gets in.

INT. HOUSE

Harry is in the living room, heading for the garage. WE SEE Robin come silently in through a back window, motion for the other two to wait outside. She and Harry both start converging on the garage, looking around them, guns raised.

Harry looks down at his leg just as it trips an electric eye in the doorway.

THE ELECTRIC EYE

is wired to something. A red light goes on.

Harry and Robin look at each other, knowing it's the last thing they will ever see.

EXT. HOUSE

The explosion blasts out the windows, sending the other two flying, wounded. The last thing WE SEE are the venetian blinds as they are shredded when that window is also blown out.

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - ANGLE ON JACK'S PHONE

Rings.

JACK
Harry! Tell me good news, man.

There is a pause. And Jack knows.

FI SK
I'm sorry, Jack. He didn't make it.

JACK
You FUCK!

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. FISK'S ROOM

FI SK
It was the watch that led him to me, wasn't it? It felt a little hammy to me, building the bomb from my previous retirement gift. But I figured a sign that said 'I'm Howard Fisk' would be pushing it.

As he speaks, he opens the venetian blinds. We look out on Pershing Square: he was never in the house at all.

JACK
I'm gonna rip your fucking spine out, I swear to God.

FI SK
You'll do as you're told! Now Harry's gone. Just accept it.
(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FISK (cont' d)

Jack, we both know he was the brains of your particular operation. You're not gonna beat me. You're gonna pay me all of my dollars. Otherwise you, the wildcat and every innocent soul on that bus is gonna end up just like your friend. Now pay attention! Are you listening?

JACK
(softly)

Yes.

FISK

Good. Tell them the drop point is Pershing Square. There's a garbage can on the northeast corner. Dump the bags and leave. I don't show up until your people are gone and I don't disarm until I'm clear. Getting on toward 11:00, Jack. I think it's gonna be a pretty day.

INT. THE BUS

He hangs up. Jack SMASHES the phone against a pole, furious. Everybody stares at him. He leans against the front window., seething.

ANNIE

Jack?

He throws the remains of the phone to the floor, unable to respond.

ANNIE

Goddamnit, Jack, don't you fold on me now!

He whips his head around, stares at her.

ANNIE

You just cool it, okay? We're scared. We need you.
(more)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNIE (cont'd)
I need you, with a clear head. I know this guy's hurting you and I'm sorry, but we still have a problem here so stop doing the asshole dance and be part of the solution.

He still stares, but she's drawn the fire out. Everybody is staring at him. He smiles winningly at Annie.

JACK
We're gonna die.

ANNIE
We got this far.

He falls silent again. His gaze goes from her face to her shirt, the Arizona tee shirt. For a moment he looks almost puzzled.

ANGLE ON THE SHIRT

Beneath the Arizona is a picture of a wildcat.

JACK
I'll be damned.

Jack kneels by her, daubing her brow, speaking softly.

JACK
You go to University of Arizona?

ANNIE
(puzzled)
Yeah.

JACK
Good football team.

ANNIE
Yeah...

JACK
Arizona Wildcats. They went nine straight wins last year.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ANNIE
(completely lost)

Right.

Jack smiles.

JACK
He can see you.

She starts to ask but he shushes her, standing and leaning again on the windshield. Slowly he looks around at the front of the bus. His P.O.V. searches for it, and there it is, behind the big convex mirror with a view of the whole bus. The thin wires, the red light. A camera. We push in on it --

INT. FISK'S ROOM

...and pull out, looking at the camera's P.O.V. on a small black and white screen next to Fisk's other TVs. We pull out further to see Fisk as his eyes flit from screen to screen, resting on the black and white image.

On the screen, Jack kneels once again by Annie.

INT. BUS

JACK
He called you a wildcat before.
I didn't even pick up on it.
Bastard has a camera right in your
face. He can see the whole bus.
He's been playing me from minute
one.

ANNIE
He's looking at me? Can he hear
me?

JACK
Doesn't look like. He's just
watching.

ANNIE
What do I do?

JACK
Nothing. Act scared.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNIE
(plenty scared)
What's my motivation?

Jack strides to the back of the bus, talking into his throat mike.

JACK
Mac, Mac...are you there?

MRS. KAMINO
Jack, how much longer can we circle?

He holds up a finger to shush her as McMahon gets on the line.

EXT. AIRPORT

McMahon arrives at the base camp.

MCMAHON
Yeah, go ahead, Jack.

INT. BUS

JACK
Mac, I know about Harry. Listen, there's no time. Is that news van still around?... Good. It's time for a little turnabout.

CUT TO:

EXT. BY NEWS VAN - A MINUTE LATER

McMahon and a few other cops rush to the van.

MCMAHON
L. A. P. D. We need this shit.
(to a crew guy)
Can you broadcast on a UHF frequency?

CREW GUY
Sure.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MCMAHON

Good. There's a signal coming
from that bus. Find it.

The crew guy starts turning dials. After some snow, the
shot of the bus appears on one of his screens.

MCMAHON

Good. Tape off this.

The crew guy sticks in a tape, hits "record." An angry
reporter steps in.

REPORTER

Hey, this is private property!
You can't just take it!

MCMAHON

Yeah, why don't you call a cop?

INT. THE BUS

Jack is sitting near the front. Everyone is sitting,
looking tense.

JACK

(quietly, but to
everyone)

Remember, no big movements. Just
look whipped.

ORTIZ

That's not gonna be too hard.

And WE PAN along the bus, picking up everyone's face as
they try to appear casually despondent. We pass Jack and
Annie and close in on the fuel gauge -- is it picking up
speed?

UNDER THE BUS

WE SEE as the screwdriver is jolted looser and looser, and
the leak grows.

THE NEWS VAN

McMahon and the others watch the bus on screen.

INT. THE BUS

Annie notices the fuel gauge as it drops below a quarter tank.

ANNIE
(quietly)
Jack...

JACK
What?

ANNIE
Our leak has sprung a leak. We
gotta get off.

Slowly, Jack brings the walkie talkie to his face.

JACK
McMahon? Fuel?

MCMAHON
Five minutes.

Mrs. Kamino drops her purse, nervous. She doesn't know if she should pick it up. Sits nervously.

JACK
Not enough time. Run the tape.
We have to unload.

MCMAHON
We only got a minute of --

JACK
Do it!

MCMAHON
(to the crew guy)
Run it. Run it on a loop.

He starts pressing buttons and --

INT. FISK'S LOFT

The image plays on the TV. Sounds of Fisk FLUSHING inside. A slight JUMP in the image just before Fisk sits down, watches. The tape is now playing.

INT. THE BUS

Jack looks back and forth between his watch and the gas gauge.

JACK

Come on.

Then he looks over and sees...

AN AIRPORT TRUCK

Pulls alongside the bus. McMahon and SWAT cops...

THE LEFT REAR WHEEL OF THE BUS

The outside wheel. More rubber is peeling off: it's gonna pop any second.

INT. THE BUS

Jack strides to the back doors.

JACK

Okay, Annie.

Annie flips a switch. The back emergency door opens. McMahon tosses a length of 2-by-4 and some rope to Jack.

MCMAHON

Rig the gas pedal and steering wheel.

JACK

Gotcha.

INSERT - FISK'S TV

The taped image of the inside of the bus. Quiet and calm.

INT. THE BUS

Intense activity as the passengers line up to get off.

THE LEFT REAR TIRE

Rubber is peeling off, flapping on the pavement.

INT. THE BUS

Jack stands on the back steps. The first passenger to get off is Mrs. Kami no. Jack ushers her off into the arms of Norwood. Annie is steering and trying to tie off the wheel.

JACK
Next! Let's go! Annie, how're
you doing?

ANNIE
I'm doing!

BUS AND TRUCK

More women get off the buss, followed by Terry and Ortiz.

THE LEFT REAR TIRE

Big strips are peeling off. Seconds from a blowout.

INSERT - FISK'S TV MONITOR

Shows the bus as calm, quiet.

INT. THE BUS

Jack helps Terry off. Stephens is about to step across...

THE LEFT REAR TIRE

The tread peels off completely.

ANNIE

Gasps as the steering wheel spins, wrenched from her grip.

THE BUS

Swerves hard away from the truck.

STEPHENS

In the stairwell, doesn't know what to do. Panics and jumps for the truck.

JACK
Stephens!

Jack grabs for him, misses.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BUS AND TRUCK

Stephens' upper body reaches the truck. He swings under, is slipping.

ORTIZ

is the closest to him. He grabs for Stephens' hand, gets it.

STEPHENS' FEET

Are skidding on the pavement, dangerously close to the rear wheels.

STEPHENS AND ORTIZ

A look between them. Stephens grins with relief.

ORTIZ

Okay, man, pull!

They just pull him up in time. They smile at their victory all except Stephens himself, who looks like he has vomit on his mind.

ON THE BUS

Annie fights to regain control of the steering.

THE BUS

Veers toward the airline terminals.

ON THE BUS

Annie and Jack look ahead.

ANNIE

Oh, no, Jack.

THEIR P. O. V.

The terminals.

ANNIE

is able to steer back onto the runway.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ON THE TRUCK

The passengers watch in horror as the bus angles off.

MRS. KAMINO
Please, God, no.

RAY
Come on, man, you can do it...

INT. THE BUS

JACK
Wedge down the pedal! Hurry!

Jack goes back and picks up the 3x5 floor panel he took out of the floor.

THE BUS

Tears along the runway...

ON THE BUS

Jack maneuvers the floor panel down onto the hole, letting it out on a length of rope. The other end of the rope is tied to a seat support.

UNDER THE BUS

The edge of the panel touches the speeding pavement, bounces and splinters.

INT. THE BUS

Annie finishes tying off the steering wheel and wedging down the gas pedal.

ANNIE
Done.

They hear an eerie choking sound. Then silence. Out of gas.

INSERT - SPEEDOMETER

Is dropping. 58... 57...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JACK

Go!

Annie gets out of the driver's seat, hurries to Jack. He helps her down into the hole.

THE BUS

Is headed for a small jet whose engines have been stripped for repair.

UNDER THE BUS

The wood panel is skidding over the pavement, sparks are flying off. Annie gets down onto it.

INT. THE BUS

The rope and 2x4 are holding. Jack takes one last look ahead.

HIS P. O. V.

The wing of the small jet comes SMASHING through the windshield and rips through one side of the bus, coming right at us, nearly decapitating Jack and he jumps down through the hole

UNDER THE BUS

and crouches on the sled, he and Annie holding onto each other and...

BACK ON THE BUS

...Jack and Annie blast out from underneath the bus in a shower of sparks.

INT. THE BUS

The rope starts to loosen on the steering wheel.

EXT. THE BUS

starts to veer off toward an airplane hangar and... Jack and Annie slide to a stop against a large blinking runway sign. They look up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The bus toward the huge open door of the AIRPLANE HANGAR and disappears inside.

INT. HANGAR

The bus rolls under the wings of a parked 747, between other jumbos and...careens out the other side of the hangar.

AN EMPTY DC10 CARGO PLANE

Is towed along the runway by a tow truck...

INSERT - SPEEDOMETER

Plunges to 50.

THE BOMB

The red light goes out.

The bus EXPLODES...

...while still rolling at a healthy 49 miles an hour. Whatever part of it can still roll PLOWS into the DC10... which explodes... A huge fireball and a shower of metal...

JACK AND ANNIE

Cover their heads as debris rains down. He is on top of her. It finally stops.

Annie looks at the flaming carcass. Jack looks at Annie. After a moment, she looks back at him.

JACK
Are you all right?

ANNIE
Yes.

Another moment. He still hasn't gotten off her. The moment between them is intimate, Annie is about to burst into tears.

ANNIE
You're not gonna say something mushy, are you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JACK
What? No.

He gets off her and they stand. For a moment she falls against him, but she rights herself. They head for the ambulance.

ANNIE
Relationships based on intense experiences never last. I've read extensively on this.

JACK
You thought that was intense? I do this everyday.
(after a moment)
I think I broke my spleen.

CUT TO:

ANGLE ON AMBULANCE

as it races up to Jack and Annie. Medics pop out, start patching them up. Annie is still talking to Jack.

McMahon comes up to them.

MCMAHON
How're you doing?

Jack and Annie look at each other, almost laughing. They look back at Mac as if to say, "Eh."

MCMAHON
Well maybe I'll let you have the rest of the day off.

JACK
Oh. Mac, this is Annie. Annie, Captain McMahon.

MCMAHON
Hi.

ANNIE
Nice to meet you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

It's a slight awkward moment -- feels like introducing your girlfriend to your dad.

Norwood runs up to Mac with a phone.

NORWOOD

It's him. He wants to know when he's gonna get his money.

MCMAHON

(grabbing the phone)

That son of a bitch, I'll tell him what he can do with --

Realization blooms in Jack's face. He puts his hand over Mac's.

JACK

He doesn't know it blew up.

McMahon pauses, stonefaced. He brings the phone to his ear.

MCMAHON

Twenty minutes.

CUT TO:

EXT. PERSHING SQUARE

The cops finalize their preparations. UNDERCOVER COPS move here and there, signal to each other...

EXT. ROOF OF THE BILTMORE HOTEL

...Snipers take position.

EXT. NEAR PERSHING SQUARE - DAY

The ambulance pulls up, no lights or sirens. Jack gets out. Other undercover police cars are nearby and cops rush quietly to and fro.

INT. BARBERSHOP

McMahon is setting up his command post in a barbershop.

INT. THE AMBULANCE

Annie is just finished being patched up. She steps out of the ambulance to watch Jack's receding figure, her face etched with concern.

INT. FISK'S ROOM

He looks down on Pershing Square.

HIS P. O. V.

On the street, a garbage truck pulls up next to the can on the northwest corner. A cop dressed as a garbageman gets out, deposits two bags in the garbage, and drives on.

Fisk looks more carefully around the square. Again from his P. O. V., WE CAN SEE:

A cop running behind a doorway a block away.

A sniper crouching low on a roof.

Fisk smiles, heads for the door. He stops at the TV that shows Jack and the others on the still circling bus.

FISK

It's too bad, Jack. You probably would have made a good cop.

On the screen, Mrs. Kamino drops her purse.

There is a glitch. The purse is in her hands.

Fisk stares at the TV, eyes wide. A scream rises in his throat but before it comes out we:

CUT TO:

EXT. PERSHING SQUARE

Jack, McMahon and Norwood look out from a storefront.

EXT. NEAR PERSHING SQUARE

Annie is standing by the ambulance, still looking in Jack's general direction. Cops run to and fro, some keeping pedestrians back.

A SWAT cop comes up to Annie.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COP

Miss, we can't have you this close, we need you to move back.

ANNIE

But Jack --

COP

Officer Traven asked for you to be brought out of harm's way. Let's just move back.

Relenting, she turns to the cop. It's Howard Fisk. She smiles as he leads her away.

EXT. PERSHING SQUARE - LATE

The can stands alone on the northeast corner.

INT. THE STOREFRONT

Jack is becoming increasingly agitated.

NORWOOD

He's running a little late.

Jack looks at his watch. 11:02.

JACK

He's not late.

MCMAHON

What?

JACK

He's never late.

NORWOOD

That money hasn't moved. We've got two hundred eyes on that can. We've got a homing beacon in the bags. He's covered.

JACK

Turn it on.

NORWOOD

What for? He's not --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JACK
Do it!

Norwood does, looks down.

ANGLE ON THE HOMING DEVICE

The bags are moving.

NORWOOD
Shit...

Jack bolts for the can.

MCMAHON
Jack!

CUT TO:

EXT. PERSHING SQUARE

Jack DASHES across the street. He runs to the garbage cans, pushes them over. Below where the garbage can stood, there's a jagged hole in the concrete, opening up into a utility access tunnel.

JACK
Son of a bitch --

INT. TUNNEL

Jack hang-drops down into the tunnel. He hears the sound of hurrying footsteps down the tunnel. Jack pulls the gun from his waistband and takes off after the sound.

FARTHER DOWN THE TUNNEL...

...SOMEONE runs, holding the bags of money. Jack pulls out his Glock, draws a bead...

JACK
FREEZE! Turn around!

The person stops.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JACK
 Pop quiz, asshole. I got a hair
 trigger aimed at your brain and
 I'm in a really shitty mood. What
 do you do?

The person turns, face coming into the light. It's...

ANNIE

And she is very scared.

JACK

Incredulous.

ANNIE

opens up the jacket she's wearing to reveal TEN POUNDS OF
 C-4 strapped to her chest.

JACK
 Christ.

An EMERGENCY DOOR on the side of the tunnel opens.

FISK

Steps out, holding a deadman stick.

FISK
 Be prepared. That's the boy
 scouts marching song.

ANNIE
 I'm sorry, Jack.

FISK
 What do you do, Jack. Can't shoot
 her.

JACK
 Let her go.

FISK
 I don't think I'm gonna do that.

He has a bag, which he drops at Annie's feet.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FISK

Fill it.

(to Jack)

I think Harry would be disappointed, finding us right back where we started.

JACK

Let her go! You got the money! Take it and walk! You don't need her!

FISK

You still don't understand, Jack. The beauty of it. A bomb is made to explode; that's its meaning, its purpose. Your life is empty because you spend it trying to stop the bomb from becoming. And for what? For who? You know what a bomb is, Jack, that doesn't explode? It's a cheap gold watch.

JACK

You're crazy.

Annie finishes filling the bag. Fisk takes it.

FISK

Poor people are crazy, Jack.
(hoisting the bag of
money)
I'm eccentric.

JACK

(one last time)

Let her go!

Fisk looks at Jack, almost fondly. Then he bolts through a door with Annie, slamming it shut behind him.

Jack runs up to the door.

INT. THE TUNNEL

Jack tries the door. It's locked. he aims his gun and blows the door handle to pieces. He tugs the door open and light floods in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Jack steps through the door and is very surprised to find himself in...

EXT. A SUBWAY STATION

He's on the upper level. Not many people around. Someone runs up the stairs, looking frightened. Jack down the stairs.

INT. THE SUBWAY PLATFORM

People are shying away from Fisk and Annie as they make their way along the platform. He has his gun out and she's wearing bombs. People start getting off the subway, heading for the stairs. Fisk pulls Annie onto the first car.

INT. FIRST CAR

Three people, sitting. Smiles at one of them.

FISK

Is this seat taken?

Everyone clears off. All the cars are empty now as the doors close and the train starts moving.

INT. PLATFORM

Jack runs down the stairs, yelling. Sprints along the platform as the train starts pulling out of the station. He jumps, just grabs the end of the fourth car.

INT. THE SUBWAY TRAIN

Fisk handcuffs Annie to a vertical handpole. He hands her the deadman stick.

FISK

You don't want to drop this. I'm counting on you.

He moves to the front of the car as the driver starts out of the compartment.

DRIVER

What the hell is going --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Fisk SHOTS four times at point blank, sends him flying back into the compartment. Two of the shots blast the control panel. Annie cries out.

INT. THE SECOND CAR

Crouching, Jack is making his way to the first car, leaving the connecting doors open as he goes. He peers into the first car as Fisk finishes shooting, just in time to see him retrieve the deadman's stick.

FISK

Smiles at Annie as he takes it.

FISK

Maybe I better hold this after all. I'm afraid you're a little hysterical and might let go a mite early. It's not 'cause you're a woman.

He heads for the back and almost sees Jack. With nowhere to go, Jack climbs on the top of the car. Fisk looks out at the other cars.

FISK

Looks like we're all alone. Nobody wanted this train.

ANNIE

You can let me go. You won, you beat Jack, you beat everyone. Throw me off the train, I don't care. Only let me go.

He speaks to her softly.

FISK

This stick works on a remote. See, when you explode, that's where they'll come. But it's not where I'll be. Mess like that, they don't even count the body parts. Gives me time.

He brushes hair from her face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FISK
It's not gonna hurt, Annie.

ON TOP OF TRAIN

Pipes and concrete ceiling whips by Jack's head. He checks his gun and a red conduit pipe RIPS it from his fingers.

INT. THE CAR

Fisk and Annie HEAR the gun bouncing off the top of the car. Fisk looks up, smiles a little wildly.

FISK
Is that you, Jack?
(to Annie)
He's persistent. He always gets
his man.

He grabs the bag of money, opens it. Looks up again.

FISK
Don't suppose you'd be interested
in a bribe, would you?
(chuckles)
Got plenty to go around...

Inside the bag, a dye pack explodes.

Fisk looks down at his now useless money, some of the dye dripping like blue shadows on his face. He SCREAMS.

Still roaring, Fisk whips out his gun and pumps a round into the ceiling.

TOP OF THE TRAIN

Fisk's bullets come up all around Jack, the last one ripping into his arm. He clutches it, in agony.

IN THE TRAIN

Fisk keeps firing until the gun clicks repeatedly. Even then, it's hard for him to stop.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ON TOP OF THE TRAIN

No more shots -- Fisk must be out of bullets. Jack starts inching for the back of the car.

Fisk is right behind him.

Unchecked fury mars his face more than the eerie dye. All semblance of control is gone. Roaring, he SLAMS his fist into Jack's face.

He practically foaming at the mouth, hitting Jack with the hand that holds the deadman's stick. Jack is helpless; he's wounded and Fisk has the stick. He feebly tries to defend himself.

Fisk is on his knees over Jack. He starts hitting Jack in his arm wound. Jack nearly blacks out from pain.

FISK

What do you do, Jack? What do you do? You're so smart! Right, Jack? You little piece of shit! I got the plan! I'm smarter than you! I'm smarter than you!

JACK'S P. O. V.

Blurred, shifting. There is light on the ceiling. They're tearing through another station.

Jack suddenly pulls back his leg and SLAMS it into Fisk's solar plexus. Fisk flies back, standing straight up on his knees and:

A RED CONDUIT PIPE

meets his face.

SOMETHING ROUND

Bounces along the top of the train like a tin can discarded along a freeway...

FISK'S HAND

clenched in a literal death grip over the stick...it starts to loosen...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

...and Jack GRABS the hand at the last second, closing it, taking the stick before Fisk's body even hits the top of the train. Jack holds the stick, out of breath.

JACK
Yeah, well, I'm taller.

INT. TRAIN

Annie turns warily at the sound of a door sliding open. Relief. It's Jack.

ANNIE
Fisk?

By way of reply, he holds the deadman's stick up, almost smiling. Annie looks very relieved.

JACK
I ripped his head off.

He takes off her vest and defuses the C-4 and neutralizes the deadman stick. Goes to the driver's compartment.

INT. DRIVER'S COMPARTMENT

Sparks. The equipment was shot to shit. Jack sees the braking controls, flips the switches. Nothing. Grabs the speed dial/lever and tries to pull it back toward the left, but it won't budge. It's jammed up. Pushes it forward -- the train goes FASTER. Tries the radio mike -- DEAD.

JACK

RUNS back into the passenger compartment.

JACK
C'mon, we gotta jump.

She shows him her handcuffs.

JACK
Shit!

ANNIE
You can't stop it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He pulls at the hand cuffs, pulls at her wrists, tries to unscrew the pole with a knife -- nothing.

THE TRAIN

barrels down the tunnel.

JACK

Goes apeshit. He kicks the pole, screaming with effort. Again. Again. Pulls at it. Pulls at her till her wrists bleed.

ANNIE
Nooooo000WW!

He stops. Her eyes are wet.

ANNIE
Jack, you have to get off.

No way. He looks up at the map. There's a big curve, then dead end.

ANNIE
Jack, listen to me...the end of this line is solid rock. You have to jump. Goddamnit, I'm ordering you! Go!

He looks at her.

JACK
Faster.

ANNIE
Jack...

Going to the driver's compartment.

JACK
The only way to stop this thing is to make it go faster. There's a curve up ahead. We go fast enough we might jump the track, hit something besides a dead end.

INT. THE DRIVER'S COMPARTMENT

Turns the knob hard right, comes back out...

ANNIE
This is bullshit, Jack. You have
to get off this train, Jack! Jack!

He says nothing. Comes up to the pole she's at, holds on.
Braces himself. She falls silent as well. Drops her cuffs
around him. Holds him tight. They wait.

The train ROARS along the track...

INT. HIGHLAND STATION

Still under construction. At the end of the station the
track dead-ends into a ROCKFACE.

JACK AND ANNIE

brace themselves...

JACK
C' mon... Let's go...

EXT. THE TRAIN

Barreling through the station... it's going way too fast,
but it's holding the tracks.

JACK AND ANNIE

Jarred by the rough ride. The lights flicker on and off.
Smoke from overheated engines rises into the car.

INT. TUNNEL

The construction crews are fleeing. A truck speeds off up
the ramp, hauling dirt out.

THE TRAIN

Hits the curve. The train wheels SPARK on the rails,
SCREECH.

JACK AND ANNIE

Eyes shut, holding tight.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE TRAIN

With Jack and Annie skids sideways up the ramp... Steel SHEARS the car in half... The front half continues to skid and roll up the ramp and...

EXT. HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD - THE TRAIN

...appears. Above ground, like a breaching whale, skidding and crashing and finally resting on its side in front of the Chinese Theater, to the amazement of dazzled onlookers. Jack and Annie visible through the now-open back of the car.

CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN

Jack and Annie sit up, find they are all right. The pole has been wrenched from the ceiling and Jack pulls Annie's hands free. They suddenly kiss, desperately alive.

ANNIE

You didn't leave me...
 (looks him in the eye)
 You didn't leave.
 (holds him again)
 My God...

JACK

I didn't have to be anywhere just then.

ANNIE

How boring?

JACK

What?

ANNIE

How boring are you? I mean, is it really scary?

JACK

(thinks a moment)
 I watch bowling on TV.

ANNIE

Okay.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JACK
Sometimes when I watch bowling, I
get excited and I cheer.

ANNIE
Ooh. Well...

JACK
Annie, it's over. You can walk
away.

She takes his hand, quickly and gentle clicks the other
cuff on him, joining them.

JACK
Whatever you say, Ma'am...

And they sit awhile.

TOURISTS WITH CAMERAS

arrive on the scene. Train their cameras on the kissing
pair.

FADE OUT.

THE END