

CHESAPEAKE AVENUE

Written by
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One-hour pilot

"Independence Day"

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LOG LINE: Young restaurateurs take extreme measures to ensure the success of their two-faced Midwestern business empire.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

NAME	ROLE
SCOUT WILLIAMS	BUSINESS MANAGER, THE BRAUCH GROUP
MICHAEL "MIKE" ALBA	BUSINESS MANAGER, THE BRAUCH GROUP
GRETA WAGNER	LOCAL CHEF; BRATMOBILE OWNER
ANA LEEDS	SENIOR DESIGNER, MCGIVERN & PARTNERS
SAM MOREAU	DETECTIVE
MJ MEYER	MEDIA MOGUL
DESIREE "DEZ" TUCKER	GRETA'S GIRLFRIEND
NICOLAS "NIC" BRAUCH	OWNER, THE BRAUCH GROUP
TANNER	SHADY BRAUCH ASSOCIATE
ELLIOT DONOVAN	CHIEF OF POLICE
ALEX SHANNON	MAYOR OF COLUMBUS
JULIA	MANAGER, DEPOT
HERRERA	POLICE OFFICER
HEALTH INSPECTOR	
CHEF 1	
CHEF 2	
CHEF 3	
POLICE OFFICER	
RICK	
CARA	

LOCATIONS

EXTERIOR	INTERIOR
CITY STREET 1	TENANT BUILDING - GRAND ROOM
BRAUCH GROUP OFFICE	TENANT BUILDING - FOYER
GROCERY STORE PARKING LOT	TENANT BUILDING - ELEVATOR
CULVERT	TENANT BUILDING - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY
A BIRD IN THE HAND	BRAUCH GROUP OFFICE - LOBBY
DEPOT	BRAUCH GROUP OFFICE - MIKE'S OFFICE
CITY STREET 2 - BRATMOBILE	BRAUCH GROUP OFFICE - HALLWAY
ALLEYWAY	DEPOT - FRONT OF HOUSE
SAFEHOUSE	JEEP - FRONT SEAT
PARKING LOT	A BIRD IN THE HAND - DINING ROOM
RANCH - GATE	DEPOT - KITCHEN
RANCH - FRONT LAWN	DEPOT - PANTRY
RANCH - REAR LAWN	SAFEHOUSE - GARAGE
RANCH - AUCTION TABLE	SAFEHOUSE - OFFICE
RANCH - BAR	UPSCALE BAR
RANCH - STABLE	RANCH - MANSION KITCHEN
CHESAPEAKE AVENUE - FACADE	RANCH - MANSION BATHROOM
	CHESAPEAKE AVENUE - BAR

TITLE SEQUENCE: "Man With A Gun" by Jerry Harrison

Images of contemporary bars, restaurants, kitchens, food being plated, diners at tables, eating and drinking, cooks chopping veggies, bartenders shaking drinks, stovetop flames—all interspersed with urban vistas. Columbus streets, sidewalks, traffic. This gives way to rural scenes, highways, horses, bird flocks, open fields. Lastly, a timelapse of a buckeye tree blooming and dying.

We feel stylish Midwestern rustic luxury mixed with apprehension and anxiety.

TITLE CARD: "CHESAPEAKE AVENUE"

FADE IN.

EXT. CITY STREET 1

A sunny, hazy morning after rush hour. A BMW rolls into view and parks on the side of a wide city street. The neighborhood is clean, gentrified and ostensibly hip, but relatively empty at this time. ANA LEEDS, an attractive and business-minded thirtysomething, takes her time exiting the car. She briskly jaywalks across the street with a coffee and leather tote in tow. Her body language suggests she's running late.

Ana approaches a dilapidated but sweeping tenant building situated on the street corner. She cranes her neck, checks her phone. A front door doesn't budge, but she makes her way around the building's east side and slips through unlocked double doors.

INT. TENANT BUILDING - GRAND ROOM

With her phone to her ear, Ana wanders through the expansive but neglected space. Natural lighting pours in from outside. She finds an old table with an overturned chair. She picks it up, sits down.

SCOUT

(off-camera)

What can I get the lady this morning?

SCOUT WILLIAMS, handsome, confident, early thirties, walks into view, holding an iced coffee.

SCOUT

We have the house mimosa, a zesty Black Forrest light roast or, my personal favorite, the bloody Mary made with our very own vodka, fresh tomato and pestle-ground black pepper.

ANA

(facetious)

I didn't know I was meeting with the bartender.

SCOUT

I didn't know Alan was sticking me with you.

Ana stands and extends a hand.

ANA

Alan sends his apologies. I'm his new senior designer, Ana Leeds.

SCOUT

(shakes hand)

Scout Williams—no need for apologies.

ANA

(nods to Scout's coffee)

Are you also the barista?

SCOUT

(points across room)

No, but you'll find him right over there. Behind the Marzocco.
In about 10 months.

ANA

Alan said you guys tend to be optimistic about timelines.

SCOUT

Wait until you see what you have to work with.

INT. TENANT BUILDING - FOYER

Scout leads Ana through the skeletal but promising building.

SCOUT

Our dinner guests would use the entrance you used. But our hotel guests, or anyone else, could come in here. This is the lobby space, coffee lounge, urban clubhouse. People will want to be here. And my buddy is working on the CRM for us to-

ANA

This is a lot. Conceptually.

SCOUT

What did you expect?

ANA

How about an elevator pitch?

SCOUT

Why didn't you say so?

INT. TENANT BUILDING - ELEVATOR

A small light bulb flickers to life. Ana and Scout are cramped inside a small, whirring service elevator. It likely hasn't been used in years.

ANA

(unsettled)
Is this safe?

SCOUT
(highly animated)

Part culinary adventure, part arcadian hostel, our one-of-a-kind communal space is a sanctuary of retreat and indulgence. Choose one of our 13 rooms for a whimsical night in, or prepare to be dazzled by a kitchen that honors our Rust Belt roots from brunch to night cap. Here, merriment and mischief collide under one roof—where the only rule is that no one leaves a stranger.

With the ring of an old bell, the elevator stops.

SCOUT
Welcome to Solstice.

INT. TENANT BUILDING - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

Ana exits the elevator, with Scout following.

ANA
Do you play dress-up for everyone, or just the architects?

SCOUT
(nervously laughing)
I don't know; this is my first unsupervised walkthrough.

While walking, Ana peeks into several small rooms that may have once been used as apartments.

ANA
You normally require supervision?

SCOUT
(sips coffee)
My partner and I—this is our first real passion project, you could say.

Ana and Scout reach the end of the hallway and stand before a large window overlooking the city street below.

ANA

Well, this is quite the space you have. Do you think the city is ready for a boutique hostel concept?

SCOUT

Where are you from?

ANA

Chicago—until eight days ago.

SCOUT

Baptism by fire.

Ena pulls several large sheets of paper out of her tote.

ANA

(hands over sketches)

Alan mocked these up, if you want to go over them. But I'd say we're set to get started immediately. I don't see any red flags here—assuming all stakeholders are on board with our project costs?

SCOUT

We do have great investors.

ANA

Well, then I think Solstice can be everything you want it to be.

Scout puts a hand on the sketches but pauses before pulling away.

SCOUT

I'm glad you think so.

Scout takes the sketches and gives them a glance.

SCOUT

(playfully)

Then again, you've only been here eight days.

ANA

Well, like you said-

SCOUT

You've never been to one of our restaurants?

ANA

No. No merriment and mischief for me.

Eyeing Ana, Scout grins as he tucks the papers under his arm. "Real Wild Child (Wild One)" by Iggy Pop plays.

CITY MONTAGE: Over the music, Columbus is waking up. Cars, cyclists and pedestrians bustle along sunny city streets. Baristas serve coffee. Glass skyscrapers bake in the summer sun.

EXT. BRAUCH GROUP OFFICE

The music continues as a woman walks into a nondescript brick building.

INT. BRAUCH GROUP OFFICE - LOBBY

Several young chef types are seated, eagerly awaiting their job interview. Tattoos and colorful shirts, hats, sneakers, haircuts. Music fades.

INT. BRAUCH GROUP OFFICE - MIKE'S OFFICE

MIKE ALBA, a somewhat unkempt, intense thirtysomething, is seated behind an ergonomic desk. While drinking coffee and swiping away at a tablet screen, he questions several of the candidates, one of whom is young local chef GRETA WAGNER. Throughout, Mike appears annoyed, dismayed, bored. But when Greta speaks, he's alert.

MIKE

What does the phrase "Midwest cuisine" mean to you?

CHEF 1

Creamy, smooth, bright, earthy.

CHEF 2

You know, chef, my grandma—wonderful woman, made me into the man you see sitting before you today—she used to bake these dumplings. From memory, right? Totally from scratch, right? No recipe like Wu-Tang. But I remember sage leaves. I remember fresh thyme. I remember—

GRETA

In school, I was bludgeoned with the French traditions, so I like to be home. Home means family. There's more of a Germanic influence here that I gravitate to. And attention is paid to where the food comes from. Tasting the dirt on the vegetables.

CHEF 2

I remember peas. From the garden. Her garden. It was like a jungle, right, but it was her jungle. I remember onions. Little of this, little of that. Some pepper in there. She just went Wu-Tang on those dumplings, right?

CHEF 3

I really think Justin set the mold, you know? Like what he's doing up there in Pittsburgh with those guys. Real food, real people. Such a source of inspiration.

MIKE

Talk to me about your management style in the kitchen.

CHEF 1

Everyone has strengths and weaknesses, including myself. I believe you have to cater to those in the kitchen. You have to know how to bring the best out of every person. Like ingredients in a dish.

CHEF 3

When I was in Cleveland, under Jonathan—he just understood people, you know? Like the people came first, and the food came later. It was about building a real community up there.

CHEF 2

You know what it is. Wu-Tang.

GRETA

I can be hard on people. But you know where you stand with me. One of my CIA instructors always said you're only as good as your last plate, and I believe that. I hold myself to that. Taking people's money is serious. You have to want to be there.

MIKE

What's the best thing you've ever eaten?

CHEF 3

You know, I recently had the opportunity to eat at the French Laundry. And I wanted to hate it. I mean, but what Keller is doing out there. *Whew.*

CHEF 1

In Hanoi, I ate pho. From a cart. Right on the street. The woman making it had no teeth. She lived and breathed this soup. And you could taste that. The flavors they have there, in Vietnam, in Southeast Asia. There's a lightness, a clarity of palate, we just don't have here.

CHEF 2

Oh, chef. You know what I just had, chef? White Castle. Fuckin' fast food. I hate it. I love it. It never calls me back.

GRETA

That's impossible. But I think anything I make for myself. I don't mean my food is the best food I've ever had. But the last thing I made is the best thing I've eaten. And then if other people like it, that makes it even better.

MIKE

What was the last thing you ate?

GRETA

(hesitantly)

I had a Nature Valley bar.

MIKE

Well, what did you have before that?

GRETA

For dinner, I made Annie's Mac and Cheese.

MIKE

Was it the best thing you've ever eaten?

GRETA

(uncomfortable)

Well, no.

MIKE

What the hell? This is a job interview.

GRETA

Yes, it is.

MIKE

What did you eat on the night June 21st?

GRETA

I—

MIKE

Do you know how to cook? This is a cooking-related job.

GRETA

I am a cook.

MIKE

Of what? You want to be our Chef de Lean Cuisine.

GRETA

Excuse me?

MIKE

You like Wheat Thins? I might have some Fig Newtons in the break room.

GRETA

I was sous chef at The Juniper.

MIKE

(looks at paper resume)
This isn't Atlanta.

GRETA

Have you had Bratmobile?

MIKE

No. But I saw you and your box on Food Truck Face Off.

GRETA

Well, that's my business. I conceptualized the entire thing when I left Atlanta, when I moved back home, back here. For the first time, with food, I felt completely free. Sausages. Veal, beef, pork. On white bread with a side of kraut and stone mustard. It's traditional. It's simple. I grew up with it, but no one ever got it right.

MIKE

Until you came along.

GRETA

You should try it. You'd like it.

MIKE

Well what do you need us for?

GRETA

I think I've outgrown the trucks. It's been amazing. It is amazing, don't get me wrong. It was a good way to collect myself and really focus on the food, what I wanted to cook, what I know. And I'm really proud of the community of women that's grown up around the trucks.

MIKE

But?

GRETA

But I've never been an executive chef. And I want this job.

Before Mike can respond, his cell phone vibrates loudly on the desktop. He checks the phone. The caller name reads JULIA. He presses IGNORE.

MIKE

Sorry.

GRETA

That's OK.

MIKE

So—where were we? Putting Annie's on the menu?

Mike's phone vibrates again. Noticeably flustered, he checks the screen. Again, JULIA.

MIKE

(lifting phone)

I have to take this.

GRETA

OK?

INT. BRAUCH GROUP OFFICE - HALLWAY

MIKE
(answering phone)
What?

INT. DEPOT - FRONT OF HOUSE

JULIA, a young and composed Brauch manager, is calling Mike on an iPhone. She is nervous. A man is pacing in the airy converted garage space behind her, in front of a long bar. The restaurant, DEPOT, is filled with natural light and refurbished wood.

JULIA
Mike, it's Julia. I'm so sorry to bother you, but I couldn't get a hold of Scout—there's an inspector here from the food protection program. He's going to conduct a routine inspection before we open for lunch.

INT. BRAUCH GROUP OFFICE - HALLWAY

MIKE
(pauses, clenches his jaw)
A routine inspection? Did we know about this?

INT. DEPOT - FRONT OF HOUSE

JULIA
No, it's unscheduled.

INT. BRAUCH GROUP OFFICE - HALLWAY

MIKE
Unscheduled.

INT. DEPOT - FRONT OF HOUSE

JULIA
Yes. He said he's here to conduct a complete inspection for regulations compliance.

INT. BRAUCH GROUP OFFICE - HALLWAY

MIKE

How is an inspection unscheduled and routine?

INT. DEPOT - FRONT OF HOUSE

JULIA

I believe that's how it works. They're unannounced. That's the point.

INT. BRAUCH GROUP OFFICE - HALLWAY

MIKE

Unscheduled.

INT. DEPOT - FRONT OF HOUSE

JULIA

Sorry to bother you.

INT. BRAUCH GROUP OFFICE - HALLWAY

MIKE

(starts walking)

No. Yes. Thank you. Is he starting? Does he need me? I'll just come down there. I better come down.

INT. DEPOT - FRONT OF HOUSE

JULIA

I don't think that's necessary, Mike. I just wanted to let you know. He just got here.

INT. BRAUCH GROUP OFFICE - HALLWAY

MIKE

OK. Great. Thank you.

EXT. BRAUCH GROUP OFFICE

Mike barrels outside, enters his Ford F-150 and peels out of the office parking lot.

EXT. GROCERY STORE PARKING LOT

A clean but unadorned 1990s-era Jeep Grand Cherokee pulls into a sunny, chipped parking plaza in northern Columbus. Casual SAM MOREAU parks and, with a deep breath, makes his way behind a vacant grocery store.

EXT. CULVERT

Sam bushwhacks into a hidden concrete culvert littered with leaves, puddles and trash. A bustling crime scene has been established around a man's lifeless body, well hidden within a large, graffitied drainage pipe. Officer HERRERA greets Sam as he approaches the body.

HERRERA

Morning, Sam.

SAM

My watch says afternoon. Who found the D.B.?

HERRERA

Bag boy came down for a smoke and found it. Says he skates down here sometimes.

A frumpy teenager in an apron is speaking with officers across the culvert.

SAM

No shit.

Sam moves closer to the body and takes a knee. Herrera follows.

HERRERA

Ballistic trauma. Single exit wound through the temporal bone.

SAM
And he's fresh.

HERRERA
Very. Owens thinks no more than 12 hours.

SAM
What else do we know?

HERRERA
Caucasian, likely mid-thirties. Tattoos on both arms. Some
bullshit.

SAM
No I.D.?

HERRERA
Nothing on him. We found a single car key in his pocket. Chevy,
probably a rental. We're sweeping the neighborhood.

SAM
No casings?

HERRERA
Not here. Not yet.

Sam spots an unsettling tattoo depicting a ghost on the man's
inner-left arm.

SAM
(distracted)
Some bullshit.

HERRERA
What do you think?

SAM
(standing)

What, so Sonny Crockett just ollied down here and found himself
a body?

HERRERA

Said he wiped out and his board shot out from under him. He was
looking for it. You want to talk to the kid?

Sam looks back at the body and the tattoo one more time.

SAM

I want to have lunch. Our boy's not local. And widen the search
for the car. This was a drop-off. A fast one. Call me as soon as
you have something on this Chevy.

Sam exits the culvert and slowly makes his way back to his Jeep.

INT. JEEP - FRONT SEAT

Sam contemplatively gazes out the windshield. Sun glints. He
comes to, pulls a pack of Marlboros from the glove box. With a
cigarette wedged between his lips, he starts the engine and
lights up as the intro of "Get a Grip on Yourself" by The
Stranglers plays on the radio.

EXT. A BIRD IN THE HAND

Several motorists and cyclists whiz past an upscale but socially
casual cafe.

INT. A BIRD IN THE HAND - DINING ROOM

Hardwood and mismatched furniture span a modern American
restaurant, purposefully but realistically patinaed. At a
centrally located table, Scout and Ana smile over several empty
plates.

ANA

(gesturing to plate)

My first official Columbus meal.

SCOUT

Well, first official Brauch Group meal. So?

ANA

I guess I'll stay.

SCOUT

(pointing to Ana's empty plate)

You like that smoked trout flatbread?

ANA

(using napkin)

Mhm.

SCOUT

(looking around)

That's not usually on the menu. Chef adds lemon to the creme fraiche. Capers, too. A Bird in the Hand is quite the neighborhood spot. This is also the first place I was taken to in Columbus. It's been here a while.

ANA

And how long ago was that?

SCOUT

A little over two years. I was in New York before.

ANA

Me too. Once. I hated it.

SCOUT

(scoffs)

Chicago girl.

ANA pauses to sip her coffee.

SCOUT

I'll warn you now—you're not going to like the pizza here.

ANA

Oh, I know! You guys cut it into squares?

SCOUT

There's no "you guys" in this. I told you. I lived in New York
for 10 years.

ANA

Wait—do you guys have a pizza place, the Brauch Group?

SCOUT

No. Well, not yet.

Scout gestures to a passing server, who stops at their table.

SCOUT

(to server)

More coffee when you get a chance.

ANA

Late night?

SCOUT

(stammers)

Oh, no. No, just didn't sleep well. Solstice has been keeping me
up.

ANA

So before this Solstice thing, how many restaurants does The
Brauch Group own?

SCOUT

Solstice will be number eleven. But it's the first hotel. It's a
leap, but I know it's the right move.

ANA

Well—I'm glad I can be a part of it. The space has potential.

SCOUT

That's exactly why we bought it. And we have creative control.
No third parties.

ANA

That's a powerful feeling. My last job in Chicago—I was just a
pair of hands. That's why I left.

SCOUT

So how did Alan find you?

ANA

Actually, Alan also went to UIC. One of the department heads put
us in touch.

SCOUT

So you're Chicago through and through?

ANA

Yep. It's going to be an adjustment, but—

The server quietly drops off a leather-bound bill on the table.
Scout picks it up and examines the balance.

SCOUT

(handing bill to Ana)

Maybe you better get this one.

Puzzled, Ana takes the bill. Despite the many line items, the
balance reads zero. She turns back to Scout with a curious grin,
just as his phone rings from his pocket.

SCOUT

(lifting phone)

I know where you can get dinner for that price, too. *Hello?*

INT. F-150

Mike is stuck in midday traffic, frantically gripping the
steering wheel with one hand, his phone with the other.

MIKE

Where the fuck are you right now?

INT. A BIRD IN THE HAND - DINING ROOM

SCOUT

(embarrassed; lowering phone volume)
Hi, Mike. I'm having lunch at Bird.

INT. F-150

MIKE

(exasperated)

Oh, you're having lunch at Bird?

INT. A BIRD IN THE HAND - DINING ROOM

Scout lifts a finger to Ana, as if to say "hold on." He steps away from the table and toward the dining room's foyer.

SCOUT

What is wrong? What do you want?

INT. F-150

MIKE

What is wrong? What is wrong is that there is currently a routine health inspection happening at Depot.

INT. A BIRD IN THE HAND - DINING ROOM

SCOUT

OK? You still haven't told me what's wrong.

INT. F-150

MIKE

Last night-

INT. A BIRD IN THE HAND - DINING ROOM

SCOUT
(panicked)
No.

MIKE
Yes, Scout. Yes. Last night, after you drove home.

SCOUT
(half-whispering)
You did not take it to Depot.

INT. F-150

MIKE
(weaving through traffic)
Yeah, well, that's where it is. And we need to move it. Now.

SCOUT
We? That was your job.

MIKE
Oh, because I was the one who didn't follow orders?

INT. A BIRD IN THE HAND - DINING ROOM

SCOUT
(stammering)
Wait, routine? If it's a routine inspection, why didn't we know about it?

MIKE
That's the point. I guess. You don't know. It's a routine that you don't know about.

SCOUT
Fuck. *Fuck*. You're driving there now?

MIKE

Yeah.

SCOUT

(examining watch)

I can meet you in 10.

Scout hurries back to the table, where he finds Ana standing and slinging her bag over her shoulder.

ANA

I should get back to the office.

SCOUT

(gestures to his phone)

Sorry about that.

ANA

Playing hooky on my first week?

SCOUT

Fair enough. I should run, too. I'll take a closer look at everything and call Alan.

Scout extends an open hand, returning to form.

SCOUT

It was good meeting you, Ana. Thanks for indulging me.

EMA

Thank you for lunch. We'll be in touch.

Scout ushers Ana ahead. Before following, he glances back at the table and is given pause when he notices a crisp \$20 bill has been slipped under one of the empty plates.

EXT. DEPOT

Mike's pickup pulls into a small parking lot in front of a sleek, garage-like restaurant exterior. He scampers out of the cab and through the building's front door.

INT. DEPOT - FRONT OF HOUSE

Mike makes a beeline for the hostess podium and clasps its edges with both hands. Julia, bewildered, draws back.

MIKE
Has he started?

JULIA
Mike? I think he's nearly done.

MIKE
(brushing his hair)
Done?

JULIA
Mike, what is it? Is there something I should know about?

Outside, an Audi Q5 screeches into the parking lot. Scout steps out and jogs inside. He's greeted with wide eyes.

JULIA
You're here too?

SCOUT
What's happening?

MIKE
(to Scout)
He's nearly done.

SCOUT
Where is he?

JULIA

We do open in 30 minutes.

Together, Scout and Mike dart toward the kitchen.

SCOUT

(whispering)

Where'd you put it?

MIKE

(whispering)

Pantry.

INT. DEPOT - KITCHEN

The men enter a clean, expansive kitchen. In a corner, two cooks are busy with prep work. Beyond, the unknowing HEALTH INSPECTOR, carrying a bulky clipboard, disappears inside the wide walk-in pantry at the far end of the kitchen. Wire shelving units full of canned goods and other dry ingredients line the walls. Nervously, Scout and Mike look at each other.

The men slowly tread toward the open pantry doorway. Shuffling and rattling can be heard inside. As they reach the pantry and pause, the Health Inspector re-emerges. He appears deep in thought as he steps toward Mike and Scout.

HEALTH INSPECTOR

Oh. Hello.

SCOUT and MIKE

Hello.

HEALTH INSPECTOR

Didn't see you there.

SCOUT

How are we looking?

HEALTH INSPECTOR

Well, about the pantry. I took a good look around, and I'd like to see better labeling. Some use-by dates are illegible.

MIKE

(overreacting)

Use-by dates. I'm always talking about the use-by dates.

SCOUT

Use-by dates.

HEALTH INSPECTOR

(extending hand)

I'm sorry. Jeff Rusnak with the Food Protection Program.

MIKE

Mike Alba.

SCOUT

Scout Williams. We're business managers for the Brauch Group.

HEALTH INSPECTOR

Well, I think we're about done here. You get to keep your green sign.

Scout and Mike share a subtle look of relief. The Health Inspector exits to go over his report with Julia. Across the kitchen, the two prep cooks carry large tubs of produce into another room.

SCOUT

What the fuck?

Ignoring him, Mike silently walks into the pantry. Scout follows.

INT. DEPOT - PANTRY

The pantry shelves are crowded with generic bulk items and kitchen staples: cans, rice, coffee, bags of flour, large canisters of spices. On the floor near the back, leaning against

a shelf, is a sagging but unassuming 50-pound sack labeled "MICHIGAN SUGAR - GOLDEN LIGHT BROWN SUGAR."

Scout looks to Mike, who nods toward the sugar bag. Slowly, Scout kneels and examines the packaging, before again looking back to Mike. Mike nods more insistently this time. Scout carefully unfolds the bag's flap and reaches inside, running his fingers through thousands of coarse sugar crystals. He reaches deeper and pauses before pulling out his hand, which is holding a tightly sealed brick of brown powder heroin. He turns to Mike a third time.

MIKE

All nine are there.

Scout looks bewildered.

SCOUT

Why—why is this in here?

Mike nervously back-steps and peers into the kitchen, which is still empty.

MIKE

(agitated)

What did you want me to do?

SCOUT

(standing)

I wanted you to drive this shit to the Short North. Not leave it at one of our commercial businesses on the eve of a health inspection.

MIKE

Neither of us could have known. It was unscheduled.

SCOUT

(tossing brick to Mike)

But you should have known better.

MIKE

(stammering)

You sent me down High Street with half a million in pure-grade Mexican heroin.

SCOUT

It's only a couple miles. You didn't have to take High.

MIKE

There was a cop.

SCOUT

What?

MIKE

There was a cop tailing me.

SCOUT

Like "tailing you" tailing you?

MIKE

He was behind me. I got fucking scared, OK? I turned off, lost him. Depot was right there. I didn't know there was gonna be an inspection. I was gonna come back this morning.

SCOUT

You were high last night. That's why it took you so long to meet me.

MIKE

Well, then all the better reason I didn't drive this home. I shouldn't have been driving anyway. I wasn't expecting to have to go anywhere.

SCOUT

(sighing)

It's always on me, you know that?

MIKE

(aggravated)

I helped you last night, didn't I? I had interviews all morning.
What in the fuck were you doing? Brunch?

SCOUT

It was a business meeting. Keep your voice down.

MIKE

(sarcastically)

Oh, that's right. And I have to do the chef interviews because
you don't know your way around a fucking kitchen.

The arguing ends in a stalemate. Awkwardly, both men linger in
silence. The tension breaks when Scout bends over more closely
inspect the sugar sack.

SCOUT

You know, this is not your worst idea.

MIKE

(slowly grinning)

Michigan Brown Sugar.

EXT. CITY STREET 2 - BRATMOBILE

Sam steps to the front of the Bratmobile food truck line. Crowds
of young people are milling around. The truck is parked on a
street in the Campus neighborhood. The three women working the
truck are young, with short hair, piercings and tattoos. One of
them is Greta. They're taking orders and grilling sausages.
Loud, incoherent punk music plays ambiently from speakers inside
the truck.

GRETA

Hey, Sam.

SAM

Greta. I dream about this veal. Just one today, with mustard.

Sam hands Greta a 10-dollar bill.

SAM

Keep that. How things? Good day?

GRETA

To be determined.

SAM

Me too.

Greta reaches down and hands Sam the veal sausage in a slice of white bread.

SAM

Mmm.

A moment later, Greta reaches down again and hands Sam a flimsy paper plate.

SAM

Ah, yes: the plate.

Sam raises his free hand in a wave and walks away from the truck, pausing to take his first bite. Meat juices and mustard drip onto the plate, which he's holding, net-like, under the sausage.

He walks to his car and leans against the hood. As he's chewing, his phone rings in his pocket.

SAM

(answering with difficulty)

Moreau.

EXT. ALLEYWAY

Herrera is walking through an urban alleyway cordoned off with police tape. A crime scene has already been established among the brush, dumpsters and chain-link fencing. There's photographers and a forensics team.

HERRERA

(on her phone)

We got a car for your DB. 2016 Cruze.

EXT. CITY STREET 2 - BRATMOBILE

SAM

Great. Where?

EXT. ALLEYWAY

HERRERA

Side street off Indianola. Car's empty. Ran the plates. Pennsylvania, registered to a Simon Schmidt. We're making some calls. I can follow up-

POLICE OFFICER

Herrera!

HERRERA

Sam, hold on.

Herrera jogs over to where several officers have removed a steel road plate apparently used to cover a pothole in the alleyway. Below, is a man-made, foot-deep cavity, squared off and lined with clear plastic. A perfect place for hiding something.

HERRERA

(back on phone)

Sam, I think we found something better than the car.

EXT. CITY STREET 2 - BRATMOBILE

SAM

Text me the address. I'm on my way.

Sam takes his last giant bite and tosses the plate into a sidewalk trash can. He rubs his hands on his jeans, climbs inside his Jeep.

INT. JEEP - FRONT SEAT

Sam settles in and draws keys from his pocket. His cell vibrates, and he pauses, checks his texts. A new message reads: "See you tonight?" This brings a small but assured grin to his face. Sam types a brief reply before starting the Jeep's engine.

EXT. SAFEHOUSE

Under an afternoon sky, the offices of a low-lease industrial park stretch in all directions. Both Scout's SUV and Mike's pickup lurch into the small drive of a nondescript building, possibly a former wash garage. A large door rises, and the vehicles pull inside the open bay. Bearded TANNER ducks into view wearing wraparounds and black tactical garb. He was expecting them.

INT. SAFEHOUSE - GARAGE

The two men exit their vehicles and step out into the high-ceilinged, brightly lit garage. It's rudimentary but efficiently designed. Few have likely laid eyes on its contents: chest freezers, a long stainless steel workbench and a large metal hutch line one wall.

Scout and Mike appear tentative in front of Tanner. Scout drops a plain duffel bag at Tanner's boots.

Keeping one eye on the guys, Tanner kneels, unzips the bag and counts each kilo of heroin inside. At one point, he brushes some brown crystals from one of the bricks. However, everything appears to be in order.

TANNER

The heroin's here, and you're both here. So what was the fuckin' problem last night? You look like you've seen a ghost.

Scout, scared, stands still. Mike shoves him.

SCOUT

There was somebody at the drop.

Tanner stands and places an impatient hand on his hip.

SCOUT

There was a guy waiting for me at Indianola. He knew about the heroin. He wanted money.

TANNER

A guy?

SCOUT

I've never seen him before, but he knew who I was. He wanted me to bring him here. He surprised me. He had a gun.

Tanner steps toe-to-toe with Scout, visibly angry.

TANNER

Nobody knows about Indianola.

SCOUT

I told him, sure, I'd bring him to the safehouse. It got him to relax.

TANNER

What are you trying to tell me, Scout?

SCOUT

He's dead. I shot him.

Tanner steps back and runs his hands over his head. He begins pacing.

TANNER

Shot him with what?

SCOUT

A Ruger SR40 I took from here. A while ago.

TANNER

What time was this?

MIKE

I got there at midnight. It was right before we texted you.

TANNER

And what'd you do with the body?

MIKE

We took care of it. Nobody's gonna find it.

Tanner pivots and steps toward Mike.

TANNER

Where is it?

MIKE

Gates of Hell.

TANNER

What the fuck is that?

SCOUT

The big culvert, under High Street.

MIKE

I used to skate there.

TANNER

Shut the fuck up.

SCOUT
It's hidden.

TANNER
Jesus Christ. It better be hidden.

SCOUT
We were careful.

MIKE
I hosed down my truck.

TANNER
Oh. Good. What did he have on him? Who did you shoot?

SCOUT
We didn't find anything. No wallet, no phone.

TANNER
This is all pretty convenient.

SCOUT
We told you what happened.

TANNER
And there's two versions of every story.

SCOUT
(exasperated)
What the fuck can we do?

TANNER
(extending hand)
Where's the gun you killed him with.

Scout, caught off guard, toes the end of the duffle bag. Tanner reaches down, shuffles around and produces a handgun. Standing, he lifts the bag up by its strap and starts walking away. Mike and Scout look at each other and follow.

INT. SAFEHOUSE - OFFICE

The three men enter a cluttered office-like room. An iMac sits on a high stainless steel table surrounded by stools. Above this, mounted to the wall, are twin flat screens, their monitors broken up into squares of black and white security footage. A couple of couches are set against another wall.

TANNER

OK—did you pick up the shell?

Mike and Scout exchange glances and shake their heads.

SCOUT

We couldn't find it. In the dark.

MIKE

We didn't want to linger.

TANNER

(pointing the gun at Mike)

You have no idea what this is. Do you ever listen when I talk?

Frustrated, Tanner sets the pistol on the table.

TANNER

The Indianola dead drop is compromised.

SCOUT

There's others.

TANNER

The money. I need to check Whitehall.

MIKE

What do you mean?

TANNER

That's how this works. We put our money in one hole, and we magically find heroin or fentanyl or whatever else we paid for in another hole. If Indianola was compromised, if somebody's fucking with us—

Tanner sits heavily on one of the stools.

TANNER

How do I find this culvert?

SCOUT

Near the Arcadia intersection. Below the parking lot with Lucky's Market and Tim Hortons. You can't miss it. Glen Echo Creek runs through there.

TANNER

(aghast)

Can't miss it?

SCOUT

Well, you know what I mean.

TANNER

No, I don't. The body. Where exactly did you put it?

SCOUT

Inside the culvert opening on the east of High.

TANNER

Is there anything else I should be aware of, or can the two of you get the fuck out of my garage?

Dejected, Scout and Mike begin to head for their vehicles.

SCOUT

(turning back)

What are you going to do with the Ruger?

TANNER

(annoyed)

I'm gonna destroy it. If I were you, I would be a little more concerned about whether or not our bosses' half a million dollars is at the Whitehall drop.

SCOUT

OK—I'm sorry.

TANNER

We'll finish this tonight.

INT. UPSCALE BAR

A dimly lit space is crowded with stylish patrons sipping drinks and picking at small plates. Though the long bar is packed, the bartenders are unhurried. DESIREE "DEZ" TUCKER, a well-dressed woman in her early 40s, short dark hair, is seated at a small table against a large window. She appears despondent while arranging her cocktail for the perfect Instagram photo.

Dez, still on her phone, doesn't notice Greta who enters through the bar's front door. She has a canvas shopping bag over her shoulder, which she drops at her feet before sitting. The hectic production catches Dez's attention.

GRETA

I'm sorry I'm late. There was no parking on Livingston.

DEZ

(still on Instagram)

I parked on Mohawk.

GRETA

(looking at Dez's drink)

Looks good. What is that?

DEZ

Corpse Reviver.

Noticing Greta, a server approaches the table.

SERVER

Anything I can get you to drink?

GRETA

(frazzled)

Do you have Bud Light in a bottle?

SERVER

(hesitantly)

Let me check for you.

Dez, from behind her iPhone, shoots Greta a disapproving glance.

DEZ

Well, how'd it go? I've been waiting all day.

GRETA

Terrible, good, I don't know. Maybe good? Maybe not. I don't know.

DEZ

Well, it's always hard to gauge those things. Did you remember to ask questions?

GRETA

Didn't have much chance? The guy left in the middle of the interview—

DEZ

Left? Who's the guy? The guy who interviewed you?

GRETA

Mike? Yeah. We were talking and he left. He got a call. This receptionist came in and told me he left. She said he'll be in touch?

DEZ

(frowning)
What was the last thing you said?

GRETA
Well. I think I told him I wanted the job.

DEZ
(sarcastic)
That's encouraging.

The server returns to their table.

SERVER
(popping cap)
One Bud Light in a bottle.

GRETA
Thank you.

DEZ
(to server)
And I'll take another one of these.

From across the table, Dez drops her phone and affectionately takes Greta's hand.

DEZ
Do you really want to work for Brauch? What about our thing?
What we've talked about? And what about Bratmobile? That's six
trucks you're responsible for.

Greta pulls back and takes a sip of Bud.

GRETA
Rosalie's ready. We've been talking about her taking on a bigger
role. If this happens.

DEZ
So you're going to sell the entire business to Rosalie?

GRETA

Maybe.

DEZ

But you said this is like a hotel?

GRETA

"Arcadian hostel." I think it's bold. And they really want to emphasize regional cuisine. And I could decide what that means. This could be James Beard level. This could be very exciting for the city.

DEZ

But is it exciting for you? You're already doing that. If it's about a brick and mortar, I'll build you a space.

GRETA

(annoyed)

Dez. I told you.

DEZ

I know. I'm just saying, think about it. Nothing is set in stone here.

GRETA

If I have my own place. I want to do it my way. With my money.

The server returns and drops off Dez's cocktail.

GRETA

Can't you just be supportive right now?

DEZ

That's what I'm trying to do.

Greta takes another sip of her beer. Dez takes a sip of her cocktail.

DEZ
I'm sorry.

GRETA
It's not a big deal. It doesn't even matter. It didn't even go well.

DEZ
I don't think that's true. If you're meant to have this job, you'll get it. It'll happen if it's supposed to happen.

An awkward silence falls over the table. Greta picks at the beer bottle's label.

GRETA
So, what do we still need for the Fourth?

DEZ
I don't know. You tell me, Grillmistress. People are supposed to get there around two.

GRETA
(smiling)
I think we're good. I'll bring the truck over in the morning.

DEZ
(distracted)
I'm hungry. Are you hungry?

Instinctively, the women lean across the table and kiss.

GRETA
(nodding)
Let's order something.

"Birds of Flims" by Sun Kil Moon plays.

COUNTRY MONTAGE: As dusk settles over Columbus, Scout's Audi merges onto a mostly empty freeway. Dilapidated warehouses and

factory smokestacks soon give way to underdeveloped countryside and sparse Midwest suburbia. After a few turnoffs, the SUV is swallowed by rich summer farmlands. A gravel road leads to an imposing gate, guarding a windy drive that disappears into a broad swath of trees. Scout pulls up.

EXT. RANCH - GATE

An attendant holding an iPad recognizes Scout and Mike and waves the Audi through. Scout lifts a hand in acknowledgment as he passes. The music fades as the SUV drives into the trees.

EXT. RANCH - FRONT LAWN

An attendant directs drivers to an expansive field already full of luxury cars, parked concert-style on the grass. After parking, Scout and Mike are led around to the rear of the sweeping property—a classic Midwestern ranch, with several stables, outbuildings and a natural lake, all anchored by a grand Georgian mansion.

EXT. RANCH - REAR LAWN

A high-end, thoughtfully curated Fourth of July weekend cookout. In the dusky evening, globe lights are strung around the massive lawn. There are lavish buffet spreads: pulled pork sliders; pheasant sausage bites with bone marrow aioli; house-made macaroni and cheese; strawberry shortcake with Snowville Creamery whipped cream. All over, servers in Brauch Group aprons buzz between picnic tables of chatting, laughing and wandering guests; children run barefoot. A crowded bar area is situated at the back of the lawn. Across the way, a live indie-country band is playing on a small stage. Everyone is holding a drink and something to eat—including Scout and Mike.

JULIA

(waving)

I didn't know you guys were here.

SCOUT

Miss one of Nic Brauch's famous soirees?

JULIA

Is everything OK at Depot?

MIKE

My radishes. They were back there fermenting away. Totally slipped my mind.

JULIA

Radishes.

MIKE

Trying out a little kimchi starter. Still in the experimental phase, you could say. Better the health department doesn't know.

JULIA

I could have hidden that for you.

Across the party, a knife loudly clinks a glass and a hush falls over the crowd. Everyone directs their attention to the sound. NICOLAS BRAUCH, the aging but gregarious founder-CEO of the Brauch Group, is climbing atop his full picnic table, holding a half-empty pint glass and utensil. Brauch is dressed preppy eccentric-casual, in a large untucked button-down, muddy designer rain boots and round dark sunglasses. He's warmly received by the crowd.

BRAUCH

(surveying the crowd)

Easy, easy. When you pay for the tables, you can stand on 'em.
Hey, OK, everyone having a good time tonight?

The crowd cheers, with scattered applause.

BRAUCH

(clinking near-empty glass)

We all know I am. I'm sensing a little more ABV in here than usual. Not that I'm complaining. Jamie, I'm looking at you. Another beer, another year, another Fourth of July weekend at the ranch. Thank you all for keeping this annual barbecue going.

Again, the crowd cheers.

BRAUCH

I would be more than remiss if I did not take this opportunity to thank the Brauch Group's outstanding catering team. How good is this food, people? Is this a taste of the Midwest or is this a taste of the Midwest?

Hooping and hollering from the crowd.

BRAUCH

You better believe I'm going back for more of that butter custard. And please—show some love for our band tonight, led by Columbus' unmatched Carrie Berg.

The crowd responds.

BRAUCH

And don't forget, still plenty of time left in the silent auction. We have some truly amazing items this year—generously donated from all over Columbus. You could even win one of my cars. And, as always, this year's proceeds are going to support cancer research at The James and its partners, including the Brian Meyer Foundation and their very vital work. Now, while I'm up here on my soapbox, I need to make sure that someone else gets a warm Columbus welcome. Elliot, get up here.

Sitting below Brauch, bashful ELLIOT DONOVAN, 40s, graying, in full police regalia, awkwardly climbs onto the table. Brauch throws an arm around him.

BRAUCH

Ladies and gentleman, standing next to me is one of the best things to happen to Columbus in a very long time—our new chief of police, Elliot Donovan.

Donovan receives an ovation.

BRAUCH

Chief Donovan has spent the last fifteen years carrying Detroit on his back. He and his beautiful family have just relocated to the Buckeye State—after much lobbying, shall we call it, by our good Mayor Shannon—and we are so very lucky to have him here.

Donovan waves to the cheering crowd, as does suited Mayor ALEX SHANNON, who stands from his seat at the table, between Brauch and Donovan's empty seats. At the back, partially obscured by other guests, Sam slowly claps.

DONOVAN

Thank you, everybody. Thank you, Columbus. Thank you, Nic. This is an incredible tradition, and I am so honored to be here. My family and I couldn't ask for a warmer welcome. But, I must warn you now, I'm a born and bred Wolverine. And that's not going to change.

Some scattered laughs, good-natured booing and applause from the crowd. Sam takes the last long sip of his cocktail.

BRAUCH

We'll try not to hold it against you, Chief. Now let's get that taste of Ann Arbor out of our mouths—please, more drinks, more food. Enjoy. Oh, and our fireworks begin at 10 this evening.
Now, Carrie, I think we need a send-off.

Music resumes as Brauch and Donovan step heavily off the table.

EXT. RANCH - AUCTION TABLE

Across the party, recently widowed media mogul MJ MEYER is sitting behind the long auction table, business-like but dressed-down, looking at her phone.

CARA

MJ—how are you?

MJ looks away from her phone, stands and greets a kooky but well-to-do couple, RICK and CARA.

MJ

Cara. Rick. Good to see you both.

RICK

It's just so great what you continue to do with Brian's name. Did I hear right that the foundation raised almost \$9 million alone since he, uh, passed?

A reserved smile spreads across MJ's face.

MJ

The credit's really not mine to take. In the end, the foundation was Brian's passion. I just keep the wheels turning.

RICK

And turning they are. That's a lot in one year. He'd be proud.

CARA

Well, and you must have your hands so full these days. With the Gazette and the magazines.

RICK

And I think it's so great what you've done with it online. We're digital subscribers, we subscribe.

MJ

That's nice to hear, Rick. Not everyone shares your level of enthusiasm about the changes, I'm afraid.

BRAUCH
(off-camera)

Rick—you put something down on my Mustang yet?

Brauch appears at the auction table. He shakes Rick's hand and air-kisses Cara on the cheek.

RICK

Nic. Making our way over there now. But I have to say, I have my heart set on that Black Forrest coffee roasting class.

CARA

Well, so nice to see you MJ.

Cara and Rick make their way down the table, scrutinizing the different auctions. An awkward silence settles between Brauch and MJ, who now are both looking straight ahead, out at the darkening party.

BRAUCH

You know, sometimes, I wonder if you love your dead husband's memory or envy his reputation.

MJ

(sighs)

I'm gonna go.

Without looking at Brauch, MJ walks along the table and heads across the lawn to the bar. Wantingly, Brauch stares as MJ leaves. She passes Sam, who appears to be perusing the auction items. He and Brauch meet eyes; Sam, in fact, has been watching Brauch the whole time.

BRAUCH

I don't remember inviting you.

SAM

I don't remember wanting to be here.

BRAUCH

Well, one of my attendants can gladly escort you back to your vehicle.

SAM

I'm here for Elliot, not you.

BRAUCH

(exaggeratedly placing hand on chest)
I'm so wounded. But it wouldn't be the first time.

SAM

What do you want, Nic? We both made our choices.

BRAUCH

And what'd you have to show for it?

SAM

Nic, I have things you'll never have.

BRAUCH

(stepping closer)

Ah, well, don't let me keep you. From all those things. And if I see you on my property again, you better have a warrant. And backup.

SAM

(stepping closer)

You always underestimate me.

Sam walks away. Brauch watches him go before turning back to the auction table. Suddenly, Brauch answers his ringing phone. His expression changes as he listens; he walks briskly away.

Sam approaches the wet bar and gestures to the bartender.

EXT. RANCH - BAR

SAM

Whatever she's having.

Sam stands against the bar next to straight-faced MJ, who's sipping a clear iced liquor.

SAM

And what are you having?

MJ

Tequila.

The bartender slides a glass to Sam.

SAM

I have a feeling you needed that.

MJ

(smiling)

And how would you know anything about what I need?

SAM

Well, I am a detective.

Sam holds his drink up to hers. They cheers.

MJ

Then you must need one, too.

SAM

Good intuition, deputy.

MJ

You never texted me back. That was my first clue.

MJ discreetly runs a finger along Sam's arm. He takes a sip of his tequila.

SAM

One of those days.

MJ
Yeah?

SAM
I saw something today I thought I'd never see again.

MJ
What?

SAM
It's not fit to print.

MJ
The city's changing. I can feel it all around.

SAM
I've seen it.

MJ
(cocking her head)
What's up with you?

SAM
(turning toward her)
Let's get out of here.

MJ
We should stay for the fireworks.

SAM
I mean Ohio. I mean Columbus. You and me. Let's just go.

Excitedly, Sam grabs MJ's hand. She pulls it away.

MJ
(taken aback)
Sam. Someone might see.

Sam looks at her, downs the rest of his drink, and walks quickly away. Confused, MJ waits a moment and then follows him.

EXT. RANCH - STABLE

MJ catches up to Sam, who's standing near a stable. They're separated from the party. It's darker now. MJ tries to get his attention verbally; she finally grabs his hand and turns him around. They look at each other, then passionately kiss.

MJ

What're you so afraid of?

SAM

Nothing. I'm sorry. One of those days.

MJ

Well. Want to have one of those nights?

Sam smiles at her. They kiss again.

MJ

Let's go.

INT. RANCH - MANSION KITCHEN

A rustic kitchen. Copper pans hanging. A beautiful range. Huge farmhouse sink. Ambient sounds of the party are heard from outside. Scout, Mike and Brauch are sitting around a long butcher block, each with a glass of whiskey in front of them.

BRAUCH

And then what?

SCOUT

We went to the safehouse, met Tanner, dropped off the product.
And then we came straight here.

A long silence falls over the room as Brauch ruminates. Mike fidgets. Scout sips his whiskey.

BRAUCH

I thought he'd be here by now.

MIKE

Tanner?

SCOUT

Whitehall's a drive.

BRAUCH

He shouldn't even be near one of the drops in daylight.

SCOUT

Nic, I'm sorry. There's never supposed to be human contact at the dead drops. Period. But this guy was waiting for me. Knew I'd be there. Wanted me to take him to the safehouse.

Brauch walks around the butcher block to pick up the bottle of whiskey. Mike and Scout, uneasy, cannot get a read on his mood. Slowly, Brauch refills each of their three glasses.

BRAUCH

I shouldn't have been so quick to throw you into this. Thank God you were carrying.

Scout and Mike exchange a quick, startled glance.

BRAUCH

I'm less worried about our stick-up man than I am about what this means for our arrangement. What are our friends up north doing?

MIKE

What do you mean?

BRAUCH

Ah—case in point.

SCOUT

The guy was amateur. The fact that I'm sitting here proves that.

BRAUCH

Well, that's one possibility. But if it wasn't a rogue move, I think they'll be expecting their nine kilos back, along with my \$500,000. Something tells me Tanner's intuition was right.

MIKE

Why would they do that? Rip us off?

BRAUCH

(shaking head)

Mm. Speculation is dangerous, boys. Nobody wants a liability. Tell me—how's the whiskey?

SCOUT

Good. It's good.

MIKE

It's great, Nic.

Across the kitchen, two French doors open from the outdoor patio. It's Tanner, wearing jeans, boots and a Carhartt jacket. He doesn't look pleased. Carefully, he closes the doors and makes his way toward the butcher block.

BRAUCH

Well?

TANNER

The money at Whitehall is gone. They at least got one half of what they wanted. And that fucking culvert is an active crime scene. Job well done, boy scouts.

SCOUT

What are you talking about?

TANNER

I don't know, but that entire parking lot is taped off. I couldn't even get down there. Someone found something.

MIKE

Jesus Christ.

BRAUCH

(calmly nodding)

All right, all right.

TANNER

(turns to Brauch)

What's the move, boss?

BRAUCH

I wish we hadn't put Scout in that position.

SCOUT

No, this is my fault.

BRAUCH

It's all right.

SCOUT

No, it's not fucking all right. I killed him. I shot somebody.

BRAUCH

(placing hand on Scout's shoulder)

It's done. And you're here. We're gonna make this right, but I need your head in the right place. What this tells me is you and Mike need your own firearms. You need range practice. This other part of our business is no game. And we're up against something new here, as you unfortunately had to learn last night.

Brauch's words linger in the air, met with heavy silence.

BRAUCH

Oh, where are my manners? Tanner, we're drinking Pappy's.

Brauch walks over to a cabinet to fetch another glass. He sets it on the counter and begins pouring.

TANNER

What about the police?

BRAUCH

What about them?

TANNER

Am I missing something here? They just found a dead body. What if they find a shell? Prints? DNA?

MIKE

We covered our tracks.

TANNER

You never killed anybody before, but you're suddenly forensics experts?

BRAUCH

(to Tanner)

The police won't find anything.

TANNER

What does that mean?

BRAUCH

(exasperated)

Dammit, Tanner. Have your drink.

TANNER

I don't want any whiskey.

BRAUCH

Have some anyway.

Tanner sits down.

BRAUCH

No more of this. Not tonight.

Another long pause.

MIKE

I need to pee—this way?

Brauch points down the hall. Mike finishes the last of his drink and heads to the bathroom. Scout watches him go. Reluctantly, Tanner sips his drink.

BRAUCH

Scout. So. How did Alan go? Did that still happen?

SCOUT

(startled)

Oh, oh, it's good. It's good. Design is on schedule.

BRAUCH

Don't lose sight of the things that really matter. Sometimes, that means doing what we have to do to preserve them.

Scout half-nods.

BRAUCH

This business, every facet of it, relies on trust and relationships. Without those, we're nothing. And I think you and Mike are beginning to learn that.

Tanner raises his glass. Brauch and Scout follow suit.

TANNER

Well, happy Fourth, gentlemen.

SCOUT

To Solstice.

BRAUCH
To Solstice.

The three men cheers and drink.

BRAUCH
(checking watch)

Hey—almost 10. What's Fourth of July weekend without fireworks?

Brauch begins to head outside. Tanner follows.

SCOUT
I'll be out in a minute.

Scout contemplatively whirls the melting ice in his glass before downing the remaining whiskey. He takes a deep breath and begins to head for the patio doors.

INT. RANCH - MANSION BATHROOM

In a nice but cramped powder room, Mike is snorting his second line of cocaine, cut on the countertop, next to his whiskey glass. Afterward, he clasps the counter and gazes intently into the vanity mirror before snorting another line.

EXT. RANCH - REAR LAWN

Reduced to a silhouette, Mike wanders back outside in the dark just as the first of the fireworks takes flight. Faintly, upbeat indie-country plays. He takes another generous swig of whiskey before absently dropping his glass onto the lawn. As flashes of red, white and blue illuminate his drunken face, he pulls out his vibrating phone. The caller name reads MOM. He presses IGNORE and orders an Uber.

EXT. CHESAPEAKE AVENUE - FACADE

In the dark, a black sedan pulls up at a corner of the Short North. A red brick dive bar occupies the whole corner. Above the door, an unlit neon sign, in readable script, says, CHESAPEAKE AVENUE; more unlit neon signs fill the bar's small windows: an OPEN sign; a Budweiser sign; a Miller Lite sign; a Johnnie Walker sign. The rear door of the sedan swings open, and Mike steps out on wobbly legs. He walks to the bar and, pulling keys from his pocket, slowly opens the front door.

INT. CHESAPEAKE AVENUE - BAR

A dark, empty bar greets Mike. He intuitively floats through the space. He hops up and over the counter. He crouches and, before he stands, lights strands of Christmas lights draped over the long mirrored back bar, bathing the room in soft light. Mike knows the bar well. Immediately, he finds what he needs and begins batching a stiff cocktail.

If Mike notices the familiar Audi SUV pull up outside, he doesn't show it. A moment or two later, Scout enters the bar's front door, a bag over his shoulder. Grinning, Scout sits down at the counter, opposite of Mike, as if he's a customer. Mike has made progress on the cocktail.

SCOUT

How was that bathroom break?

MIKE

I had enough.

SCOUT

At least I always know where to find you.

MIKE

Vieux Carré.

SCOUT

Make me one.

MIKE
Angostura and Peychaud's?

SCOUT
Yes, please.

Mike is busy methodically measuring and stirring.

SCOUT
(looking around)
I totally forgot-how were your interviews?

MIKE
(pausing)
Tools. Except this one girl.

SCOUT
Oh, yeah?

MIKE
(lost in thought)
Oh, shit. That's when Julia called. When I called you. I left.
Without saying anything.

SCOUT
Of course you did.

MIKE
It's been quite the 24 hours.

SCOUT
Maybe this will help.

Scout places his bag on the bar top. This catches Mike's attention. He stops stirring and, slowly, unzips the bag. Once he realizes what's concealed inside, he turns to Scout awestruck.

MIKE

This is the money.

SCOUT

Two hundred and sixty-four thousand each.

MIKE

Each? This was at Whitehall? How did you get it?

SCOUT

The guy I killed. He didn't have a wallet, no I.D. Nothing in his car. Except this. He'd already picked it up.

MIKE

And you kept it.

SCOUT

Says who?

Mike hands Scout his drink across the bar. He thinks for a moment.

MIKE

(shocked)

Nobody would ever know.

SCOUT

Money was picked up. Tanner checked himself.

MIKE

He hates you.

SCOUT

He hates both of us.

MIKE

Scout. What is this?

SCOUT

It's perfect. That's what it is.

MIKE

This is Nic's money.

SCOUT

This is our money. Your money.

MIKE

(shaking head)

Why didn't you tell me about this last night?

SCOUT

I'm telling you now, aren't I? Last night happened fast. I didn't know how today was going to play out.

MIKE

You don't trust me?

SCOUT

Of course I trust you. You saved my ass.

MIKE

(perking up)

Well. That remains to be seen.

Scout stands, sets down the drink and makes his way over to an old jukebox against the opposite wall. Mike overturns the bag, spilling stacks of money across the bar top between them. Involuntarily, he lets out a nervous laugh at the sight of it.

MIKE

You know, this is not your worst idea.

A CD clicks into place inside the machine, as Scout returns to the bar and raises his glass to Mike.

MIKE

But why?

SCOUT
Why not?

"Lawyers, Guns and Money" by Warren Zevon kicks on, loudly filling the room. As they share a smile and clink glasses, their image is reflected and distorted in the long mirror behind the bar, which reads CHESAPEAKE AVENUE in old, stately gilded typography.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CHESAPEAKE AVENUE - FACADE

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW