

BEST SERVED COLD

Written by

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EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - AFTERNOON

A 1980'S CONVERTIBLE MERCEDES, old, but obviously well loved, rumbles down the street. Behind the wheel is TRISTAN BENONI, late 20's, everyman good looks, reliable, not flashy.

He riffles through a BLACK COMPUTER BAG as he drives.

TRISTAN

Oww!

He pulls his hand out and sees that he has a small cut on his finger. He sticks it in his mouth.

PHONE RINGING

Tristan presses a button and it goes to speakerphone.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

(in silly voice)

Hello?

JOANNA (O.C.)

Okay, so the wedding coordinator just called and said that the bakery won't deliver the cake, and we'll have to pay extra for someone to bring it to the site.

Tristan silently laughs to himself. This has been going on for some time.

TRISTAN

Why doesn't the coordinator just pick it up? Or your assistant?

Out the window he passes house upon house with a FORECLOSURE SIGN in the yard.

JOANNA (O.C.)

I don't know, Tristan. I still have to go over my talking points for the fundraiser tonight and --

TRISTAN

Oh hey, I didn't mean to throw this on your shoulders. You get ready for tonight and I'll take care of this cake debacle, okay?

JOANNA (O.C.)

Okay. Sorry I snapped, but if I'm going to run a competitive campaign tonight has to go perfectly. You'll be home in time, right?

TRISTAN

Are you kidding me? Why do you think I'm wearing my best suit?!

JOANNA (O.C.)

Oh, did you get the tie? That one did very well with the focus group.

Tristan looks in the back seat. A STUPID TIE lies in an open box.

TRISTAN

Yeah, we'll see. You're gonna do great, Madam Senator. I love you, and you have super sexy legs.

JOANNA (O.C.)

Madam Senator does sound pretty good. I love you too.

They both make kissy noises, but Tristan can't help but stare when he sees a CONSTRUCTION SITE. A sign reads: 32 DAYS SINCE OUR LAST ON SITE ACCIDENT.

JOANNA (O.C.) (CONT'D)

Oh my gosh, are we becoming that couple?

(beat)

Tristan?

TRISTAN

Huh? Sorry. Listen, I'm almost at the client's house, so I should be back home in about two hours. Gotta go secure our nest egg.

JOANNA (O.C.)

Look in the glove compartment.

TRISTAN

(suspicious)

Okay...

He opens the glove compartment and finds a GOLD POCKET WATCH.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

Oh my gosh. Is this your grandfather's watch?

JOANNA (O.C.)
 For good luck. Go get 'em tiger, I
 have faith in you.

TRISTAN
 Rowl!

He hangs up and marvels at the watch. His car drives through a large stone gate that automatically closes behind him.

EXT. COUNTRY MANSION - AFTERNOON

It looks like a home from an F. Scott Fitzgerald novel. The place is huge! Ivy covered walls, stone fireplaces, well manicured garden, large drive way - there is no guessing that the owner is super fucking rich.

INT. CONVERTIBLE MERCEDES - CONTINUOUS

Tristan looks at himself in the mirror. He adjusts his hair, and straightens his RED TIE. He slows his breathing.

TRISTAN
 (to himself)
 Excellence is not an act.
 Excellence is a habit.

He combs his hair, grabs his BLACK COMPUTER BAG, and --

SCREAMS LIKE A LITTLE GIRL!

A SPIDER crawls across the dash. He "shoos" it out the window by blowing on it and begging.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)
 Please-please-please, go-go-go. Off
 the upholstery, off the upholstery!

After this traumatic event, he steadies himself and gets out of the car.

EXT. COUNTRY MANSION - DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

BIRD CRY. PLOP.

He turns around to see BIRD SHIT on the hood of the car. He searches his pockets, but comes up empty. With a panicked look on his face he looks in the windows of the car.

With a sigh, he opens the door, grabs a STUPID TIE, and cleans the bird poop off the hood. He throws the neck tie in the trunk, closes it, and collects himself.

Upon approaching the house he sees a sign hanging on the front door that reads: PLEASE USE DOOR ON THE LEFT.

There is no door on the left.

EXT. COUNTRY MANSION - SIDE OF THE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

He walks to the left until he comes across a GREEN GARDEN GATE about seven feet high. He pushes it, but it's stuck. He shoves it hard, and the gate flies open sending Tristan falling into the dirt.

TRISTAN

Oh, no way!

He dusts himself off, but doesn't see the PUDDLE OF MUD.

SPLOSH!

His shoes are ruined. Tristan turns red, but takes a deep breath. He finds a GREEN WATER HOSE and washes them off, at which point he's hit in the head by an APPLE from an APPLE TREE. Pissed, he picks it up and throws it as hard as he can!

THUNK!

The apple hits a DOG HOUSE, styled to look exactly like the Country Mansion.

EXT. COUNTRY MANSION - BACK OF THE HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Stone BBQ, huge blue pool, wooden deck chairs.

Tristan presses his face up against a GLASS DOOR, but all he can see is a PAINTING OF A WOMAN, writhing in pain with six spider legs protruding from her abdomen.

He pulls out his CELL and dials.

ASSOCIATE (O.C.)

Dude! You know whose body they just found?

TRISTAN

Um, who?

ASSOCIATE (O.C.)

Michael Hogan. He was killed in MacArthur Park.

TRISTAN

MacArthur Park? What was he doing there?

ASSOCIATE (O.C.)

No idea, bro. But I guess that takes care of that. How's it going with you?

TRISTAN

This place is weird with a capital W. Do me a favor, look on my desk. There should be a note with a date scribbled on it. Thanks, by the way.

ASSOCIATE (O.C.)

No worries. I'm the Frodo Baggins to your Samwise Gamgee.

TRISTAN

That's funny because you look like Golum.

ASSOCIATE (O.C.)

Yeah, says right here: Friday, March 25th. Go to the door and say: *mellon*. That's the Elvish word for friend.

TRISTAN

I'm not trying to get into Endor.

ASSOCIATE (O.C.)

That's Star Wars. This might be a bit out of your league, bro-ski. Maybe I should head out there and help you close?

TRISTAN

This is my customer, thank you, and my quarterly earnings will destroy yours, like Kahn.

ASSOCIATE (O.C.)

That's Star Trek. Alright, but don't go calling me later; I will be no help.

TRISTAN

Listen, thanks for all your hard work. I know you're busy and I appreciate it.

He hangs up and continues to the left.

EXT. COUNTRY MANSION - SIDE OF THE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

He hops over the PUDDLE OF MUD and smiles to himself --

BIG DOG GROWLING

About ten feet from Tristan is a brown, sleek, well bred DOG designed to kill. Tristan moves very slowly, but the Dog leaps for him!

EXT. COUNTRY MANSION - GATE - CONTINUOUS

Tristan leaps onto the gate, trying to climb over, but the dog has some part of him. He struggles nearly making it, but falls.

GROWLING, BARKING, SCREAMS

Finally the gate opens and he makes it through; shutting it behind him.

He is out of breath, the sleeve below the elbow is torn, his hair is a mess, and his Computer Bag has a chunk torn out of it. He gets a look at himself in the reflection of the window - a hot mess!

He takes the GREY COMPUTER out of the bag to inspect. There are TWO BITE HOLES clean through it; the computer is dead. Tristan looks up to discover he's in front of the door that reads: PLEASE USE DOOR ON THE LEFT.

TRISTAN

HOW THE HECK DO YOU GET IN THIS STUPID HOUSE?!!

The door opens.

Standing in front of him is MR. WYLIE, old as shit, WALKING STICK in hand, uncombed white hair, wearing a white nightgown. He looks like Ebenezer Scrooge except for the CORDLESS PHONE to his ear.

MR. WYLIE

(into phone)

Thank you, good bye.

Mr. Wylie tosses the phone over his shoulder which SHATTERS on the floor.

MR. WYLIE (CONT'D)

Yes?

TRISTAN

Mr. Wylie? I'm Tristan Benoni from Global Bank. Good to meet you, sir.

He offers his hand.

MR. WYLIE

Good God, you look like a pile of crap's crap. Wipe your feet, man!

Tristan smiles, and wipes his feet.

TRISTAN

I have to ask you sir: is there a door on the left that --

Mr. Wylie walks away, not out of spite, but just walks away.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

-- I should have... okay.

INT. COUNTRY MANSION - CONTINUOUS

The house is immaculate on the inside: tapestries, artwork, suit of armor. This guy might be Bruce Wayne. He follows Mr. Wylie as he toddles through the spacious house.

TRISTAN

You have a very lovely place, Mr. Wylie.

MR. WYLIE

I've got eyes.

Mr. Wylie toddles into the --

INT. LIVING ROOM

Chandelier, hand carved desk, and HUGE MIRROR. Mr. Wylie sits in the most BEAUTIFUL CHAIR you have ever seen; velvet cushion, dark ornate mahogany wood.

TRISTAN

I do have to say it's very exciting to meet you, sir.

(MORE)

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

Your record is astounding:
investing in Apple in the early
80's, not getting pulled into the
".com" overspeculation trap. What's
the secret, if you don't mind?

Mr. Wylie burps.

BEAT

Tristan looks around the room and stops at a PAINTING. It's Francis Bacon's *Study After Velazquez's Portrait Pope Innocent X*, the portrait of a ghostly, 17th century Clergyman, mouth agape, mid scream.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

Oh my goodness! Is that an original Francis Bacon? You know I always told myself that when my fiance and I move into a home as nice as this I'd get myself a truly great piece of art in the ten to fifteen million range. But this must have cost you, what? Twenty, twenty five million?

Mr. Wylie sips his tea.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

Sorry. I'm digressing all over the place!

Mr. Wylie burps.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

Anyway, we at Global Bank feel we have a new opportunity that I think would interest you.

MR. WYLIE

You expect me to give my money to a man who scarcely knows how to dress himself?

Tristan crosses to a chair next to Mr. Wylie.

TRISTAN

I'm very sorry about my appearance. I did run into a bit of mud, and there was a "wildlife" incident. May I sit?

MR. WYLIE

Not there. So, did a hawk make you buy a shirt with buttons on the collar? Did a beaver eat your handkerchief?

Tristan crosses to the couch.

TRISTAN

Sir, with all due respect, this suit was custom made for me by one of the best tailors in New York.

MR. WYLIE

Don't sit there. So you're proficient in wasting money, bravo. The tailor could have dressed you in a burlap sack and you would have been proud. Beware of all enterprises that require new clothes - Emerson.

TRISTAN

Actually, I think that was Thoreau.

Tristan finds a LITTLE CHAIR, much too small for him. He sits with no protest from Mr. Wylie.

MR. WYLIE

My shutter is creaky.

TRISTAN

And I am very sorry to hear that.

Tristan shifts in the seat.

MR. WYLIE

It creaks all night long. Creak, creak, creak, creak, creak!

TRISTAN

That is a lot of creaking.

MR. WYLIE

You'll have to fix it. Come on.

Mr. Wylie gets up and starts out the room.

TRISTAN

Excuse me, Mr. Wylie. I'm an investment banker, not a handyman.

MR. WYLIE

Well then get out of the house. Too much to do.

Tristan quickly stands up.

TRISTAN

Well now, let's wait a second. I'm no stranger to hard work, so let's take a look at it.

MR. WYLIE

Good, now hurry along. You and your twelve dollar haircut.

Mr. Wylie starts down the --

HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

MR. WYLIE

So why did the bank send you?

TRISTAN

I leapt at the chance, sir.

MR. WYLIE

Oh, a hungry fella, hmm?

TRISTAN

Yes sir. The difference between trying and triumph is a little "umph."

MR. WYLIE

That sounds like wisdom from one of those motivational posters.

TRISTAN

That's right, sir. I have it sitting on my desk at work.

MR. WYLIE

You must be fun at parties.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

It's a gourmet kitchen, complete with twelve range stove, copper pots and pans, sub-zero refrigerator - the works.

MR. WYLIE

Open the refrigerator and look in the drawer at the bottom.

The refrigerator is nearly empty. He opens the drawer and sees a ZIPLOCK BAG with something wrapped in BLOODY PAPER. He grabs it and holds it out to Mr. Wylie.

MR. WYLIE (CONT'D)

That's gross. You carry it.

Mr. Wylie walks to a door just off the kitchen. It has a NUMERICAL LOCK. Before punching in the CODE, he scowls at Tristan over his shoulder. He opens the door to the --

GARAGE

It's as big as a dining hall, and just as clean. There is an actual hydraulic lift, and a workbench big enough to be considered a small Pep Boys. Mr. Wylie walks to a door.

MR. WYLIE (CONT'D)

I have a dog.

TRISTAN

(laughing)

Yes, I know.

MR. WYLIE

Why are you laughing?!

TRISTAN

It's kind of a funny story. See --

MR. WYLIE

I don't care. He will bite you; I paid a black man to teach him that.
(pointing to the bag)
Open that.

Slowly he opens it and takes out the Bloody Paper. He unwraps it to reveal - RAW PIECE OF MEAT.

MR. WYLIE (CONT'D)

(coldly)

Do you know what that is?

TRISTAN

The... um... black man?

MR. WYLIE

What? No! It's steak.

TRISTAN

Oh thank God.

MR. WYLIE

Why the hell would I have piece of
a black man in my refrigerator?

TRISTAN

(laughing)

I'm sorry, sir. It's been kind of a
strange day.

MR. WYLIE

Refrigerator is too small to fit a
man.

Tristan stops laughing. Mr. Wylie stares at a LARGE FREEZER
in the corner. Above the Refrigerator is a HEADLESS
MARIONETTE. They stare at one another for an uncomfortably
long time.

MR. WYLIE (CONT'D)

So put the pills in the steak then
feed the dog.

TRISTAN

I'm sorry, pills?

MR. WYLIE

The pills! The sleeping pills.

TRISTAN

What sleeping pills?

MR. WYLIE

The pills we got, you moron!

TRISTAN

I don't have any pills!

MR. WYLIE

Oh, that's right. Well, look
around. They should be here
somewhere.

They begin looking around the garage. Tristan scans the room
and sees an ORANGE PILL BOTTLE sitting on the work bench.

TRISTAN

I think I found it.

MR. WYLIE

Oh good, good, good. Those are
sleeping pills. Put them into the
steak and feed it to the dog. He'll
eat the steak and fall asleep long
enough for you to fix the shutter.

TRISTAN
(offering pill bottle)
Okay, if you wouldn't mind opening
this?

MR. WYLIE
No.

TRISTAN
(offering the steak)
Okay, can you hold this?

MR. WYLIE
I'm not going to hold that; I
fought in the war!

TRISTAN
Oh my. Which one?

MR. WYLIE
The one I fought in.

TRISTAN
Okay. I thank you for your service
to our great country. My
grandfather fought in the war.

Tristan tries opening the bottle with one hand.

MR. WYLIE
Oh yeah? Where was he stationed?

TRISTAN
(laughing to himself)
Kentucky.

MR. WYLIE
See a lot of combat, did he? I
assume your father was a war hero
as well?

TRISTAN
Um, no. He was listed as a 4-F on
account of his size and flat feet.
Short on size, high in stature - as
he used to say, but I'm proud to
have served.

Mr. Wylie looks at him suspiciously.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)
In the Coast Guard.

MR. WYLIE

Keeping San Diego safe. Let's get on with this. You just need two or three now.

Tristan bites the pill bottle top open with his teeth. A few PILLS go flying around, but it works.

CUT TO:

Tristan has shoved at least TEN PILLS into the Steak. He opens the door and is in the --

EXT. COUNTRY MANSION - SIDE OF THE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

It's no wonder he couldn't see this door before, the light is out and the enclave shrouds the entrance. Slowly he creeps out and tosses the steak onto the grass.

TRISTAN

Night, night Cujo.

He turns back to open the door, but it's locked.

BIG DOG GROWLING

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

Mr. Wylie? Mr. Wylie?!

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY MANSION - GATE - CONTINUOUS

Tristan leaps onto the gate, trying to climb over, but the dog has some part of him. He struggles nearly making it, but he falls.

INT. COUNTRY MANSION - FOYER - MOMENTS LATER

Mr. Wylie opens the front door to a bloodied and torn up Tristan.

MR. WYLIE

Well, my shutter is still creaky.

TRISTAN

Mr. Wylie, this is the second time your animal has attacked me. Now I don't want to get the authorities involved, but after we conduct our business we should --

MR. WYLIE
No, the dog is asleep.

Mr. Wylie walks away.

MR. WYLIE (CONT'D)
Wipe your feet for God's sake.

BEAT

Tristan wipes his feet and follows Mr. Wylie.

EXT. COUNTRY MANSION - SIDE OF THE HOUSE - EVENING

The door opens just enough for Tristan to peer out. The dog is asleep, steak half eaten laying next to him. Tristan, now with a black CROWBAR in hand, slowly walks outside. The shutter CREAKS in the wind.

TRISTAN
Now what?

MR. WYLIE
Put the crowbar in between the house and the shutter and pull! It's like you're taking stupid pills.

Tristan does as he says and 'pops' the shutter away from the house.

SMASH!

The window behind the shutter has broken.

TRISTAN
(to himself)
Shhhhhhoot.

He returns inside --

MR. WYLIE
Take your shoes off! I don't want mud being tracked all over my home!

Tristan takes his shoes off and heads inside --

GARAGE

TRISTAN

Mr. Wylie, I'm really sorry, but I think I may have broken your window. I'll happily pay for it.

MR. WYLIE

Yes, yes you will. Nothing for free in this life.

Mr. Wylie sits.

TRISTAN

It's very true. There are far too many people who demand hand outs these days.

Tristan grabs a CLOTH and starts cleaning the mud off his shoes.

MR. WYLIE

That what you believe, is it?

TRISTAN

Yes sir. My father used to say, a man makes it on his own steam.

MR. WYLIE

So not a big believer in helping your fellow man?

TRISTAN

Give a man a fish and he eats for a day, but teach a man to fish and he eats for a lifetime.

As he cleans, MUD falls from Tristan's shoes onto an OLD TOOLBOX.

MR. WYLIE

You certainly enjoy quoting people.

TRISTAN

My point is, sir, that too many people today are just hand fed and don't do the work themselves. They only survive because someone else is footing the bill.

MR. WYLIE

So not like your industry's bail out at all?

TRISTAN

You mean the stimulus from the government? That was quite different. We were looking at the collapse of the market.

MR. WYLIE

And you don't believe that may have been the sort of thing that your institution needed? A swift kick in the ass. Suss out some of the crooks?

TRISTAN

I don't believe there were any crooks, sir.

Tristan finishes wiping off his shoes. They look near polished.

MR. WYLIE

And how do you figure that, young man?

TRISTAN

The vast majority of the economic collapse was due to people defaulting on their mortgages. They promised the banks they were going to pay back the money they'd borrowed and instead they left us holding the bag.

(referring to a seat)

May I?

MR. WYLIE

No.

Tristan attempts to stand and put his shoes back on. It looks awkward.

MR. WYLIE (CONT'D)

Isn't the truth that the Fed was offering interest rates at such a low rate that everyone was borrowing money, and after you numbskulls were done loaning to all the people with good credit you got greedy and decided to sell losers with bad credit sub-prime mortgages?

TRISTAN

Not losers, Mr. Wylie. Some families, like my parents, just needed someone to take a chance on them. After all, part of our American dream is owning your own home. The banks took a chance on the working man, and in some way I like to think it was a good bet.

MR. WYLIE

It was a horrible bet! The market crashed and Uncle Sam had to bail your asses out.

TRISTAN

There were hardships, but think of the families who weathered the storm and now have a home of their very own. That's the sort of wealth that can be passed onto their children, and our children are always a good bet.

Tristan proudly hands him the black Crowbar.

MR. WYLIE

I don't want that. Set it over there.

He sets the Crowbar on the work bench next to the Pill Bottle, and this is when he notices the RED 1992 NISSAN STANZA, in need of body work, parked in the garage.

MR. WYLIE (CONT'D)

I think it's time I listened to this "opportunity" of yours.

CLINK

They stop as Tristan bends down to pick up the pocket watch. He examines his pants and sees a HOLE in them. He examines the watch closely. It has a large scratch on it.

MR. WYLIE (CONT'D)

Are you waiting for it to talk to you or something?

TRISTAN

Hmm? No. It's my fiance's. It belonged to --

Mr. Wylie is already walking away. He follows Mr. Wylie --

UPSTAIRS

TRISTAN

This is a fairly recent opportunity, and I don't want to get your hopes up, but this could just make you --

It is a pig sty. Plates of moldy food, dirty clothes strewn about, backed up toilet.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

-- filthy rich.

MR. WYLIE

Yes, and? I'm old; enough with the pitch - where's my money going?

They walk down the long, narrow --

HALLWAY

Equally disgusting. Some food is actually on the wall, and is being eaten by BUGS. Tristan does his best not to look scared.

TRISTAN

Investors, such as yourself, pay a flat fee to a "health challenged" person. That money helps them with end of life costs: funeral arrangements, hospital stays, etc. And we get their signature on an annuity policy. Once the person has "expired" you receive the policy's payout, minus our percentage.

Tristan shutters as a RAT scurries by. Mr. Wylie stops and turns, leaning in very close.

MR. WYLIE

What kind of a return are we talking about?

TRISTAN

Our highest to date is forty percent.

Tristan leans against the wall and gets some food stuck to his jacket. He brushes it off.

MR. WYLIE

You want me to pay some person on death's doorstep a few thousand dollars then take out a life insurance policy on them?

TRISTAN

It's an annuity, not a life insurance policy.

MR. WYLIE

Fine print. But I'm still profiting off someone else's death, right?

TRISTAN

Well sir, from an investing standpoint death is a sure bet.

Mr. Wylie smiles for the first time.

MR. WYLIE

My goodness, they certainly sent the right man, didn't they?

TRISTAN

The bank always does.

At the end of the Hallway is a door with another NUMERICAL KEYPAD. Mr. Wylie makes sure Tristan is far enough away before entering the numbers. He opens the door to --

MASTER BEDROOM

Huge oak four-poster bed, chestnut bureau, and vaulted ceilings juxtaposed by cockroaches scurrying about, moldy plates of food, and a putrid smell.

TRISTAN

(covering his nose)

Wow. Maybe we should go back downstairs to fill out the paperwork?

MR. WYLIE

No, no, no. I need my shot, and my shot is up here.

TRISTAN

Your shot?

MR. WYLIE

Yes, damn it, my insulin. Why do I have to repeat everything with you?

(MORE)

MR. WYLIE (CONT'D)

Your generation - so excited to get outside and play with your Atari games.

Mr. Wylie opens a drawer and produces a SYRINGE and BOTTLE. He sets them on a small SIDE TABLE.

TRISTAN

So, should I just wait outside then... ?

MR. WYLIE

Then how would you give it to me?
(under his breath)
Jackass.

TRISTAN

Mr. Wylie, sir, I really don't feel comfortable administering a shot, especially after the injuries sustained by your dog.

MR. WYLIE

Grow a pair! Now my syringe and insulin bottle are over there on the table. After this we'll talk about your payment.

With a heavy sigh he picks up the SYRINGE and BOTTLE. He turns to see that Mr. Wylie is now leaning over the bed with his nightgown hiked up, and his BARE ASS is exposed.

TRISTAN

(to himself)
This is actually happening.

He kneels down next to Mr. Wylie's bare white ass and fills the Syringe.

MR. WYLIE

Thirty cc's. And hurry, my ass is getting cold.

TRISTAN

Can't I give you the injection in your side?

MR. WYLIE

Yes.

TRISTAN

Well, why don't --

MR. WYLIE

Hurry!

He injects Mr. Wylie. He stands, now face-to-face, it's hard to make eye contact. He hands the Syringe and Bottle to Mr. Wylie.

MR. WYLIE (CONT'D)

I'm hungry.

TRISTAN

Understandably.

KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Tristan, rubbing large amounts of SANITIZER on his hands, sits at the table with Mr. Wylie.

TRISTAN

Um, would you like me to make something?

MR. WYLIE

Perceptive. In the freezer you'll find my dinner.

Tristan crosses to the freezer where he finds one FROZEN TV DINNER.

TRISTAN

Only the best.

MR. WYLIE

Your not a man of great sympathy, are you, Mr. Benoni?

TRISTAN

On the contrary, sir. I took two years off from college to do work for my church.

MR. WYLIE

If a man lost his job because he was an alcoholic, but couldn't afford treatment you strike me as the type of person who wouldn't advocate government funding for a program.

TRISTAN

(laughing uncomfortably)
Now that is kind of personal.

He unwraps the TV Dinner.

MR. WYLIE

You're a gentle one, aren't you?

TRISTAN

Sir, I'm happy to discuss my principles, but I'm here for --

MR. WYLIE

A sale, that's what you're here for, correct? The best case scenario for you would be to walk out of this house with me having agreed to your investment, correct? Do you know what I did for a living, Mr. Benoni?

He crosses to the MICROWAVE and puts the TV Dinner inside.

TRISTAN

I know that you ran an alternative asset management and financial services company, but you sold your shares just before the collapse. Kudos, by the way.

He presses a few buttons and the microwave starts cooking.

HUM

MR. WYLIE

I bought mid sized companies that had plateaued financially. I stripped them down, so the quarterly report would show a sharp increase in revenue. Then you find some boob and sell them the company for an amazing profit.

TRISTAN

Why didn't you try and build them up? You could have created the next Apple or Google.

MR. WYLIE

Years of development, gathering the greatest minds, motivating a workforce - all of it takes time and even then you're not guaranteed a return, but kill one cow, grind him up and sell all of his pieces, and you'll make a healthy profit.

TRISTAN

Sir, since we're on the topic of principles, I don't know if we should be doing business.

BEEP, BEEP, BEEP

The microwave shuts off.

MR. WYLIE

What's that?

TRISTAN

Well, no offense sir, but I simply do not agree with your business practices.

He takes the dinner out and places it in front of Mr. Wylie.

MR. WYLIE

Ooo, an idealist. Do go on. Silverware, top drawer.

Tristan opens the drawer and grabs a FORK and KNIFE.

TRISTAN

The point of sales isn't to hit a jackpot once and then cash out, but rather to build a relationship with your customers.

He hands them to Mr. Wylie who does not take them. Tristan begins cutting up the food.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

To answer your question, I want to walk out of this house having laid the foundation for a working relationship. I don't want to talk with you once and make some quick cash. I want us to work together for years to come.

He finishes cutting the food and places it in front of Mr. Wylie.

MR. WYLIE

You want to teach me how to fish.

TRISTAN

(laughing)
Something like that, yes sir.

MR. WYLIE

After tonight you probably won't want to see me ever again. Napkins are in the cabinet.

TRISTAN

I don't know about that.

Tristan turns and opens a cabinet. Finds a NAPKIN and places it next to Mr. Wylie, who doesn't touch his food.

MR. WYLIE

Mister, what you don't know could fill a library.

BEAT

TRISTAN

I wouldn't. I wouldn't advocate the treatment program. It may seem cold hearted, but if we'd spend our time mending a parachute for those of us who are the worst off then the best of us will never rise. John F. Kennedy charged America with going to the moon, and that call was answered by our best and brightest. If we'd spent that money on heroin addicts then we may still be wondering what was above us.

MR. WYLIE

Well said.

TRISTAN

What about you?

MR. WYLIE

What about me?

TRISTAN

You've had me answer some very personal questions, so now I think it's only fair you do the same.

MR. WYLIE

Nope. The salesman has to complement the lady of the house on her dress, the buyer only has to write the check.

He gets up and walks away. The food is still untouched. Tristan throws his hands into the air.

LIVING ROOM

MR. WYLIE

Alright Mr. Benoni, let's do this.

TRISTAN

Excellent!

Tristan opens his computer bag and takes out a few papers. They have bite marks on them. Mr. Wylie opens a cabinet and removes a SMALL BOX.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

Okay, now of course your copies will have fewer bite marks --

MR. WYLIE

I want to thank you for all that you've done. I want you to have this.

(handing him the Box)

It's been mine for a long time, and I think you deserve it.

Mr. Wylie nearly shoves the Small Box into Tristan's arms.

TRISTAN

Thank you, Mr. Wylie. Now, most the details are clear --

MR. WYLIE

You know something? I don't want you forgetting that. Why don't you go put it in your car?

TRISTAN

Don't worry, I'll remember it. Now the annuity is straight forward --

MR. WYLIE

But I'd just be so heartbroken if you forgot it.

TRISTAN

Okay, but then we really have to get to these, agreed?

MR. WYLIE

Agreed.

TRISTAN

Okay!

Tristan walks out the door --

EXT. DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

-- to his car. He puts a ORANGE TOWEL down on the front seat, puts the SMALL BOX on top of it, closes the door, and walks back to the front door of the house --

SLAM!

Tristan's face runs into the front door that is locked.

TRISTAN

Oh come on!

He knocks on the door and then notices --

The door opens to Mr. Wylie.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

Wasn't there a sign on this --

MR. WYLIE

Jesus, that's an old car.

TRISTAN

Oh, yes it is. It was my father's car. We'd planned to restore it together; he was a mechanic, like his dad. When I was in high school he was killed by a drunk driver. So I saved up, bought a couple of books, and learned how to restore it myself. You know that car really taught me the --

Mr. Wylie walks inside.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

-- okay.

Tristan shakes his head and walks into the --

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

TRISTAN

Let's get to these papers --

MR. WYLIE

Oh, one other thing...

TRISTAN

(heavy sigh)

Yes, sir?

MR. WYLIE

This mirror is my favorite thing in the house. I get a bee in my bonnet when it gets too dusty. If you would be a doll and grab that bottle of cleaner and a rag, and just give it a once over?

TRISTAN

But then the annuity, right?

MR. WYLIE

Absolutely.

TRISTAN

Promise?

MR. WYLIE

I give you my word that once it's done we'll get to the business at hand.

He grabs the BROWN BOTTLE and RAG off the mantle. The Mirror is eight feet off the ground.

MR. WYLIE (CONT'D)

Here. You can stand on that chair.

Mr. Wylie points to the BEAUTIFUL CHAIR.

TRISTAN

That's a very nice chair. You sure you want me standing on it?

MR. WYLIE

Oh, I don't care. It's not mine.

He drags the chair over and stands on it.

TRISTAN

Sure seems like a nice chair to... borrow.

He pours some solution from the Brown Bottle onto the Rag and begins cleaning.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry Mr. Wylie, but do you have anything else?

MR. WYLIE

What?

TRISTAN
Well, it's just that this isn't...

MR. WYLIE
What is it man?

Tristan steps down off the chair.

MR. WYLIE (CONT'D)
What are you doing? Get back up there.

TRISTAN
I don't think I should; I suddenly got really light-headed.

MR. WYLIE
Let me tell you Tristan, when you look back at this moment you'll have wished you'd gone with the chloroform.

TRISTAN
The what?

Raising his WALKING STICK --

WHACK!!

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. COUNTRY MANSION - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Tristan wakes up on the couch. The FIREPLACE is now lit, and a man stokes it.

He looks like Mr. Wylie, but dressed in a T-shirt, jeans, work boots and BLUE JACKET. He also looks much younger, like a man in his 50's. This is CHESTER.

CHESTER
How's your head? The chloroform was supposed to knock you out, not the stick.

TRISTAN
Mr. Wylie... why'd you do that?

CHESTER
Oh, my name isn't Mr. Wylie.

TRISTAN
Who... who are you?

CHESTER
Just call me Chester.

Chester hands him a GLASS OF WATER. Tristan swats it out of his hand, and it shatters on the floor. He gets up and staggers to the doorway.

TRISTAN
What the hell is the matter with you?! Why'd you hit me?

CHESTER
To knock you out.

TRISTAN
Yes, but why?

CHESTER
So you'd go to asleep.

TRISTAN
I understand what knocking someone out entails! Who are you?

CHESTER
I am the ghost of Christmas past come back to haunt you.

Chester stands with his arms out, as the orange flames of the fireplace flare behind him.

TRISTAN
Why did you do all of this?

CHESTER
I had to set up the game.

TRISTAN
What game?

CHESTER
Man, I'm getting ahead of myself.

TRISTAN
You know what, pal? Take your time, I'm calling the cops!

CHESTER
Oh, don't worry your pretty little head. I called the police the second you pulled into the driveway.

(MORE)

CHESTER (CONT'D)

The problem is we're in the middle of nowhere, so they won't be here for about an hour, whether you like it or not.

TRISTAN

Oh, I do like it - scumbag!

CHESTER

Scumbag?

TRISTAN

That's what they say on CSI.

CHESTER

Sit down, or don't. Whatever; eat a cake made of dicks for all I care.

Chester sits down and pours himself a GLASS OF AMERICAN WHISKEY.

TRISTAN

Wait, don't I know you? You look familiar.

CHESTER

Seriously? You don't recognize me?

Tristan looks closely, but shakes his head.

CHESTER (CONT'D)

Guy does all that character work for nothing.

Tristan cocks his head to the side like a dog.

CHESTER (CONT'D)

I owned a construction company and got my business loan through your bank. Then 2008 happened.

TRISTAN

Wait a minute, does this have something to do with your interest rate or something? Some sort of complaint?

CHESTER

Your bank shut my company down. I lost everything. I was left renting a room at a motel by the side of the freeway.

TRISTAN

Oh, so this is a blame thing? Yeah, it must have been the bank's fault. I'm sure it had nothing to do with the entire world's economy going to hell, and I'm positive that it had nothing to do with your skills as a business owner.

CHESTER

I was gonna kill myself; got the gun and everything.

Chester pulls out a BLACK .38 SNUB NOSED REVOLVER, waving it in front of Tristan, who tries to look calm.

TRISTAN

Yes, but that was Global Bank, not me.

CHESTER

But you work for Global Bank, don't you? You cash their checks? You suckle at the teat, right piggy?

TRISTAN

You're blaming me for decisions that I had no control over.

Chester slowly crosses the room and pins Tristan to the wall with his stare.

CHESTER

You're absolutely right. You're just one person; I can't punish all of Global Bank... but I can punish you. This isn't a blame thing --
(raising the gun)
-- it's revenge.

TRISTAN

Me? But why me? I'm not even all that important to the company!

CHESTER

But Tristan, you're the guy Global Bank sent. You're the guy who jumped at the chance.

TRISTAN

You're not Mr Wylie, are you?

Chester rolls his eyes and steps back.

CHESTER

Look man, I get that you were just hit on the head and I'm trying to treat you with some respect, but if you keep saying stupid stuff like that, I mean, what am I supposed to do?

Tristan stares blankly.

CHESTER (CONT'D)

No! I'm not Mr. Wylie. Mr. Wylie's gone.

TRISTAN

Oh God! Oh my God!

He starts gagging.

CHESTER

What? What's the matter?

TRISTAN

You had me feed that dog part of Mr. Wylie, didn't you?!

CHESTER

Are you high? No, Mr. Wylie is in the Maldives or something.

Chester grabs his Highball.

TRISTAN

Prove it.

CHESTER

No.

TRISTAN

Well, what's he doing there?

CHESTER

He's under investigation for insider trading, so he's laying low like most criminals: on a beach, sipping a Mai Tai. Burden of the one percent.

TRISTAN

So you just broke into his house?

CHESTER

I did the renovations on the kitchen a few years back, and came looking for back pay. His accountant used it as an excuse not to pay me. I used it as an excuse to crash here once, you know, my life went to suck. You believe that the guy gave me the key and access codes, so he wouldn't have to talk with me or my guys when we worked? Rich people.

TRISTAN

I'm very confused.

Chester puts his arm around Tristan as he leads him to the couch.

CHESTER

Hey bud, don't take this the wrong way, but you're not very smart are you?

TRISTAN

No, I'm very smart.

CHESTER

Really?

TRISTAN

Yeah. I graduated top of my class.

CHESTER

That's super good, champ.

TRISTAN

So are you going to kill me?

CHESTER

Well, we're an hour away from civilization. You could scream at the top of your lungs and no one would hear you, but no Tristan, I'm not going to kill you. You've already killed me.

TRISTAN

Wait, what?

CHESTER
Okay, sit down, close your eyes and
try to visualize this --

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY MANSION - FLASHBACK

SMUG TRISTAN drives up in his car, and hops out. He's
whistling a tune and doesn't have a care in the world.

CHESTER (V.O.)
You came to the house --

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY MANSION - GATE - CONTINUOUS

Smug Tristan loads a STEAK with PILLS and tosses it over the
fence.

CHESTER (V.O.)
Drugged the dog.

EXT. COUNTRY MANSION - SIDE OF THE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Smug Tristan, with Crowbar in hand, breaks the WINDOW.

CHESTER (V.O.)
Broke open the window --

CUT TO:

INT. COUNTRY MANSION - STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS

Smug Tristan sneaks up the stairs.

CHESTER (V.O.)
Snuck upstairs --

CUT TO:

INT. COUNTRY MANSION - MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Chester sleeps in bed, when Smug Tristan sneaks inside, takes
a BROWN BOTTLE out of his jacket, pours its' contents on a
RAG and covers Chester's mouth.

CHESTER (V.O.)
Knocked me out with chloroform --

Smug Tristan injects Chester with a Syringe.

CHESTER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Then injected me with Sodium
Monofluoroacetate.

CUT TO:

REALITY

Tristan looks confused.

CHESTER
That's poison.

TRISTAN
Oh.

CUT TO:

INT. COUNTRY MANSION - KITCHEN - FLASHBACK

Smug Tristan sits at a table and eats a TV dinner.

CHESTER (V.O.)
Had yourself a nice meal --

INT. COUNTRY MANSION - MASTER BEDROOM -

Smug Tristan, now standing in front of a COMPUTER with his
PANTS off, masturbating.

CHESTER (V.O.)
Then you masturbated to foot fetish
pornography and left.

TRISTAN (V.O.)
Whoa!

CUT TO:

REALITY

TRISTAN
What?!

CHESTER
I don't know what weird stuff
you're into, man.

TRISTAN
Look, Mr. Wiley --

CHESTER
Chester.

TRISTAN
Chester, you sound like you're
working out some issues, so I'm
just going to leave, okay?

CHESTER
No you're not.

TRISTAN
I get that you're angry with the
bank and I'm sorry for your losses,
but you got to play dress up and
put the fear of God into me, so I
hope that'll satisfy you. Good bye.

Tristan heads for the door.

CHESTER
Hogan Polon Inc. development deal.

Tristan stops dead. Chester takes a MANILA ENVELOPE out of
the drawer and flops it down on the DESK.

CHESTER (CONT'D)
You knew the land wasn't safe to
build on, didn't ya?

TRISTAN
How do you know about...

CHESTER
This is a copy of the inspector's
report --

Tristan grabs the Manila Envelope and throws it in the FIRE.
He spins back to Chester with a look of glee! Chester rolls
his eyes and pulls out ANOTHER MANILA ENVELOPE.

CHESTER (CONT'D)
Like I was saying, the thing is --

Again, Tristan grabs the Manila Envelope and throws it in the
fire.

TRISTAN

Ah-ha!

CHESTER

I've got like, ten of these!
Besides, the copy you need to worry
about it is on here.

Chester holds up his CELL PHONE.

TRISTAN

Wait! What the hell is going on?!

CHESTER

You're being blackmailed, Tristan.
The evidence in this house suggests
that you poisoned me, and the
police are on their way. They'll
charge you with murder unless
you're able to clean up. If you try
and run, piss me off, do anything I
don't like then this --
(pointing to cell)
-- will be e-mailed to the police
and the press.

TRISTAN

And they're gonna run a story from
an out of work construction worker?

CHESTER

CNN does regular segments on
kittens in a bath tub; what do you
think?! If you clean everything up
I'll let you destroy the evidence,
and you walk away scott free.

TRISTAN

Why even give me the chance?

CHESTER

Your bank ground me down; I want to
die. But first I want to watch you
twist in the wind. It'll be fun.

Tristan collects himself and sits.

TRISTAN

So an investment banker, prominent
in his community and church,
decides one morning to drive to the
middle of nowhere, break into a
house and kill an unemployed
construction worker?

(MORE)

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

As my friends from Texas say: that dog don't hunt.

CHESTER

But what about our correspondence?

TRISTAN

What correspondence?

CHESTER

Last Thursday you got a phone call from me. You picked up and held on the line for fifteen seconds.

TRISTAN

Wha - I got a call from some blocked number, nobody was on the line --

CHESTER

How do we know I didn't tell you about the evidence? Or threaten your fiance? Say, when those people died what lie did you feed her?

TRISTAN

I don't lie to my fiance!

CHESTER

When the police arrive and find a dead body with evidence of a conspiracy pointing to you and your associates at Global Bank, not to mention the evidence you've left all over this house, that's all they'll need to put you away --

TRISTAN

What evidence?!

CHESTER

The tire tracks from your car in the driveway, your fingerprints on the vial and syringe in the bedroom, and on the crowbar and pill bottle laying on the workbench in the garage.

Chester stands and pours another drink. He hands it to Tristan.

TRISTAN

I don't drink.

CHESTER

Now'd be a good time to start.

Chester pours the drink into his glass and sits down.

TRISTAN

Okay, you've obviously put a lot of thought into this, and I applaud that; I applaud hard work. Now you really need to ask yourself: what do I need?

Chester smiles.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

We both know that syringe wasn't filled with poison.

CHESTER

You've really figured this out.

TRISTAN

Look at you; you're too calm. And the police aren't coming. But you've piqued my interest and you've got a slight bit of leverage, so what do you want? Hmm? What do you need, Chester?

CHESTER

I want to you and your friends at the bank go down. You'll probably end up doing time in some white collared country club. You deserve to be locked up in federal prison with the murders and rapists. I want to see you burn. That, and a pony.

TRISTAN

Chester! The jig is up, okay? Now lets settle this like grown-ups and go home.

CHESTER

I love that you're trying to talk your way out of this.

TRISTAN

You're busted. You've shown your hand; I know none of this is real. Look at your little gun there --

CHESTER
Oh, this one?

BANG!

The VASE just over Tristan's shoulder shatters! Tristan is frozen in terror.

CHESTER (CONT'D)
Is it starting to sink in yet?
(looking at his watch)
Thirty nine minutes.

Tristan stares blankly at Chester... THE BOLTS UP THE STAIRS!

UPSTAIRS

He races towards the bedroom door, but it's locked! He tries the numerical lock, but nothing works. He backs up, psychs himself up, and charges! He bounces off of it like a rubber ball.

LIVING ROOM

Chester sits quietly and sips his Whiskey. Tristan races down the stairs and into the --

KITCHEN

He reaches for the door to the garage, but it's locked as well. He thinks for a moment and runs out the front door --

EXT. COUNTRY MANSION - GATE - CONTINUOUS

He opens the gate to see DOG growling at him. He slams the gate shut.

He's run out of ideas and is quietly panicking. He looks at his car for a moment, but through the window he can see Chester, smiling and waving his cell phone.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Tristan comes in and sits down.

TRISTAN
So what do I have to do?

CHESTER

It's easy, all you have to do is get rid of the evidence.

TRISTAN

But where - I mean, how do I...

CHESTER

I'm a sport, so how about I get you started. First things first, you have to make sure you don't leave behind any more evidence, so I'd lose your shoes and that hair is gonna have to come off.

CUT TO:

BATHROOM

The floor is lined with PLASTIC TARP and an ELECTRIC TRIMMER is on the sink.

TRISTAN

Is this really necessary?

CHESTER

You said you watched CSI. You know those guys can bust you if you leave behind a fart.

Tristan turns on the Electric Trimmer and begins SHAVING HIS HEAD, EYEBROWS, and ARMS.

CUT TO:

BASEMENT

A HUGE BLACK BOILER sits in the middle of the room. We hear GRUNTING as Tristan shoves the PLASTIC TARP inside. The hot fires almost instantly disintegrates it into ash.

LIVING ROOM

Chester, holding his HIGHBALL of whiskey, laughs long and loud at the sight of the now bald Tristan.

CHESTER

You look like the guy from Powder!

TRISTAN

Can I get started now, please?

CHESTER
You can start whenever you like.
Now you've got to ask yourself:
what do I need?

TRISTAN
I need to get that door open
upstairs.

CHESTER
That's right.

BEAT

TRISTAN
So how do I open the stupid door?

CHESTER
You need the number for the keypad.

BEAT

TRISTAN
And?!

CHESTER
And what? I'm not going to just
give it to you.

TRISTAN
Well can I get a damn hint?!

Chester waits.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)
Please?

CHESTER
There you go. Global Bank has an
unofficial account that's sole
purpose is to buy political reform.

TRISTAN
Okay.

CHESTER
The money from that account is used
to buy lobbyists in Washington who
"incentivise" politicians so as to
create legislation that reduces
bank regulation. Such as: the right
not to disclose the details of a
loan when selling it in a bundle to
investors.

TRISTAN

How do you know all of --

CHESTER

See, when your bank makes a shit loan that knows it'll never pay off they sell it in a bundle. Like putting all the good apples on top when they know all the ones on the bottom are rotten.

TRISTAN

What does this have to do with the number I need?!

CHESTER

The account number and password opens the lock.

TRISTAN

I don't know anything about any fund!

CHESTER

Well then maybe you should call someone who does.

UPSTAIRS

Tristan is on his phone. Tristan examines the lock on the door.

ASSOCIATE (O.C.)

Tristy! What's going on, man? How'd the meeting go?

He finds a FORK in a PLATE OF FOOD, takes off his NECKTIE and uses it to clean the fork, then puts the tie in his pocket.

TRISTAN

I was set up. This guy isn't even Mr. Wylie.

He bends the teeth of the fork down until only one is left standing.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

It's some ex-construction worker named Chester. He says he has evidence against us in the Hogan Polon deal.

He jams the fork into the lock and begins trying to open it.

ASSOCIATE (O.C.)

Okay Tristan, slow down and really think here. What did this guy say *exactly*?

TRISTAN

He says he has evidence that we knew the land was unsafe. He says that Global Bank has some sort of slush fund used to buy off politicians. I need that account number or he's gonna send everything to the cops and the press.

Silence.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

Hello?

ASSOCIATE (O.C.)

How the hell does he know about that?

TRISTAN

How do you know about it?!

ASSOCIATE (O.C.)

My division has access to all the accounts, and I'm not technically supposed to know about our *off the book* accounts --

Tristan bends the fork back too far and it catapults itself out of the lock and flies into the air!

TRISTAN

Holy crap, that's real?!

ASSOCIATE (O.C.)

Nobody knows about that account. It - I - listen: Global Bank offers it's high earners the opportunity to reallocate funds to our sister bank in Switzerland where the tax laws are a bit more... lax. We charge interest for this, and that money goes to Washington D.C. Legally, it's kind of a grey area.

TRISTAN

Jesus!

ASSOCIATE (O.C.)

Tristan, we're a multi trillion dollar bank; you don't get that without involving politicians.

TRISTAN

Involving or buying?

ASSOCIATE (O.C.)

Hey bro, don't let this guy get to you. We don't do anything illegal.

TRISTAN

What about Hogan Polon?

ASSOCIATE (O.C.)

That wasn't our fault. Let me tell you a story --

TRISTAN

I really don't have time --

ASSOCIATE (O.C.)

-- when I was nine I had a dog, a great big golden retriever named Bilbo. I loved that dog, T-bone. I loved him, but one day I accidentally left the gate open and Bilbo was hit by a semi truck. He was hit by a semi truck and killed. I felt horrible, no joke. It was without a doubt the darkest day of my life. Does that mean I should have jumped off a bridge?

Tristan looks up and sees the fork has embedded itself in the ceiling.

TRISTAN

No.

ASSOCIATE (O.C.)

No! Of course not. This guy wants you to focus on the worst, and what's more is he wants you to believe that it's all your fault. He's manipulating you, but you can beat him, okay?

TRISTAN

Okay. And this guy looks so familiar, it's killing me.

ASSOCIATE (O.C.)
Send me a picture.

TOP OF THE STAIRS - CONTINUOUS

Tristan peers around the corner. He can see into the living room where Chester is sitting with his feet up, sipping from his highball, his hand is resting on the side of his face.

Tristan holds his phone out when --

ASSOCIATE (O.C.)
Did'ja take it yet?

Tristan hides just as Chester looks up.

TRISTAN
(hushed)
No! When you get the picture you'll know I've taken it. Now shut up!

Tristan peers around the corner, takes the picture, and returns to the --

HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

ASSOCIATE (O.C.)
Got it. I'll see what I can come up with. Does anyone know about this stuff other than you and him?

TRISTAN
No. I mean, I don't think so. Now can I please have the account number and password?!

ASSOCIATE (O.C.)
Well... what's he gonna do with the account info?

TRISTAN
I need it to get evidence - look, if I clean everything up then he says he'll destroy the evidence, and I now have --
(looking at pocket watch)
-- thirty minutes left, so can I please get the account number?!

ASSOCIATE

Okay, but if you tell anyone I gave
this to you I'll deny it up and
down! You ready?

Tristan stands at the door and punches the keys. The door is
still locked. He violently pulls at the door, banging his
fists against it --

CHESTER (O.C.)

You have to press pound.

Tristan spins to see Chester, highball in hand, standing at
the end of the Hallway. He reaches down and presses the '#'
symbol.

CLICK

The door opens.

MASTER BEDROOM

He walks in the room, covering his nose as the room smells
like a public toilet. He starts opening drawers.

CHESTER

Thought you'd be a better thief.

TRISTAN

Smells like a porn set in here.

CHESTER

Oh yeah? What's that smell like?

TRISTAN

I don't know; feces and shame. Can
I get a hint as to where this thing
is, please?

CHESTER

A hint? No hint this time. When it
comes to stealing stuff I'm sure
you'll do just fine.

Chester leans against the doorway, sipping his drink.

TRISTAN

I'm not a thief. I provide
opportunities.

CHESTER

That is the thief-iest thing I have
ever heard.

(MORE)

CHESTER (CONT'D)
You don't steal money from dumb
people, you liberate goods from the
intellectually challenged.

Tristan is very delicately going through drawers.

CHESTER (CONT'D)
(laughing)
Didn't they teach you to toss a
room at Harvard?

TRISTAN
(scoffing)
We couldn't afford Harvard.

He crosses the room and leans on the BUREAU OF DRAWERS that
Tristan is searching.

CHESTER
Aww, so dad forgot to pay the life
insurance bill, or was it one of
those annuities?

TRISTAN
Hey! We didn't get any money from
my father's death! I went to night
school and worked three jobs so I
could help my mother pay the bills.

CHESTER
Oh and I'll bet you hated him for
that.

Chester spots a COWBOY HAT and picks it up.

TRISTAN
Shut up.

CHESTER
Guy like you shouldn't have been
born to a mechanic. Your dad should
have been a lawyer or a doctor,
right?

He's admiring the HAT.

TRISTAN
The world needs mechanics just as
much as it needs doctors.

Chester looks at him sideways.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)
Okay, well that might not be true,
but he was a good man who
appreciated hard work.

CHESTER
Really? You must'a been a
disappointment.

Chester crosses to a WALL MIRROR.

TRISTAN
I bust my ass.

CHESTER
Yeah, but he made things, like his
daddy. He was useful. Whereas you
just move imaginary numbers from
one place to another. That's not
really man's work, is it?

TRISTAN
Well I sure as hell make more than
he ever did.

Chester tries on the HAT, but it's way too big. Disappointed,
he throws it on the bed.

CHESTER
And in less time too, I'll bet.

TRISTAN
I know what you're doing. My dad
worked long hours and when he came
home he deserved to be left alone.
Would it have been easier if I'd
been born into money? Sure. Could I
have been further along in my
career if my dad were a politician?
Without a doubt, but growing up the
way I did, struggling, made me who
I am.

CHESTER
Sounds like you were pretty broken
up over his death.

TRISTAN
You know what? By the end of this
thing you're gonna see that I'm not
the bad guy.

CHESTER

I hope that's true, Tristan. I really do. But honestly, I'm betting against you.

Tristan opens the CHESTNUT WARDROBE and gags!

CHESTER (CONT'D)

Yeah, I'd been using that as a toilet.

TRISTAN

What is the matter with you?

CHESTER

There ain't a better thrill than really messing up some rich guy's stuff.

TRISTAN

You need hobbies. Oh God!

Using his necktie he reaches into the CHESTNUT WARDROBE and pulls out the Syringe and Bottle, which are covered in a BROWN SUBSTANCE.

CUT TO:

BASEMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Tristan throws the Syringe and Bottle in the BOILER and closes it up.

PHONE RING

Tristan pulls out his cell phone, but the pocket watch accidentally comes with it, and falls to the floor with a CLANG!

He bends down and sees it now has a dent on the face. He sees Joanna is calling. He's about to press 'IGNORE' when --

CHESTER (O.S.)

Pick it up.

Tristan jumps! He looks up to see Chester with his Highball.

TRISTAN

I'm busy.

Chester hold up his cell phone. His finger hovers over the 'SEND' button.

CHESTER

I want to hear you lie to her.

Tristan stares at Chester as he answers the phone.

TRISTAN

Hey.

JOANNA (O.C.)

Where are you?! Everybody's already here.

TRISTAN

I got held up at the client's house, but don't worry. It'll all be over soon.

Chester laughs to himself.

JOANNA (O.C.)

You're still at that guy's house? What are you two doing? Tristan?

TRISTAN

You know what we started talking about: fishing. Yeah, the guy is a fishing nut, and he's just going on and on about all these trips he's been on and then he started pulling out these envelopes with pictures of him on trips with his buddies.

JOANNA (O.C.)

Are you serious?

TRISTAN

Honey, he's a client. I have to listen to him. That's my job.

JOANNA (O.C.)

I have to give my speech at any moment!

Chester puts his arm around Tristan and listens to the phone conversation.

TRISTAN

You're gonna do great. Besides, I don't know if I'm ready for an audience just now.

POP!

Tristan jumps as the bottle in the boiler has just burst.

JOANNA (O.C.)
What was that?

TRISTAN
It was one of the logs in the fire
popping.

JOANNA (O.C.)
You two are sitting in front of a
fire? Ugh! Are you almost done over
there?

He stares at Chester --

TRISTAN
Yeah. I think things are wrapping
up.

JOANNA (O.C.)
Okay. I still love you.

TRISTAN
I love you too.

Joanna makes kissy noises. Chester smiles at Tristan's hard
stare.

BEAT

Tristan makes kissy noises back, and hangs up the phone.
Chester bursts into laughter.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)
At least I still have my girl.

He walks towards the door.

CHESTER
Not for long.

TRISTAN
You leave her out of this!

CHESTER
Oooo! Look at Romeo. She's gonna
drop you faster than a greased baby
when she finds out what you did.

TRISTAN
She won't find out.

CHESTER

Maybe you're right, but what do I know? I'm just a guy who'll be dead soon.

KITCHEN

He tries the door to the garage, but it's locked with another NUMERICAL KEYPAD. He braces himself and kicks the door over and over. He hits it with his shoulder. He grabs a POT and hits the door repeatedly... but nothing.

CUT TO:

LIVING ROOM

TRISTAN

So?

CHESTER

So what?

TRISTAN

So what's the code to get into the stupid garage?!

CHESTER

Don't worry champ, you know this one.

TRISTAN

So should I just start inputting any series of numbers from my life, or will you narrow it down?

Chester points to the Beautiful Chair.

CHESTER

Have a seat.

TRISTAN

Are you kidding me? I have twenty six minutes left.

Chester puts his feet up.

Tristan stomps over and flops down.

CHESTER

When did you know the land wasn't safe?

TRISTAN
Will you just help me --

CHESTER
I am. Tell me about the Hogan Polon deal.

TRISTAN
Kiss my ass!

CHESTER
Have it your way. Sit tight and wait for the cops.

Chester drinks from his highball. Tristan takes a deep breath and --

TRISTAN
When my friend and I were junior associates we were contacted by Michael Hogan. We took him out and he told us about a track of land he wanted to develop. We looked it up, and it looked solid. Good location, cheap land, strong possibilities.

CHESTER
But...

Chester gets up and makes two drinks.

TRISTAN
But the land was unstable. The bedrock was uneven and wouldn't support buildings.

CHESTER
And you gave him the money to build anyway.

He hands the drink to Tristan.

TRISTAN
No! I mean, yes, but he told us that he was going to retrofit the land. He said it would be safe.

Tristan throws the whole drink back, and nearly gags.

CHESTER
How'd the deal work out for you?

TRISTAN

Great. We got his company a loan at a low interest rate, and he built a strip mall.

CHESTER

Then what happened?

TRISTAN

The bedrock shifted and some of the stores collapsed. Four people died.

Chester takes a sip of whiskey.

CHESTER

He's what I don't understand: you were involved in a deal where people died, yet you and your friend were both promoted. How?

TRISTAN

Well, that wasn't the only deal we made with Michael Hogan.

CHESTER

What?

TRISTAN

He built six other strip malls with loans from our bank. He made us a bundle. Besides, the bank does a good job of distancing itself from the problem.

CHESTER

Problem? Is that what you call them?

Chester opens the desk and takes out FOUR PICTURES. He holds up a PHOTO of an Asian male sitting in a bar wearing a "Kiss Me, I'm Irish" t-shirt.

CHESTER (CONT'D)

Brandon Liang. 34, married for three years. He was shopping for his mother's birthday.

He holds up a PHOTO of a White male and female, sitting down holding a cat.

CHESTER (CONT'D)

Adam Watson and his new wife, Kelly, both 28. They were there to pick out their wedding rings.

He holds up a PHOTO of Latino woman in her late 40's. She's sitting on a towel at the beach, making a 'kiss' face to the camera.

CHESTER (CONT'D)

Then this girl. Raised in Mexico City, but moved to the US when she got a college scholarship. Smart and beautiful; how often does that happen? She could have done anything. Her biggest problem was her stupid boyfriend wouldn't commit. She would have been a great mother... but then she died.

TRISTAN

That must have been so hard for you.

Without taking his eyes off the picture, Chester punches Tristan in the face.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

You know so much then you know what I did after that!

CHESTER

Oh yeah, you gave some money to some schools and volunteered at a hospital. I'd get up to applaud, but I've been poisoned.

TRISTAN

I beat myself up about that everyday. Everyday!

CHESTER

But not so much as to turn yourself in to the police, or tell the families what happened.

TRISTAN

And what would that do? It wouldn't bring those people back. My company would go under and everyone would lose their jobs - good people!

CHESTER

You mean people like you?

TRISTAN

I'm sorry, okay! Is that what you want to hear? Well I am!

(MORE)

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

I don't know how to make it better!
If I could go back I would!

CHESTER

When did you know it wasn't safe?

TRISTAN

I don't know. There were a lot of
details to that transaction --

CHESTER

When did you know?

TRISTAN

How do you expect me to remember
one date to a deal that took years
to set up?

CHESTER

Because you're not a monster,
Tristan. You didn't delight in
those people's deaths, and when you
got away with it you thought that
you'd do some good: volunteer,
donate money. But you couldn't
shake them, could you?

Tristan shifts uncomfortably.

CHESTER (CONT'D)

You had dreams; nightmares.
Sometimes you'd just lay in bed and
play the whole thing over and over.
You'd ask yourself: what could I
have done differently? Isn't that
right?

Tristan sets his glass down.

CHESTER (CONT'D)

And after the collapse, what
happened to Michael Hogan and his
company?

TRISTAN

Nothing. The deaths were blamed on
the...

Shocked, he looks at Chester.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

The deaths were blamed on the
construction company.

CHESTER

You killed my girl and those people. You closed my company. You sent me to prison. I could draw your face from memory; how could you not know who I am?

TRISTAN

The... problem was solved. The situation went away... and I... just forgot about you.

Chester lowers his head.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

So, Michael Hogan and his company did this to you - not us! Why not go after him?

CHESTER

Michael Hogan was the monster, but you, your bank, you created him; gave him capitol, gave him teeth. And besides, I already went after Michael Hogan... this morning.

The color goes out of Tristan's face.

CHESTER (CONT'D)

Now when did you know it wasn't safe?

TRISTAN

September fifteenth, two thousand eight. That was when the inspector came back with his findings. We bought him off and buried the report.

Chester stands, towering over a terrified Tristan.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

I swear to God. It was September fifteenth, two thousand eight --

Tristan stops at the realization.

CHESTER

Well?

Tristan bolts out of the room --

CUT TO:

KITCHEN

On the Numerical Keypad he punches "09152008" but nothing happens. He punches it in again. He's starting to lose it. He punches the door, over and over again. He races from the Kitchen to the --

LIVING ROOM

TRISTAN

What do you want from me?! That was it! That's it! September fifteenth two thousand eight! I swear to God, that was it!

(falling to his knees
sobbing

I swear to God.

BEAT

CHESTER

Did you press pound?

Tristan quietly looks up.

CUT TO:

KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

He presses "#" and the door opens.

TRISTAN

Why do you even have to... so stupid!

GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

Immediately Tristan sees the Crowbar and grabs it. He sweeps up the BROKEN GLASS and throws it away.

As he cleans up he sees the HEADLESS MARIONETTE on the freezer.

TRISTAN

Screw this.

On the bench is a BOX CUTTER. Tristan slips it in his pocket.

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY MANSION - SIDE OF THE HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Tristan peeks his head out the door; the Dog is asleep. Slowly he makes his way outside and replaces the shutter back to it's original position.

DOG GROWL

Tristan turns his head just in time to see the door shut.

CUT TO:

INT. COUNTRY MANSION

KNOCKING

Chester, Highball in hand, answers the front door.

CHESTER
So how's the dog --

He's tackled to the floor by a crazy eyed Tristan wielding the BOX CUTTER, but Chester catches the arm that holds the blade. The two struggle on the floor!

TRISTAN
Tell me the truth! Right now, tell
me the truth!

CHESTER
About what?

TRISTAN
The cops aren't really coming.

CHESTER
Oh yes they are.

TRISTAN
Liar!

Chester punches Tristan in the face, knocking him to the ground. He goes for the gun in his waistband, but Tristan slashes at him, cutting his arm.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)
It's not the size of the dog in the
fight, it's the size of the fight
in the dog.

CHESTER
So you're a dog now?

Tristan leaps at him, but Chester grabs him mid-air and rolling his body throws him to the ground. Chester screams and grabs the fresh cut on his arm.

CRACK!

Tristan sees that the pocket watch has fallen out and the face is now broken. He scoops it up, and holds the box cutter at length.

TRISTAN

What did I really inject you with upstairs? It sure as hell wasn't poison!

Tristan throws a SIDE TABLE and as Chester blocks it Tristan leaps on top of him and pins him to the floor with the box cutter at his neck!

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

You don't have any evidence, do you?

CHESTER

(laughing)

It's funny you should bring up the word evidence. That drink I gave you? I rubbed my dick on the rim of the glass.

Tristan throws a punch, but Chester throws him off, pulls the gun and holds it to Tristan's head.

TRISTAN

I'm done being your puppet! My hands are clean!

CHESTER

You sure about that? Because you've forgotten one big piece of evidence, and it's sitting on the front seat of your car.

Chester lowers the gun. Tristan's eyes go wide!

He runs out the door --

EXT. DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Chester watches as Tristan fumbles with his keys. He opens the car door and reaches for the SMALL BOX --

POP

The box BURSTS, covering Tristan and the rest of the interior of the car in BLOOD.

The only sound filling the night air is Chester's laughter.

CHESTER

Here you go.

He offers him a TISSUE.

TRISTAN

What is this?

CHESTER

It's my blood.

TRISTAN

Oh my God!

Tristan frantically begins wiping his face!

CHESTER

I collected it over the course of a year, and it kind of links you to my death, now doesn't it?

TRISTAN

What's the matter with you?

CHESTER

I think what you need is a little perspective. Man, you're looking at a first world problem.

TRISTAN

HOW IS BEING COVERED IN BLOOD A FIRST WORLD PROBLEM?!

CHESTER

Because it's not the blood of a person you care about. You didn't just witness a suicide bombing. Nothing was lost to you. Getting blood on your car - this is an inconvenience.

Tristan leaps on top of Chester, blood dripping onto him.

TRISTAN

NO! Let me tell you something, this was something sacred! This was a link to the past; my past!

CHESTER

And now it's gone. How does that feel? How many homes? How many college funds? How many dreams did you cash in on? This is what it looks like when it's not on a spreadsheet or in an email. This is how it smells.

TRISTAN

This was my car --

CHESTER

Yeah, your car that conveniently leads you into the dead dad story. Very helpful when swaying a customer.

Tristan stands up.

TRISTAN

Okay, how the hell does this fit into the story? If I killed you with poison then why in the name of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints would I be covered in blood?

Chester, still laying in the driveway, puts his hands behind his head; not a care in the world.

CHESTER

Doesn't matter. I don't have to explain anything. You, on the other hand, have to explain why you and your car are covered in a dead man's blood.

Tristan looks at his WATCH: 16 minutes.

TRISTAN

(to himself)

Okay, okay, okay. I can figure this out.

CHESTER

I'll tell you --

TRISTAN

No! You will shut the hell up, is what you'll do! I am through listening to you! I will figure this out on my own!

CHESTER
 (to himself)
 Don't have to be a jerk about it.

TRISTAN
 I'll clean the car and my clothes --

CHESTER
 You'll never get blood out in time.

TRISTAN
 Shut up! I'll hide the car in a
 ditch --

CHESTER
 What ditch?

TRISTAN
 I'll dig a ditch!

CHESTER
 Oh okay, that makes sense.

TRISTAN
 Shut your mouth!

Tristan grabs the keys off the ground and hops in the --

INT. CONVERTIBLE MERCEDES - CONTINUOUS

He wipes some of the blood off the window.

ENGINE ROAR!

With rocks flying through the air, Tristan spins the car
 around so it's facing away from the house.

The car idles in the driveway.

INT. CONVERTIBLE MERCEDES - CONTINUOUS

He sits with an extreme intensity in his eyes, but slowly the
 intensity fades... and fades... and fades.

He turns off the car and opens the door.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

He walks back to Chester with his head hung low.

TRISTAN
What's your plan?

CHESTER
Atta boy. 'Bout half a mile from here is a dirt road that leads to a little lake; more of a pond than anything. You drive it out there and sink it, along with your clothes.

TRISTAN
No.

CHESTER
Um, what?

TRISTAN
You're asking me to sink this car like it's just some sort of *thing*.

CHESTER
But it is a thing. You get that, right?

TRISTAN
No! You don't get this! This is mine and it's important!

CHESTER
That's fine. The cops will stick it in an impound yard, and when you die in jail they'll kindly sell it so some nice folks. Your call, champ.

TRISTAN
May I point out that your plan has a MAJOR hole in it? So I'm supposed to dump my car; and then what? Live in the forest for the rest of my life?

CHESTER
Nope. You walk back here.

TRISTAN
Just in time to have the cops catch me. Great plan. No wonder your company failed.

CHESTER

If you don't walk back here then I'll send the worst email of your life.

(holding his cell phone)

You dump your car and your clothes, walk back here. The evidence that you were ever here is gone and once I see you in the driveway I'll delete the email. All you have to do then is wait for your eyebrows to grow back and you'll be in business.

TRISTAN

Once I get back here how will I get back home?

CHESTER

You take my car; it's parked in the garage. Get a move on now, time's a waste'n.

Tristan wants to say something, but instead he gets in his car and drives away.

INT. CONVERTIBLE MERCEDES - LATER

He drives silently down the street, onto the dirt road, and finally arrives at the POND.

EXT. POND - CONTINUOUS

He stands outside his car and has a sudden idea! Pulling out his cell phone --

TRISTAN

F this guy.

Tristan opens the trunk and pulls out a SCREWDRIVER. He makes a few stabbing motions.

ASSOCIATE (O.C.)

Where are you --

TRISTAN

I don't have much time. I need to call in a favor here: look through the Hogan Polon deal. I need the name of the construction company and it's chief executive officers.

(MORE)

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

This guy says his name is Chester,
but that maybe an alias.

He puts the screwdriver down and picks up a RUBBER HOSE. He slaps it on the palm of his hand.

ASSOCIATE (O.C.)

Tristan!

TRISTAN

Listen! I don't have the evidence
against us yet, but I have an idea.
I just need some leverage.

He puts the rubber hose down and picks up a TIRE IRON. He swings it a few times.

ASSOCIATE (O.C.)

You mean evidence against you.

TRISTAN

What now?

ASSOCIATE (O.C.)

According to the documentation we
have you buried an inspector's
report --

TRISTAN

Wait, are you distancing yourself
from me?

ASSOCIATE (O.C.)

Global Bank is distancing itself
from the problem.

TRISTAN

WE buried that report! You and I
have the same blood on our hands!

Tristan looks at the actual blood on his hands. He tries to wipe it off, but it's dried.

ASSOCIATE (O.C.)

What the hell did you expect me to
do?! You stabbed me in the back
stealing that money!

TRISTAN

What money?! I didn't steal
anything!

ASSOCIATE (O.C.)

I give you the information of a *highly* secretive account, and seconds later the money is gone and your fiance's campaign receives a huge donation! Sylithern move, man!

TRISTAN

What are you talking about?! It's not me! It's Chester! He killed Michael Hogan.

ASSOCIATE (O.C.)

Michael Hogan was killed by two eighteen year old kids! A security camera caught the whole thing. Hogan fell of the wagon after his money was stolen. He was trying to score coke.

TRISTAN

Wait, what do you mean his money was stolen?

ASSOCIATE (O.C.)

Oh, like you don't know! You're gonna get raped so much in prison!

TRISTAN

IT WAS CHESTER!

ASSOCIATE (O.C.)

I KNOW IT WAS CHESTER!

(deep breath)

Listen, banks already have a horrible reputation. If this gets out the public is going to need a whipping boy. You said it yourself, Chester will be dead soon.... so who does that leave?

TRISTAN

Don't do this.

ASSOCIATE (O.C.)

I gotta go.

TRISTAN

No! Wait! Hello? Hello?!

He hangs up the phone. He takes off his clothes, throws them in the car and starts pushing. It rolls in and begins to sink, but then it stops!

TRISTAN (CONT'D)
(near tears)
Oh come on.

He wades in and shoves the car as hard as he can. He kicks it, punches it, hits it until... it sinks completely. He wades out of the water and sits with his knees pulled up to his chest, shivering in the night air.

He dials his cell phone.

JOANNA (O.C.)
Where are you? Do you know how stupid I looked talking about family values when my fiance isn't even there?!
(beat)
Tristan? Talk to me!

TRISTAN
Baby... I messed up. I messed up.

JOANNA (O.C.)
What do you mean? Tell me what's the matter, honey.

TRISTAN
I came out here today and the client wasn't home.

JOANNA (O.C.)
What are you talking about?

TRISTAN
It was a man. He told me that he had evidence that me and one of the guys at work had made a bad loan, and covered up the deaths of some people.

JOANNA (O.C.)
What? Covered up? You're not making any sense.

TRISTAN
Listen. We did it. We paid off an inspector and people died. This man made me do things. I just rolled my dad's car into a lake.

JOANNA (O.C.)
You what?!

TRISTAN

I had to get rid of my clothes
because they're covered in blood.
The bank is making it look like I
worked alone. If police come to the
house just... don't say anything,
okay? I don't know what's gonna
happen. It was just one mistake.
Baby, I just want to come home.

JOANNA (O.C.)

You can't come back here.

TRISTAN

What?

JOANNA (O.C.)

Tristan, the man I fell in love
with would never hurt anyone, but
now you're telling me you killed
people?

TRISTAN

No, but see... it was a mistake.
You see --

JOANNA (O.C.)

When did this happen?

TRISTAN

Honey --

JOANNA (O.C.)

How long ago?!

TRISTAN

Two thousand and eight.

JOANNA (O.C.)

Oh my God! You've been lying to me
for that long --

TRISTAN

I didn't lie --

JOANNA (O.C.)

You lied! You lied! You certainly
didn't tell me you killed anyone,
so you lied! Don't I mean anything
to you?!

TRISTAN

I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. I'll make this right... we'll move the wedding to --

JOANNA (O.C.)

The wedding? There is no more wedding. I can't - I won't be with a man who doesn't respect me, and my campaign can not be associated with a murderer.

TRISTAN

What *the fuck* are you talking about?! This man is going to destroy my life! My life!

JOANNA (O.C.)

I have to go --

TRISTAN

Wait, no! Joanna? Joanna?!

The line is dead. The phone slips out of Tristan's hand and falls to the ground. He looks at the Pocket Watch for a moment before throwing it into the water.

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

He walks back to the road. In the distance he sees the lights of the mansion. He turns and looks in the other direction. It leads into the darkness. He begins walking towards the mansion.

EXT. COUNTRY MANSION - LATER

He stands about 100 yards from the house. Through the windows he can see the glow from the fireplace. He re-examines the lay-out: Front door, gate, WINDOW.

EXT. COUNTRY MANSION - BASEMENT WINDOW - CONTINUOUS

He tries the window, but it won't budge. He hits it with his elbow.

CRASH!

Blood trickles from Tristan's arm as he crawls inside.

INT. BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

The BOILER'S flames are the only light. He searches the room. All he finds is a BUNDLE OF STICKS and PAPER. He crams everything into the boiler and watches as the flames grow.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Chester, now with a BANDAGE over his arm, sits in front of the fireplace, casually sipping his glass of American Whiskey, when a bead of sweat trickles down the side of his face.

He takes off his JACKET and gently tosses it onto the couch, but it falls to the floor. He crosses and leans down to grab it when he places his hand to the floor. It's hot.

Something is wrong. He puts down his glass and it sweats on the table.

HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Chester moves down the hall, step by step, finally reaching the thermostat. His eyes narrow when he sees that it's turned off! He starts walking back, but stops when the ELECTRICITY GOES OUT.

MATCH STRIKE.

The Hallway is pitch black except for the match light, and Chester is left alone with only the sound of his breath.

CRASH!

Silently he moves to the --

LIVING ROOM

The fire casts light and shadows across the room. Chester can make out that the FIREPLACE TOOLS have been knocked over. The POKER is missing. Chester takes the CELL PHONE from his pocket and --

BAM!

He's hit over the head and falls to the ground. His Cell Phone slides across the floor. Tristan's hand lifts up Chester's shirt and takes the GUN from his waistband.

He opens his eyes to see Tristan, wet, naked and shivering.

CHESTER
So, how you been?

Tristan walks across the room and picks up the phone.

TRISTAN
Oh man, your cell is from like,
2005?

Tristan laughs to himself and throws the cell phone into the fire.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)
Now then, answer me, plain and
clear. Are the cops coming?

CHESTER
No.

TRISTAN
Are you going to die?

CHESTER
Yes.

TRISTAN
Because I poisoned you?

CHESTER
No.

TRISTAN
Then why?

CHESTER
You know, age and stuff. That's a
heavy gun. Is your arm hurting?

TRISTAN
I'm asking the questions! But yeah;
sit down.

Tristan sits in the Beautiful Chair, resting his arm on the side table, and Chester sits on the couch. Tristan rubs his head.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)
(laughing)
You were right, I wish I'd gone
with the chloroform.

CHESTER
So are you going to kill me?

TRISTAN

Well, we're an hour away from civilization. You could scream at the top of your lungs and no one would hear you... but no Chester, I'm not going to kill you.

Tristan gets up and crosses to the desk. He opens the drawer and takes out the MANILA ENVELOPES.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

In an odd way I should thank you. Through VERY unconventional means you've helped me quite a bit. Global Bank was ready to send me down the river, but your evidence proves otherwise. Although, I am going to ask that you leave me and my family alone for forever.

CHESTER

You're gonna go back to that broad? Even after she left you in the mud?

TRISTAN

She's going to be a Senator, of course I'm going back to her. Besides, once I go public I'll be the hero that took down Global --

He tears open the Manila Envelope, but all of the pages are blank. He tears open another - blank. And another - blank.

CHESTER

Oops.

TRISTAN

Where's the evidence? Where's the report?

CHESTER

Oh, I never had that. I knew you'd done something wrong, but you were very thorough.

TRISTAN

Then why did you do all this?!

Chester reaches under the couch and pulls out a LAPTOP. He sits down and opens it. Playing is a grainy, hidden-cam shot of Tristan:

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

September fifteenth, two thousand eight. That was when the inspector came back with his findings. We bought him off and buried the report.

Tristan's eyes go wide. He looks around the room. He rips the PAINTING off the wall and behind it is a VIDEO CAMERA.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

Chester, listen to me very carefully: you can not let that video out. It would destroy me, and God knows what Global Bank would do.

CHESTER

Aww, I wouldn't worry about the bank. They have problems of their own.

Chester presses a button on the laptop. An AUDIO FILE plays:

ASSOCIATE (V.O.)

Global Bank offers it's high earners the opportunity to reallocate funds to our sister bank in Switzerland where the tax laws are a bit more... laxed. We charge interest for this, and that money goes to Washington D.C. Legally, it's kind of a grey area.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - FLASHBACK

MR. WYLIE

-- you'll have wished you'd gone with the chloroform.

TRISTAN

The what?

Raising his WALKING STICK --

WHACK!!

Tristan lies on the floor unconscious. Chester, still dressed as Mr. Wylie, takes Tristan's phone from his pocket, opens it, places a SMALL ELECTRONIC DEVICE inside, and puts the cell phone back in Tristan's pocket.

CUT TO:

LIVING ROOM - FLASHBACK

Chester is sitting with his feet up, sipping from his highball. Tristan peers from the top of the stairs. He holds his phone out when --

ASSOCIATE (O.C.)

Did'ja take it yet?

Tristan hides just as Chester looks up. There is a WIRE leading from Chester's ear to the laptop.

REALITY

CHESTER

On the bright side, that money will do some good.

TRISTAN

What do you mean?

CUT TO:

HALLWAY - FLASHBACK

Tristan punches numbers into the keypad as --

CHESTER'S LAPTOP

-- the numbers appear on a WEB SITE. Chester presses a button and the screen reads: TRANSFER COMPLETE.

HALLWAY

Chester stands at the top of the stairs facing Tristan.

CHESTER

You have to press pound.

CUT TO:

END FLASHBACK

CHESTER

Along with your wife's campaign, I spread it out to about 150 charities world wide. Maybe the courts will see it as philanthropic.

TRISTAN

You didn't have the codes?

CHESTER

Those were open source keypads. To unlock them all you had to do was press pound.

Tristan sits, mouth agape.

TRISTAN

Chester, please. Please do not send those to anyone. I-I have money. Wh-how much do you want? I have a --

CHESTER

(laughing)

Tristan. I sent those out forty five minutes ago.

Chester walks to the door.

TRISTAN

Wait. Stop. What happens now?

CHESTER

The bank gets a swift kick in the ass. Suss out some of the crooks. Global Bank is finished, the IRS will make sure of that, and it sounds like they're hanging you out to dry. Sucks.

Chester opens the door.

TRISTAN

Chester? Chester?!

He turns to see Tristan pointing the gun.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

(to himself)

Excellence is not an act.
Excellence is a habit.

BANG!

Blood. Chester falls to the floor, writhing. His HIGHBALL shatters on the floor next to him.

Tristan drops the gun. Holy shit, what have I done?!

Chester waves Tristan over to him. He gets down on his knees and leans in. Chester grabs the back of his neck!

CHESTER

This is what you deserve.

Chester smiles and then stops breathing. Tristan stands transfixed on Chester's body... until he sees BLUE AND RED LIGHTS. He races to the window to see a POLICE CAR in the driveway.

KNOCKING

POLICE OFFICER (O.C.)

This is the police! Open the door!

Tristan, naked and shaved, stands holding a gun over the body of a dead Chester, in the middle of the most beautiful house you have ever seen.

EL FIN