Nightcrawler

by

Dan Gilroy

9/27/13
INFINITY OF STARS

over barren ground ... if not for a BILLBOARD it could be the moon ... CAMERA pushing over a rim to show

LOS ANGELES

shimmering in night heat ... THRUM of civilization ... a FREEWAY feeds into the city as a SEMI blasts by and CUT TO

THE CITY

seen closer now ... Oz-like and magical and CUT TO

POSTCARD VIEWS

of Los Angeles ... inside the city now ... Beverly Hills framed against mountains ... looking down from Mulholland ... boulevard lights like strings of pearls ... desert clarity and CUT TO

THE L.A. RIVER

flows darkly before us ... CAMERA rising above a FLOOD CHANNEL to a fenced industrial area where

LOUIS “LOU” BLOOM

is a silhouette against the city glow ... using bolt cutters to rip down a square of chain-link fence ... muscling it into the back of a beat-up CAR as he hears something, turns to SEE

HEADLIGHTS

approaching in the distance ... LOU slamming the trunk as the lights

SWEEP

and we see him ... LOU’S 30 ... pure primal id ... if there’s music it’s in his head ... disconnected ... feral ... driven by dollar signs and a dream of some imagined Eden as

A PICK-UP TRUCK

stops and a MAN gets out ... framed in headlights ... wearing a utility belt with mace and handcuffs ...

MAN’S VOICE

What are you doing out here?

LOU

I’m lost.
MAN’S VOICE
This is a restricted area.

LOU
I didn’t know that. There’s no signs.

MAN
They’re everywhere. Let’s see some I.D.

LOU
Why?

MAN
Because there’s a broken gate back there and you’re trespassing.

LOU
Excuse me, but that gate was open, sir. I was under the opinion that it was a detour. What kind of uniform is that?

MAN
I’ll ask the fucking questions.

LOU seeing a SECURITY EMBLEM on the man’s sleeve ...

LOU
Private outfit, huh? I tried to get one of those jobs. I like guarding things.

(pulling a license)
Here you go, sir. I think what happened is I just must’ve gotten turned around.

The MAN reaches for LOU’S license and CLOSE ON

A CHUNKY WATCH
on the MAN’S wrist ... minute hand ticking 1:19 AM as

LOU
attacks ... fight going to ground ... dust rising into the headlights and CUT TO

LOU’S CAR

gliding along an endless VALLEY BOULEVARD ... shut stores and deserted parking lots ... street lights on every empty corner ... like a movie set waiting for the next day’s shooting ... LOU’S hand shifts on the steering wheel as he admires

THE GUARD’S WATCH

on his wrist ... industrial ROAR bleeding in and CUT TO
A GIANT MACHINE

eating CARS at the edge of the valley ... night CREW craning junkers into grinding blades as

INSIDE THE OFFICE

LOU speaks to the SCRAPYARD OWNER over the noise ...

LOU
I guesstimate I have 50 pounds of copper wire, a hundred pounds of chain-link and two manhole covers, the nice thick ones.

SCRAPYARD OWNER
I’ll give 50-cents-a-pound for the wire, 15 for the fence and 10 for the covers.

LOU
That’s below market value.

SCRAPYARD OWNER
Market value? You know the cops came by asking about manhole covers.

LOU
I’d like to counter at a dollar-a-pound for the copper, 30-cents-a-pound for the fence and 20-cents-per for the covers.

SCRAPYARD OWNER
Sell ‘em somewhere else.

LOU
I’d feel good at 75, 25 and 15.

SCRAPYARD
I’m not negotiating with you.

LOU
I think we’re close.

SCRAPYARD OWNER
We’re done. Take it or leave it.

LOU
I’m willing to take less to establish a business relationship. If that’s your last best offer then I guess I accept.

SCRAPYARD OWNER
Drive around back and unload ‘em.
LOU
Sir, excuse me, I’m looking for a job. In fact, I’ve made up mind to find a career I can learn and grow into. Who am I? I’m a hard-worker, I set high goals and I’ve been told I’m persistent. Now I’m not fooling myself, sir. Having been raised with the self-esteem movement so popular in schools, I used to expect my needs to be considered. But I know that today’s work culture no longer caters to the job loyalty that could be promised to earlier generations. What I believe, sir, is that good things come to those who work their asses off, and that people such as yourself who reach the top of the mountain didn’t just fall there. My motto is if you want to win the lottery you have to make the money to buy a ticket. Did I say I worked in a garage? Sir, I think you and I could work well together. So how about it? I can start tomorrow or even why not tonight?

SCRAPYARD OWNER filling out a form ... muttering ‘no’ ...

LOU
How about an internship then? A lot of young people are taking unpaid positions to get a foot in the door. That’s something I’d be willing to do.

SCRAPYARD OWNER
I’m not hiring a fucking thief.

DEAD OF NIGHT
LOU alone in his car, driving an L.A. FREEWAY ... windows down ... clock blinking 3:44 AM ... ad on the radio ... LOU sees an accident up ahead ... passes

TWO HIGHWAY PATROLMEN
trying to pull an unconscious WOMAN from a BLAZING CAR and

LOU
angles to the shoulder ... getting out to look as a POLICE HELICOPTER SEARCHLIGHT stabs the dark ... LOU drawn to the scene as a big panel VAN stops on the shoulder and
TWO MEN

jump out ... one in charge, tough and indifferent ... the other an employee ... both wear shirts with a logo that reads

MAYHEM VIDEO

The man in charge (JOE LODER) carrying a professional camcorder and filming as the employee yells

EMPLOYEE

We’re first!

JOE LODER

Got a view in the car!

The MEN film the COPS trying to free

THE WOMAN

in the burning car as LOU looks inside their van and SEES

A DOZEN SCANNERS

blinking and blaring EMERGENCY COM-CHATTER ... two laptops set to GPS ... Los Angeles crime and tragedy tracked on high-def screens and surround sound and for

LOU

the effect is electrifying as

THE POLICE CHOPPER

banks low and

THE COPS

smash glass and

THE CAMERA GUYS

film as an

S.U.V.

skids to a stop and a MAN and WOMAN jump out and film and

LOU

looks inside the S.U.V. and regards an array of EMERGENCY SCANNERS and laptops and CUT TO
10 MINUTES LATER

and the two CAMERA CREWS have been shunted from the wreck ... filming the departure of a wailing ambulance ... action over, they head to their vehicles ... LOU following JOE LODER ...

LOU
Excuse me. This’ll be on tv?

JOE
Morning news.

LOU
What channel?

JOE
Whoever pays the most.

LOU
What do you get for something like this?

JOE
Not much.

LOU
Enough to buy all that gear.

JOE
It’s a flaming asshole of a job.

LOU
How do you sell what you shoot?

JOE ignoring him, loading equipment in the van ...

LOU
Can I ask you, are you currently hiring?

JOE
No.

LOU
Well thank you for taking the time to discuss what you do. You’ve been very helpful.

JOE
(hears a call on the scanners)
2-11 on Rosecrans! In progress!

They jump in the van and leave ... S.U.V. following as ...

LOU stands by the smoking car ... traffic passing ... POLICE stringing yellow tape around the crash site and CUT TO
ORANGE GLOW

against an anthracite SKY ... night-black tinting day-blue as

THE RIM OF THE SUN

crests the mountains ringing LOS ANGELES ... light strikes
patch fog carpeting the basin ... angles to a black ocean ...
we’re looking at the west of a million years ago and CUT TO

A FOREST OF HIGH-GAIN ANTENNAS

rising hundreds of feet above the peak of MOUNT WILSON ...
every tv and radio station broadcasting from up here and

THE SOUND

of competing, manic MORNING TV NEWS THEMES filters in ... a
symphonic jumble of bass-heavy opuses as we CUT TO

A SATELLITE DISH

on the roof of a crappy lego block L.A. APARTMENT COMPLEX set
amid L.A. poverty sprawl ... a cable is spliced into the TV
BOX with duct tape as we follow

THE PIRATED CABLE

down the wall ... medley of MORNING TV NEWS THEMES reduced to
a single, soaring score as we follow the cable into

LOU’S APARTMENT

One shitty room ... near empty and neat ... perfectly made
bed ... a few pressed shirts hanging on a pipe ... an old
COMPUTER ... LOU watering a weedy plant on the windowsill,
watching a

TV

set on a milk crate as an L.A. MORNING NEWS SHOW begins ...

TV ANNOUNCER

In high-definition, this is the K.L.A.X Two News at six a.m. The Number One
morning news in all of Southern California. Others may claim to be your
local choice, but more Southlanders get their news here on K.L.A.X. Two. Your
L.A.’s real, local, HD news choice.

TWO plastic PEOPLE appear ... heavy make-up ... mock cheer...
ANCHORWOMAN

Good morning, I’m Lauren Delgado.

ANCHORMAN

And I’m Brendan Clark. An unclaimed mega-millions ticket sold at a 7-11 in San Diego is worth a whopping 266 million dollars. Is it yours?

LOU changing to another A.M. NEWS SHOW with older ANCHORS ...

ANCHORMAN

It’s been one week since officer Michael Hailey was gunned down, and new evidence has police hunting for one of their own.

ANCHORWOMAN

A fast moving bank robber in Sylmar didn’t move fast enough and we’ll explain how the F.B.I. caught up with him.

LOU changing channels to two, caffeinated NEWS ANCHORS ...

ANCHORWOMAN

A landmark court decision, Carl, has cyber-music fans singing the blues.

ANCHORMAN

Ouch. I might have to budget more for my music.

LOU changing channels to another L.A. MORNING NEWS SHOW ...

HAIR-SPRAYED ANCHORS

reading news against glossy graphics until something catches LOU’S attention and he stops at

THE K.W.L.A. MORNING NEWS

Lower rent than its competitors ... Ken doll ANCHORMAN and pin-up ANCHORWOMAN peddling unvarnished fear and mayhem ...

ANCHORWOMAN

With the build-up of gas the threat of a catastrophic explosion in the Fairfax District grows more likely by the hour.

ANCHORMAN

Twisted metal, a shattered life, all caught on tape last night at the scene of a fiery one-car collision on the 605.
FOOTAGE

of the crash LOU saw fills screen ... the fiery car ... COPS pulling the WOMAN from the wreckage ... a red banner reads

**K.W.L.A. EXCLUSIVE**

ANCHORMAN

*Melinda Flores of Yorba Linda was severely burned but escaped with her life thanks to the incredible bravery of two C.H.P. officers. The crash started a fire that quickly consumed the vehicle.*

ANCHORWOMAN

*As we see in an exclusive K.W.L.A. video, C.H.P. officers Mike Tully and Ken Wu risked their lives saving the single mom.*

ANCHORWOMAN

*Flores was transferred to Saint Joseph’s hospital in extremely critical condition with severe burns over nearly 80 percent of her body.*

A COMMERCIAL

plays and **CUT TO**

BRIGHT SUN

on white-glare sand ...

PEOPLE

riding bikes and jogging and roller-blading in Venice where we find

LOU

sitting on wall ... watching

A MAN

in a spandex bicycle outfit as he locks his racing bike, enters a juice store and

LOU

crosses ... picks the bike lock and **CUT TO**
A PAWN SHOP

LOU showing the bike to the OWNER ...

OWNER
I dunno. I'll give you 500.

LOU
This is a custom racing bicycle, sir, designed for competitive road cycling. This bike has a lightweight, space-age carbon frame and handlebars positioned to put the rider in a more aerodynamic posture. It also has micro-shifters and 37 gears and weighs under six pounds. I won the Tour de Mexico on this bike.

OWNER
700. High as I'll go.

LOU
It cost me over 8000 new.

OWNER
700.

LOU
2500, that's giving it away.

OWNER
No bike's got 37 gears.

LOU
2000.

OWNER
Nope.

LOU
Could I please speak with your boss, please?

OWNER
I'm the owner.

LOU
How about 800 in store credit?

OWNER
What are you looking for?

LOU
A camcorder and a police scanner.
MOONRISE

over L.A ... EMERGENCY RADIO CHATTER drums over the city ... Nonstop POLICE BAND as the MOON inches over L.A. and CUT TO

LOU

sitting in his beat-up car ... listening to the jumble of police code and call signs on a second-hand scanner ... LOU has a cheap camcorder and a map of L.A. and no idea what or where anything is happening until ...

POLICE RADIO

Any Hollenbeck units, 4-15. Fight at 1-3-9-3-2 Tularosa Drive. Suspect number one, male black. Suspect number 2, male black juvenile. Code 2. Incident 3-6-7-4. R.D. 11-45.

LOU checking the map ... pulling into traffic and CUT TO

TULAROSA DRIVE

is framed by squat apartment buildings and palms swaying against the night as

LOU

drives by ... sees a stopped POLICE CRUISER with its bubble lights blinking and CUT TO

A BLOODIED BLACK MAN

sitting on the sidewalk ... no shirt ... hands flex-cuffed behind him ... two COPS talking with a crying and bloodied TEENAGE BOY as

LOU

double-parks ... jumps out and comes up filming ... circling close ... 

COP #1

Who are you?

LOU

Freelance.

COP #2

What are you doing?

LOU

Filming. For TV.
COP #1
Back away.

LOU
What’s happening?

LOU’S CAMERA POV
as he PANS from the CRYING TEENAGER ... to the bloodied GUY in flexcuffs ... to the COPS, looking increasingly confused and irritated ...

COP #1
I said turn around and leave.

LOU
I’m fairly sure that I’m allowed to film this.

COP #1
Film what?

LOU
I don’t know. What’s going on?

COP #2
Walk away or get arrested for obstruction!

LOU backing up as he keep filming and CUT TO

LATER
LOU drives as the SCANNER spits out codes and calls, trouble touching down like a tornado stalled over L.A. and CUT TO

LATER
LOU at a FENDER BENDER ... COPS not into his filming ...

LOU
Excuse me, what’s a 10-17? What’s a 10-12?

COP
Leave! I’m not telling you again!

LATER
LOU at a GAS STATION ... hose to his overheating radiator ... car door open ... police radio cranked loud ... cacophony of police calls until ...
POLICE RADIO

All Wilshire units, 2-11 just occurred.  
Shots at Western and First.  Two male  
suspects, no description.  Code two.  
Incident 1-7-7-9.  R.D. 45-12.

LOU yanking the hose, slamming the hood and CUT TO

WESTERN AND THIRD

is blocked by SQUAD CARS and AMBULANCES ... major crime scene 

developing as

LOU’S CAR

stops on the fringe ... he gets out filming and

LOU’S CAMERA POV

COPS chalk-circle bullet shells on pavement ... other COPS direct traffic as LOU hurries toward

PARAMEDICS

doing chest compressions on a MAN in the street and

LOU

hurries around a CAMERAMAN filming from a respectful distance 
... closer and closer until he’s directly over the PARAMEDICS 
... filming something we don’t see ... agonizing moans ...

COP

(sees LOU)

Get back!  A hundred feet back!  Back!

LOU’S shoved away ... COPS pushing the other CAMERAMAN from 
the scene ... unrolling yellow police tape ...

CAMERAMAN

Fucking asshole.  You shut it down.

The CAMERAMAN kills the light on his high-end CAMERA ...

CAMERAMAN

Had a great fucking angle till you 
crowded in.  Take your dumb-ass and get 
the fuck home.  There’s people fucking 
working out here.  Fucking asshole.

The MAN crosses to a panel van, opens a door and LOU SEES
THE SCANNERS AND COMPUTER SCREENS

of the trade ... the MAN hands the CAMERA to his PARTNER who downloads footage onto a computer ... one MAN editing as the other MAN speed-dials his cell ...

MAN/ON CELL
Yeah, it’s Ace Video. You want to start rolling to Koreatown. Your lead’s gonna be at Western and First. Shooting. I got some good shots of a victim being treated. L.A.P.D. hasn’t released it but a manager at a Walgreens says it’s a carjacking and the victim’s the owner. He’s Asian and critical. I got 60 seconds cut with a quote from the manager and a neighbor. Yours exclusive for 500... so make a counter ... 400... 300 ... done ...

The MAN sees LOU listening, slams the door shut and CUT TO
A LOS ANGELES TV STATION

in the high numbers on Sunset ... neon sign flickering against the night ...

KWLA-TV
Television Center

INSIDE THE STATION

LOU enters the NEWSROOM where a night shift skeleton CREW is cobbling together the morning broadcast ...

LOU moving unnoticed through the open room ... eyes taking in everything ...

HALF-DOZEN WRITERS typing copy in cubicles ...

ASSIGNMENT EDITOR conferencing with REPORTERS (two hair-straightened WOMEN and a teeth-bleached MAN) ...

OVERHEARING bits of conversation ("We’re leading with the fire in Downey ... She wants a stand-up in every story ...")

LOU drawn to a glass wall ... peering at the
K.W.L.A. NEWS SET

with its sleek news desks and sweeping L.A. backdrops and studio-grade CAMERAS and teleprompters and green screens ... a bright, small, faux island in a cavernous black-shadowed sound stage and

LOU

is drawn to voices from a room down a hall and CUT TO

K.W.L.A. EDITING BAY

Dark ... dingy ... an EDITOR works a console with two screens ... a WOMAN stands over him and

NINA ROMINA

is a veteran of three decades in the blood-sport that is local TV news ... she’s a 50-ish, over-made, hard-bitten beauty who began in front of the camera and has now, through sheer survival, become the madam of the whore house ...

NINA
(to the editor)
Put the neighbor here ... the kids with their mother ... by the door ... get it from back at 2:16 ...

EDITOR scrolling footage to stop at

TWO SAUCER-EYED GIRLS

huddled by a WOMAN talking through a barred door ...

WOMAN/ON SCREEN
It was probably like 10:30 or 11 an’ she told me she heard a girl yelling so like she knew something was wrong an’ then a bang so now she’s like wow maybe that got something to do with what happened ... I mean he was nice, I used to see him all the time...

NINA
Cut from ‘she heard yelling’ to ‘and then a bang’ and then I want to lay over some nat sound. Let’s loop the neighbor’s dog barking and then try taking the crying kid from b roll and dropping that in the background.

NINA sees LOU at the door ...
NINA
You my fill-in operator?

LOU
I don’t think so. I shot some footage.
For sale.

NINA
A stringer?

LOU
What?

NINA
Who do you work for?

LOU
At the moment I work for myself.

NINA
See Frank, out there, the way you came.
(to the EDITOR)
What’s it time to?

EDITOR
1:06.

NINA
The slot’s 56. Trim the header four.

NINA sips coffee as the EDITOR trims a shot of police tape around a smashed apartment door ... glancing back as LOU leaves ...

NINA
What do you have?

LOU
Something I’m fairly certain you’ll be excited about.

NINA
What is it?

LOU
It’s a shooting. A man is shot, several times in fact, and he’s lying on the ground. He’s bleeding on the ground. I would be surprised if he survived, honestly. He was shot during a car-jacking.
NINA
From Western and First?

LOU
Yes, that’s right.

NINA
I heard Seven had the exclusive.

LOU
No. I was there and I was much closer to what was happening.

NINA
Well let’s see it.

LOU
(hands her his camcorder)
You can watch it on the little screen.

NINA
You’ve never done this before.

LOU
Yes. I mean no. I’m just starting.

The editor connects LOU’S camera to the editing console and

LOU’S CAMCORDER

plays ... image of LOU outside the pawn shop ... aiming the camcorder at himself ... just peering into the camera ...

LOU
You can fast-forward through this.

EDITOR fast-forwarding LOU’S video log ... past the flex-tied black guy ... past the COP yelling at him to leave and

LOU’S arrival at Motor and Washington comes up .. EDITOR slowing to real time and we see

LOU’S CAMERA POV

of the crime scene ... COPS chalk-circling bullets ... LOU elbowing past the other CAMERAMAN filming from a respectful distance ... moans of the as yet unseen victim as LOU comes in right over the PARAMEDICS’ shoulders and CLOSE ON

THE SHOT MAN

with a gaping head wound ... blood everywhere .. footage so violent and immediate the
EDITOR

(recoils)
Oh fuck.

NINA

glances from the screen to LOU ... unblinking gaze ...
impassive ... watching his work ...

NINA
(dials a phone)
I need you to see something.

NINA hangs up ... watches the screen as LOU’S shoved back by
the police and ... FRANK KRUSE (brisk, capable) enters the
editing bay ...

NINA
Lou Bloom, Frank Kruse, our assignment
editor.
(to the EDITOR)
Play it back.

FRANK

watches LOU’S footage ... winces at the gore ...

NINA
That’s the lead. I want to break it up
and do a wrap-around from the scene.
Let’s get Joel rolling. I want a walking
stand-up. Teaser at five and repeat on
the half. I want the copy to start with
a warning.

FRANK
You’re going to show this?

NINA
With a warning.

FRANK
It’s excessive.

NINA
We should have packages like this every
day.

FRANK
People are eating breakfast.
NINA
And they’ll talk about it at work. Tie it in with the carjacking last month in Glendale and the other one, the van in Palms, when was that? March. It’s a carjacking crime wave. That’s the banner. Call the victim’s family. Get a quote. Mike it. You know what to do.
(to LOU)
How much?

LOU
Well, I’m selling this particular piece for ten thousand. I think at that price there’s a lot of value in it for you.

NINA
Not even close. This late you have nowhere else to go. And the quality’s for shit. I’ll give you a 1000, that’s the most I’ll do. Now let’s get you paid.

NEWSROOM BULLPEN

LOU alone ... looking around as ... NINA comes in, hands him a check ...

NINA
Buy some better equipment. A directional mike. Get interviews when you can. You have a good eye.

LOU
Thank you. I’m just beginning so praise from someone such as yourself, well you can imagine it means quite a lot.

NINA
I’ll help anyway I can. And of course, you can help me by calling us first. I want you to contact me when you have something.

LOU
Something like this?

NINA
That’s right.

LOU
Bloody.
NINA
That’s only part of it. We like crime. Not all crime. A carjacking in Compton, for example, that isn’t news, now is it? We find our viewers are more interested in urban crime creeping into the suburbs. What that means is a victim or victims, preferably well-off and/or white, injured at the hands of the poor, or a minority.

LOU
Just crime?

NINA

LOU
But bloody.

NINA
Graphic. The best and clearest way that I can phrase it to you, Lou, to capture the spirit of what we air, is think of our newscast as a screaming woman running down the street with her throat cut.

LOU
I understand. I’ve always been a very fast learner. You’ll be seeing me again.

NINA
I believe you.

A TV COMMERCIAL
begins ... ends ... the K.W.L.A. THEME SONG crashes in and
CUT TO

LOU’S APARTMENT
A DVD recorder is patched to the TV as
THE K.W.L.A. MORNING BROADCAST
erupts ... full frame banner reading

BREAKING NEWS
CARJACKING CRIME WAVE
The ANCHORS appear, suitably breathless ...

ANCHORWOMAN
A tragic drug store visit to help his ailing wife claimed the life of a loving husband last night in East Los Angeles. Reporting from the scene is Joel Beatty.

The REPORTER begins a walking stand-up toward the police-taped crime scene ...

REPORTER
An act of kindness turned into a savage, deadly attack outside this market on Western and First at 2 am when 68-year-old Richard Cho of Mar Vista was walking toward his car with a prescription for his sick wife and was confronted right here by a black male with a 9mm handgun who police believe tried to take his vehicle. The vicious tragedy and senselessness of the brutal shooting as well as the victim’s last moments were captured in graphic footage we are about to air. Viewer discretion is advised.

LOU’S footage comes on ... full screen ... sound sweetened ... filling a full 30 seconds of the broadcast ... ending with the bloody images of the mortally wounded MAN and

PULL BACK TO SHOW
LOU inches from the tv screen ... watching his work ... news broadcast moving on to another tragedy as we CUT TO

LATER
LOU downloading the segment onto his laptop ... labelling the file CARJACKING CRIME WAVE and CUT TO

LATER
as the police scanner plays in LOU’S apartment ... LOU looking up police code definitions on-line and CUT TO

DINER
LOU drinking ice water ... crunching cubes as
A YOUNG MAN
enters ... ragged and rangy ... LOU waving him over ...
LOU
Are you Richard?

RICK
Rick.

LOU
I’m Louis Bloom.

RICK
Hi, Lou.

LOU
Louis. Sit down.

RICK sits ... a broke hustler ... loser’s self-disgust ...

LOU
I need someone who doesn’t drink or do drugs.

RICK
Okay.

LOU
The situation is that I lost an employee and I’m interviewing for a replacement.

RICK
Your ad didn’t list what the job was.

LOU
It’s a fine opportunity for some lucky someone.
(pulling a notepad)
I’d like to know about your prior employment and hear in your own words what you learned from each position.

RICK
My old jobs? I did landscaping for a couple months. Mow, blow and go.

LOU writing his answer in the pad ...

RICK
I learned I had hay-fever so I quit.

LOU
Other jobs?

RICK
I don’t know, week here, week there.
LOU

RICK
Okay. Well, I'm Rick, of course. I took three buses to get here. I finished high school. I need a job. I'll do just about anything. That's me. Hire Rick.

LOU
What's your address?

RICK
I don't have one. Not permanent I mean.

LOU
You're homeless.

RICK
I was for awhile.

LOU
You trick.

RICK
Work the street? No.

LOU
It wasn't a question.

RICK
I'm straight.

LOU
A lot of straight guys trick. Do you have a driver's license?

RICK
Yeah.

LOU
Do you know L.A.?

RICK
I grew up all around here.

LOU
Can you start tonight?

RICK
Doing what?
LOU
I run a successful tv news business. I film breaking stories. Maybe you saw my item this morning of a fatal carjacking.

RICK
I don’t have a tv.

LOU
Do you have a cell phone?

Yeah.

LOU
Does it have GPS?

Yeah.

LOU
Congratulations. You’re hired. Your job will be to listen to the emergency radio, learn the police codes, help navigate and watch the car.

RICK
What’s it pay?

LOU
It’s an internship.

RICK
I can’t do that. I need money.

LOU
I’m giving you the chance to explore career options and gain insight into my organization. It’s not at all unusual for me to make full-time job offers to my interns.

RICK
I gotta get paid. At least something.

LOU
I’ll give you 30 dollars cash per night.

RICK
Okay. I guess.
THE SUN

sinks into the sea as police radio chatter plays over ... isolating on ...

POLICE RADIO

-- 4-A-27 at Main and Washington requesting code 10 for one.
-- Hollenbeck stand-by, 4-A-27 go ahead.

LOU

4-A-27 has requested a code 10, to clear the frequency for warrant information.

POLICE RADIO

4-81 prowler complaint, Sixth and Rampart. Male Hispanic wearing a blue shirt. Incident 2-1-5-6. R.D. 32-65.

LOU V.O.

Code two is respond immediately, no lights and sirens. And code three is?

RICK

With the lights and sirens.

POLICE RADIO CHATTER continues as

A CELL PHONE SCREEN FILLS FRAME

GPS map of Los Angeles ... user location pinging on a street in West Hollywood ...

POLICE RADIO

-- 2-A-1 responding, Sixth and Rampart, code two.

LOU’S CAR

parked in Hollywood ... LOU at the wheel ... RICK shotgun ...

RICK

So should we go?

LOU

No. We want victims, and not the kind that live on Sixth and Rampart.

TIME LAPSE

An hour passes in seconds ... LOU and RICK nearly motionless in the front seat ... listen to POLICE RADIO CHATTER and ...
LOU
Structure fire.
(to RICK)

VIEW THROUGH WINDSHIELD

LOU driving hyper-speed through L.A. ... POLICE RADIO blaring ... RICK reading his GPS ... calling directions ... freaked by the speed ...

RICK
-- you’re getting off at the next exit, coming up, slow down, man --

RICK braces and grabs the dash as LOU takes the exit ... sparks flying as he brushes the guardrail ...

RICK
-- too fast dude! --

LOU
Where are we going?

RICK
-- left at the light! --

LOU
I’d like more warning next time.

LOU skidding into a hard left turn ...

LOU
Talk to me, Richard. What next?

RICK
-- keeping on this -- five, no six blocks then a right --

LOU
On what?

RICK
I made a mistake! Shit! It was the next exit!

LOU looking at him ... dead stare ... pulling a screeching u-turn and CUT TO

FIRE TRUCKS
block a street ... COPS string yellow tape and
LOU

hustles up to the action as he’s filming ... arriving late ... seeing several freelance CREWS packing gear to go ...

LOU
Did they bring them out?

FREELANCE MAN #1
Ambulance left five minutes ago.

LOU filming a smoke-sooted doorway ... gawking NEIGHBORS ... FIREMEN rolling hoses ... nothing else to shoot and CUT TO

LOU’S MOVING CAR

LOU driving ... RICK beside him ... POLICE RADIO playing ...

LOU
I’d bet I wasted five dollars of gas just getting here, or don’t you think that’s a lot of money?

RICK
I’m sorry.

LOU pounds the car horn ...

RICK
You were going too fast. I couldn’t see the screen.

LOU
Okay. First off, Richard, don’t answer by telling me a problem. I have enough of those already. Bring me a solution. Then we’ll make a decision together.

RICK
Maybe if you didn’t rush me.

LOU
Don’t rush you. Okay. Good, I can use that ... You see, Rick, they’ve done studies, and they found that in any system that relies on cooperation, from a school of fish or say even a professional hockey team for example, these experts have identified communication as the number one single key to success.
LATER THAT NIGHT

LOU doing 80-MPH on a BOULEVARD ... engine red-lined ... POLICE RADIO blasting ... RICK on the verge of panic ...

LOU
Do you know what fear stands for?

RICK
What?

LOU
False Evidence Appearing Real.

RICK
You’re going really fucking fast.

LOU
Get out of your head, Rick. It’s a bad neighborhood. Now when you have a chance I need to know where I’m going.

CRIME SCENE

Mixed neighborhood ... POLICE CARS painting the night red ... LOU films as he comes through a line of gawking NEIGHBORS ...

LOU
What happened?

NEIGHBOR
Who the fuck are you?

LOU keeps filming ... approaching an OLD NEIGHBOR ...

LOU
TV news. What’s going on?

OLD NEIGHBOR
There was a shooting. I counted 20, I dunno, 30 shots. Place is supposed to be boarded up. They don’t fucking care.

LOU
(still filming)
Let’s try it again without cursing.
Thank you. So what’s going on?

OLD NEIGHBOR
Not doing it again.

LOU
For tv.
OLD NEIGHBOR

I don’t have a tv.

The OLD NEIGHBOR walks away .. LOU goes to the police tape ... films COPS outside an abandoned HOUSE ... a FREELANCER passes, heading to his van ...

FREELANCER

S’over. Shot the place to shit.

LOU stops filming ... walking back to the car when he has a view into the yellow-taped backyard where he SEES

A WHITE COUPLE

outside a HOME adjacent to the shooting ... crying MOM with BABY ... COPS examining bullet holes in the house exterior as

LOU opens the gate of the WHITE COUPLE’S row home ... going to the front door ... knocking ... but the OWNERS are in the backyard with the COPS and LOU knows it as he lets himself in and CUT TO

INSIDE ROW HOME

LOU filming ... moving through the couple’s house ...zooming in on a stroller ... reaching the kitchen where he sees

A REFRIGERATOR PHOTO

of the COUPLE with their BABY ... LOU pauses ... moves the photo close to a nearby bullet hole ... resumes shooting and LOU sees mail on a table ... grabbing a letter and CUT TO

K.W.L.A. NEWSROOM

LOU, NINA and FRANK KRUSE packed in a cubicle watching

LOU’S FOOTAGE inside the house ... family photo beside the bullet hole ...

NINA

Great shot. Oh that’s fantastic. That’s a great piece of tape.

FRANK

You didn’t get an interview with the couple?

LOU

I have footage of them.

A clip appears ... far-away view of the young COUPLE talking to the police in their backyard ...
LOU
I also have an interview with a neighbor. He curses but you can cut that out.

FRANK
How’d you get inside the house?

LOU
The door was open.

FRANK
They allowed you?

LOU
I heard someone yell to come in, but when I didn’t find them inside I left.

FRANK
The only shot of the owners is over a fence?

LOU
The police were shutting it down.

FRANK
I don’t like it.

NINA
Like what?

FRANK
The footage looks like he broke in. He has no close-ups of the homeowners -- (holding the letter LOU took) -- and he’s giving us their names off a piece of private correspondence.

LOU
Excuse me, that’s junk mail.

FRANK
Well I have a problem with that.

NINA
We’ll knock out a killer package.

FRANK
This is my job.

NINA
Your job’s writing the tweet of the day and getting Deb to turn sideways during the weather forecast. We’re running it.
NEWS SET

NINA walks LOU onto the news set ... TECHS prepping ...

LOU
I liked how you handled Frank. You didn’t soften the truth or dilute it. I think being clear with your objectives is more important than trying to present ideas in a non-confrontational manner.

NINA
You have experience in an office?

LOU
Myself? Not presently, no.

NINA
So where’d you get all that?

LOU
I study a lot on-line.

NINA
Yeah. What?

LOU circling the news set ... taking it in as he talks ...

LOU
Well, all sorts of things, actually. I’m on my computer all day. I haven’t had what you’d call much formal education but you can find most anything if you look hard enough. Last year I took an on-line business course, for example. I learned you have to have a business plan before starting a business, and that why you pursue something is as important as what you pursue. The site advised you to answer the following question before deciding where to focus your abilities. The question was ‘What do I love to do?’ The site suggested making a list of my strengths and weaknesses. What are you good at? And what are you not that good at? Maybe you want to strengthen and develop knowledge about the things you’re already good at. Or maybe you might want to strengthen your weaknesses. I recently remade my list and I’m thinking now that television news might just be something that I love as well as something that I happen to be good at.
LOU stops at the large, high-def L.A. backdrop ...

LOU
On tv it looks so real.

NINA
Yes it does. Well, I have a show to do. Your check’s at the desk. Outstanding work, Lou. Really.

LOU
Thanks, Nina. That means an awful lot.

NINA leaves ... LOU alone ...... sitting in the anchor chair ... staring into the black eyes of the cameras and CUT TO

MOUNT WILSON
Tallest antenna ... churning K.W.L.A. theme song and CUT TO

LOU’S APARTMENT
LOU close to the TV ... K.W.L.A. INTRO playing ... montage of police chases, banking helicopters, wailing ambulances ...

ANCHORWOMAN
A Westchester couple and their newborn daughter narrowly escaped death overnight after being caught in a raging crossfire between suspected drug dealers that left two dead.

WOMAN REPORTER outside the yellow-taped crack house ...

REPORTER
It’s every parent’s nightmare. Imagine singing a lullaby to your infant, tucking them in for sleep and then shielding them as a barrage of high-powered bullets literally blast through your home. Well for the Cahills of Westchester that fear became a terrifying reality when an adjacent drug house was the setting for a scene right out of the Wild West.

LOU’S footage of the crime scene appears ... soundtrack sweetened by sirens and barking dogs ... a banner reads ...

K.W.L.A. EXCLUSIVE
Horror In Westchester
REPORter/OVER
This sleepy Westchester lane erupted in gunfire at approximately 1:20 last night, with sheriff's deputies telling K.W.L.A. that over 30 shots were exchanged in a shootout that left two unidentified but alleged drug users dead in the foreclosed home behind me. But the horror was only beginning inside the neighboring house where Robert and Cathy Cahill were left frantically checking their baby daughter for injuries after the barrage shattered the safety, as well as their windows and rooms, with high-caliber bullets.

The inside of the couple’s house is seen ... money shot of the family photo on the bullet-pierced fridge ...

REPORter/OVER
Police investigators are now mounting a massive search for the gunmen, with one senior official telling K.W.L.A. that it was a miracle innocent victims weren't injured or killed in the shootout. That official also conveyed concern for the very real possibility of more gunplay in other L.A. neighborhoods, urging all Southland residents to exercise caution by locking their doors and windows.

ANCHorman appearing ...

ANCHorman
Deena Rain, live for us in Westchester.

Later

Lou downloading the recorded news broadcast onto his computer ... labelling the file HORROR IN WESTCHESTER and ...

Time lapse

Lou’s computer screen fills with files ...
CARJACKING CRIME WAVE ...
HORROR IN WESTCHESTER ...
NURSING HOME NIGHTMARE ...
TODDLER STABBED ...
D.W.I. CRASH CLAIMS FOUR ...
CARJACKING/WOMAN DRAGGED ...
MURDER/SUICIDE IN DUARTE ...
BOTCHED SWAT RAID ...
RAMPAGE IN RESEDA ...
FIERY DEATH ...
HEADLESS BODY IN CARSON ... 
SAVAGE DOG ATTACK ... 
BUSINESSMAN SHOT IN GARAGE ... 
HAMMER SLAYINGS ... 
POWERLINE ELECTROCUTION ... 
TRACTOR TRAILER CRUSHES CAR ... 
GAS EXPLOSION IN INDUSTRY ... 
RESTRAINING ORDER MURDER ... 
SON STABS FATHER ... 
GANG SHOOTING HIGH SCHOOLER ... 
ROAD RAGE DEATH ON 110 ... 
A.T.M. KILLING ... 
KIDNAPPER KILLS VICTIM ... 
HATE CRIME MURDER ... 
MISSING MOM ... 
DRIVE-BY IN VENICE ... 
PARKING LOT RAPE ... 
SUICIDE BY COP ... 
AIRPORT BODY ... 
CO-WORKER CRUSHED ... 
TOT TAKEN ...

CAMERA closing on words in the continuing list ...

KILLING ... 
VICTIM ... 
SHATTERED ... 
BLOODY ... 
BOTCHED ... 
SCREAMS ... 
KNIFE ... 
BRAINS ... 
OFF-DUTY ... 
CRAZED ...
GAS STATION

Gaudy sunset ... LOU wiping the windshield of his brand new, red CHALLENGER ... RICK filling the tank ... pulling the pump as LOU runs over ... furiously wipes some spilled gas ...

LOU
Rick, I'm really pleased with how you've progressed and you're doing a great job. However you just spilled gasoline on my car, which will eat the paint. I'd like you to tighten up a bit on this, because if you fill it like that again I'm gonna terminate you immediately, I promise you.

NIGHT

LOU driving ... dozen new EMERGENCY RADIOS crammed on the dash ... overlapping chatter ... RICK glued to two computer screens ... checking emergency band texts and locations as

LOU stops at a red light ... eyeing the road ... listening to the scanners ... fingers drumming on the wheel ... waiting for the right call ...

RICK
(glancing across the street)
Crate and Barrel. That's a good store.

LOU not answering ... constant emergency chatter ...

RICK
Making peace with what you don't have. That's what it's all about. Living with what you ain't got. Right? Don't you think?

EMERGENCY SCANNER
-- Traffic units, ambulance traffic, Benedict Canyon, overturned vehicle, crash with injuries.

LOU
Crash with injuries. Good neighborhood.

LOU running the light ... bombing into the hills and CUT TO

BENEDICT CANYON

A half-dozen cars stopped on a sharply curved uphill road ... panicked MOTORISTS mill by their cars, talk on cell phones as
THE RED CHALLENGER

appears ... driving the shoulder to the front of the line of
stopped cars ... LOU jumping out ... already filming ...

LOU
(to a freaked MOTORIST)
TV news.  What happened?

MOTORIST
Head-on!  They’re dead!

LOU
Did you see it happen?

MOTORIST
No, after.

LOU
What exactly did you see?

MOTORIST
Bodies.  Blood.  Get that camera out of
my face.

LOU jogging up the road ... coming upon the crash and

LOU SEES

one FATALITY in a crushed car ... spies another FATALITY
ejected from a smashed truck ... body half-hidden in the
brush beside the road ... distant sirens and

LOU
goes to the body in the car ... props it into view ... drapes
it over the steering wheel ... runs to the brush ... drags a
second body by the leg onto the road ... positions a lifeless
arm ... stepping back and

LOU’S POV THROUGH CAMCORDER

as he focuses on a shot of both bodies in the foreground ... 
red RECORD light on ... fire starting ... entangled cars
becoming a bonfire as

FIRETRUCKS and POLICE

start arriving and

LOU
goes up an embankment ... shooting through the flames as
A FAMILIAR VAN

pulls up and the two STRINGERS seen at the first car crash jump out ... blocked by COPS from coming close ... JOE LODER in a MAYHEM VIDEO shirt spotting LOU filming and CUT TO

K.W.L.A. NEWS SET

as the wall clock ticks 5:54 AM ... ANCHORS taking seats at the news desk ... MAKE-UP ARTIST applying touch-ups ... cameras dollying in ... WEATHER GIRL practicing in front of a green screen ... stage lights flooding on as

LOU

watches from the shadows ... stepping out of the way as a GRIP unspools electrical cable ... seeing NINA approach ...

NINA
(handing him a check)
1500.

LOU
(re: the anchors)
Scott Kim wears the same blue tie on Fridays.

NINA
We’re leading with it. That’s your third start this week.

LOU
I’m focusing on framing. A proper frame not only draws the eye into a picture but keeps it there longer, dissolving the barrier between the subject and the outside of the shot.

NINA
Is that blood on your pants?

LOU
I don’t think so. You know I recently heard about a Mexican restaurant called Cabanita. Have you heard of it?

NINA
It’s also on your sleeve.

LOU
I didn’t see that.

NINA hands him a make-up towel ... LOU wiping his sleeve ...
LOU
What I was asking is do you like Mexican food, Nina?

NINA
Yeah.

LOU
Cabanita has been called an authentic taste of Mexico City. Most evenings there’s live music, but on Saturdays classic Mexican films are shown. Do you want to go with me? I think it would be fun if we went together.

NINA
Thanks, but I’m busy.

LOU
Saturday’s your night off, isn’t it?

NINA
I have a rule, Lou. I don’t date people I work with. And I’m twice your age.

LOU
I like older women. Besides, I don’t work with you, you’re somebody I sell to.

NINA
And I don’t want to fuck that up.

LOU
What if by saying no you fuck it up?

NINA
Is that what you saying?

LOU
I didn’t say that.

NINA
I don’t know what to say.

DAWN
Sun ascending a sheet-white sky ... LOU leaving K.W.L.A. ... walking to the Challenger as

THE MAYHEM VIDEO VAN
pulls to the curb ... JOE emerging ...
JOE

LOU keeps walking ... JOE catching up ...

JOE
Great get tonight. They were closing it down by the time we showed up.

LOU
Were you waiting for me out here?

JOE
I was driving by and saw your car. You need an air-card if you really wanna be a mobile station. Import the video to the laptop, cut the video, upload to your FTP site and notify the stations you got something for sale. Boom boom boom.

LOU listens ... acting less interested than he really is ...

JOE
Otherwise it’s a nice ride. I had a ‘97 Challenger but lost it in a divorce. The laws of California aren’t friendly to alimony payments. You got a good run going but there’s valleys out there. Believe me, I’ve been nightcrawling eight years. You hear I’m adding a second van?

LOU
I didn’t hear that.

JOE
Gonna be a game changer. Cut our on-scene time in half. And I’m setting up a dedicated dispatch. No more listening and driving. You like the Canon 300s?

LOU
I never used one.

JOE
Six thou a piece. 2.4 megapixels, night vision, 18-to-1 zoom, image stabilizing. I got one with your name on it.

LOU
I have a camera.
JOE
I want you running my second van. Two crews. Half the territory to cover. Now I know what you’re thinking, half the money. But it also means twice the sales ‘cause we’re gonna be first at the scene. Why compete when we can work together? You can use my press cards. Puppydog off my police connections. This is the big move. The next level. We can corner this whole thing. I’m talking about putting some heavy digits in our pockets.

LOU
Thanks for offering me the position but working for myself is more in line with my skills and career goals.

JOE
Take a few days to think about it.

LOU
No. You’ll need to hire someone else and I don’t want to hold up the process.

JOE
You want to be on the inside of this. I’m gonna be tag-teaming every call.

LOU
You keep talking like it’s something I might be interested in but I’m not.

JOE
You don’t even understand the offer. If you did you’d be asking questions. What does this mean? What does that mean?

LOU
I feel like grabbing you by your ears and screaming in your face I’m not fucking interested. Instead I’m going to drive home and do some accounting.

LOU gets in his car, pulls away and CUT TO

MEXICAN RESTAURANT

Crowded and loud ... Mexican movies projected on walls ... LOU and NINA eating at a table ...

NINA
I didn’t wake up till five. My body’s so off I feel like it’s time for breakfast.
LOU
I’m sure you’re beautiful anytime of day. In fact I’d say you’re much prettier than Lisa Mays. I like the dark make-up on your eyes. I also like how you smell.

NINA
Where are you from, Lou?

LOU
The north end of the valley. Some of the calls sometimes take me over that way but nobody I know is still out there. You’re from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

NINA
How did you know that?

LOU
It’s online. Everything about you’s online. Well not everything, but definitely a lot. I’ve watched all the videos from when you were a reporter. I’m sure you look at them of course.

NINA
God no, not without a drink in my hand.

LOU
I watch my work all the time.

NINA
Do you want to become a reporter?

LOU
No.

NINA
Most of you guys want air-time.

LOU
Not me. I want to be the guy who owns the station that owns the camera. The business is doing well but I’m ready to grow to the next level. To do that I need to stay one step ahead of my competition and take risks. I also need financial support to implement expansion. Would you like another margarita?

NINA
One’s enough.
LOU
Thanks for coming out to talk. The place I’m in now is that I want a relationship with somebody I can team up with and share, like we share the same hours, the same job and whatnot. I could go down a laundry list but you get the idea.

NINA
I hope you find someone.

LOU
Here’s the thing about that, Nina, I’m quite certain that I already have.

NINA
Okay, let me put this politely. I only came out to dinner with you, Lou, purely as a professional courtesy.

LOU
Thank you, because I don’t think it’s a secret that I’ve single-handedly raised the unit price on your ratings book.

NINA
Our ratings book price?

LOU
I’m a very fast learner, Nina. We had a conversation and I specifically mentioned that. Do you remember? Well do you?

NINA
Yes.

LOU
I recently learned, for instance, that most Americans watch local news to stay informed. I also learned that an average half-hour of Los Angeles television news packs all its local government coverage -- including budget, law enforcement, education, transportation and immigration -- into 22 seconds. Local crime stories, however, not only usually led the news but filled 14 times the broadcast, averaging 5 minutes 7 seconds. And K.W.L.A. relies heavily on such stories. With Los Angeles crime rates going down I think that makes items like mine particularly valuable, like rare animals. I imagine your needs will only increase during next week’s rating sweeps period.
NINA
We certainly appreciate what you do.

LOU
There's certain good things in being alone. You have time to do the things you want to do, like study and plan. But you can't have dinners like this. Or be physical with a person, I mean beyond a flirtationship.

NINA
Where are you going with this?

LOU
I want that. With you. Like you want to keep your job and your health insurance.

NINA
Look, just for starters I don't need you to keep my fucking job.

LOU
You're the news director on the vampire shift at the lowest rated station in L.A. I have to think you're invested in this transaction.

NINA
Where did you get the balls to even suggest something like this?

LOU
We're still talking.

NINA
There's nothing more to say.

LOU
You can leave.

NINA
You've done well. Okay? We pay you well. Very well. We always have. If you like, I can get you an exclusive retainer, that would be on top of your segment fees. I could maybe even get you a job at the station, starting as a production assistant, so you can learn the business from the inside, that's where you said your interests lie, see where it goes.
LOU
You’re not listening, Nina. I happen to know you haven’t stayed at one station for more than two years at a time, and you’re coming up on two years soon. So I can imagine you have a contract for that length of time and that ratings during the next week will directly affect that.

NINA
You’re threatening if I don’t ...

LOU
I’m negotiating.

NINA
You’re threatening to stop selling to me.

LOU
That’s your choice. The true price of any item is what someone’s willing to pay. You want something and I want you.

NINA
To fuck you.

LOU
And as a friend.

NINA
Jesus Christ. Friends don’t pressure friends to fucking sleep with them.

LOU
Actually that’s not true, Nina. Because as I’m sure you know ... a friend is a gift you give yourself.

LOS ANGELES
smudged in morning haze... city sounds creeping in and CUT TO
A BATTERY OF SPRINKLERS
ker-chunk, ker-chunk, ker-chunk over a manicured golf course and CUT TO
PEOPLE
in a park and
BEACH SCENE
as night comes and CUT TO
A 20-FOOT TALL, NEON COLORED, INFLATABLE DANCING FIGURE
writhing outside a gas station ... sound of an over-revved
engine bleeding in and TIME LAPSE AS
NIGHT
crashes down ... inflatable figure still writhing and
BLAST OF WIND AND NOISE
as the challenger roars through NIGHTTIME L.A. and CUT TO
INSIDE THE MOVING CAR
LOU slamming through corners ... RICK glued to the GPS ...
calling directions ... babel of emergency COM-CHATTER
blasting in surround sound and
PAN
the dozen SCANNERS crammed on the dash ... blinking and
burping codes ... each marked with its own label ...

LAPD - CITY WIDE TAC1 / LAPD - CITY WIDE TAC2
LAPD - CITY WIDE TAC3-5 / LASD - DISPATCH1
LASD - L-TAC1-3 / LAFD - DIV / LAFD - DIV2
SAN FERNANDO - TAC1 / SAN FERNANDO - TAC2
SAN FERNANDO FIRE / CHP COMMAND
LAPD AIR-TO-AIR

RICK
Left on Roth then six blocks to the ramp.

LOU
You’re putting me on the 5?

RICK
The 2 to the 5 to the 110 to the 10.

LOU
Did you read my traffic memo yesterday?

RICK
Did I read it?  Yeah.  I read it.

LOU
What did it say?  About the 5?

RICK
I looked at it.  Okay, what?
LOU
Well for one thing it included the 5 has floating construction in the fast lane for the next three weeks. So knowing that, I’d expect you to put me on the 2 to the 101 to the 110 to the 10.

RICK
Half of one, six of the other.

LOU
It’s half-dozen of one, six of the other. What I’d like is for you to admit that you didn’t read what you said you did. I think you know that I’m a reasonable person, but no one likes to be lied to.

RICK
Yeah, well when am I gonna get my raise? I mean that’s reasonable, right? Like you keep talking about this performance review but when’s that gonna happen? Two months and every night I’m here working my ass off. I’m tired of your promises for more pay, man. I’m sleeping in a fucking garage ...

RICK launching into a monologue for more money ... his voice joining the overlapping emergency chatter and

LOU
glances at the SPEEDOMETER NEEDLE fluttering at 90 as

THE JUMBLE OF EMERGENCY SCANNER

reports build ... machine-gun stacatto tragedy blending with RICK’S appeal for a raise until

LOU
Rick. Trying to leverage your salary in this economic environment is near impossible. Most firms have set starting wages. Ideally, you could leverage with other offers but that is just not the case in your situation right now.

LOU knows the music of the emergency bands as his

HAND
darts and cranks the volume on SAN FERNANDO - POLICE TAC2 ...
SCANNER
-- Task force 98, engine 91, North Division, battalion 12, heavy rescue 56, air ops, respond to reported plane down, Whiteman Field, south of Foothill.

LOU
Re-route us to that.

RICK
(regarding the GPS screen)
We’re 22 minutes from Foothill and only five from a suicide.

LOU
They’re rolling heavy rescue and an air ambulance. Get me there, please.

THE REMAINS OF A PLANE
burn in the weedy barrens beside a foothill freeway ... full emergency response as

THE CHALLENGER
stops at a police perimeter set far from the scene and

LOU
gets out with the camera ... blocked by police tape ... tries zooming to the wreckage ... too distant to register as

SEVERAL OTHER STRINGERS
arrive ... also shut out of shooting anything saleable as

A FIGURE
emerges from inside the accident scene ... carrying a camera ... it’s JOE LODER ...

JOE
(seeing LOU, smiles)
Five fatals. Come screaming outta the fucking sky. All lit up with the brush on fire. Mine. Exclusive. I’m banging.

JOE ducks under the police tape ... pausing before LOU ...

JOE
Oh, and my other van’s in Carson getting the jumper. I was trying to hook you up. I was trying to learn you. Welcome to the future, bra.
THE K.W.L.A. NEWSROOM

is busier than usual ... sweeps week creating added energy ... clock reading 4:35 AM and CUT TO

THE CONTROL ROOM

where the walls of screens are set to competing channels ... LOU showing NINA the night’s haul ... car accident on one monitor ...

NINA
None of this is going to knock anybody out. I can’t use any of this in my lineup. Is this it?

LOU
No, I have the stabbing in Corona.

NINA
Where’s the plane crash at Foothill?

LOU
I don’t mind saying that I’m trying to bring you stories that happen here, on the ground.

NINA
Four has it. It’ll be their lead.

LOU
And I hope they do well with that, but you should look at the Corona stabbing.

NINA
I don’t give a goddamn about fucking Corona. You know how important this week is. This shit’s fucking death to me.

LOU
I understand your frustration. I guess I’m trying not to be too hard on myself.

NINA
I sold you upstairs as some kind of fucking sweeps savior and I’m leading with a goddamn stabbing in Corona.

LOU
So you want that then?
NINA
I want you to get in the goddamn game. I
want something that people can’t turn
away from. I want what you fucking
promised me.

SUNNY BOUGAINVILLEA BLOSSOMS
swarming with bees ... bright, blinding flowers clinging to
A TELEPHONE POLE
as we go wider TO SHOW
A BACK ALLEY
between apartment buildings ... garages and garbage cans ...
sunlight angling to shadow ... the workday’s ending as a
CAR
pulls into a car port ... MAN getting out with a briefcase ...
... entering a back door and
LOU’S CHALLENGER
drives past ... parks behind a dumpster and
LOU
steps out ... scanning the empty alley before taking a
WRENCH
from his car and moving to a line of open garages where the
MAYHEM VIDEO VAN
is parked ... beat before
LOU
slides under the van ... squeak of bolts turning and CUT TO
A MOONLIT CANYON
and the rustles and whispers of the night ... wind through
dry scrub ... waves of car and plane and ocean sounds pulsing
over the earth ... the electricity of existence drowned by
THE CHALLENGER

thundering down the canyon road ... power-sliding through
turns ... descending into the glow of the valley ... coming
upon a much slower car and CUT TO

LOU

drives ... calmly berating RICK over the emergency radios ...

LOU
Since when did Laurel become faster than
Coldwater? What was the thinking there?
I didn’t ask that to hear myself speak.

RICK
Because Laurel only has six lights.

LOU
Coldwater has places to pass. I can’t
get around this person in front of us
until Ventura.

RICK
It’s the same argument. I said this
route and you should have said something
if you wanted to take Coldwater.

LOU
I thought you’d worked in other factors.
If I didn’t think you could do better I
wouldn’t ride you about routes. You have
to know that, Rick. I think it’s just
possible that I have a higher opinion of
you than you have of yourself.

LOU flooring it and passing

THE SLOWER CAR

on a blind turn ... pure chance the lane’s clear ...

RICK
What the fuck?! Goddamnit! Seriously?!
To get to a van crash on Moorpark? Who
cares? What’s the rush? Why aren’t we
heading for the rape in Griffith Park
like everyone else?

LOU accelerating into a sharp turn and CUT TO
VENTURA BOULEVARD

THE MAYHEM VIDEO VAN is wrapped around a telephone pole ... LOU filming the wreckage ... POLICE waving traffic around ... PARAMEDICS pulling two broken bodies from the crash ...

RICK
(running up to LOU)
Oh fuck. Fuck me. Oh God. That’s the Mayhem van. It’s Joe and the other dude, what’s his name, fucking Marcus. What the hell happened?

LOU
According to witnesses they were driving at a high rate of speed, probably heading for Griffith Park, when they apparently ran head-on into this light pole. No other cars. Single-vehicle.

RICK
How do they just hit a pole? Jesus.

LOU filming JOE being carried by ... a god-awful mess ...

RICK
Don’t film that, he’s one of us.

LOU
Not any more. We’re professionals, Rick. He’s a sale.

CAMCORDER POV
LOU filming JOE ... time display blinking 12:29 PM and CUT TO THE CHALLENGER moving deep into the valley as

LOU drives fast on an empty boulevard... emergency com-chatter always ... dash clock reading 4:27 AM ...

RICK
Man, we are way the hell out here.

THE SPEEDOMETER

rises to 80 miles per hour and
LOU

accelerates for a freeway on-ramp back to L.A. and CLOSE ON SAN FERNANDO TAC 2

stops on an emergency frequency ... DISPATCH heard ...

DISPATCHER

Any Mission units, residential 211 in progress at 8-3-0-7 Bonhill Road. Code 30 activation. Units responding, respond code 3. Any air unit come up on mission frequency for a residential 211 in progress.

LOU

Armed response on a home invasion.

RICK

-- we’re five blocks away --

(off the G.P.S.)

Pull a u-turn, left at the next street!

LOU muscling a high-speed u-turn ... flooring it and CUT TO A CUL-DE-SAC

at the end of a tree-lined street ... big estates behind high walls and greenery as an over-revved engine is heard and

THE CHALLENGER

blasts by a PRIVATE STREET SIGN and CUT TO

RICK

watching the G.P.S. ping approach the destination ...

RICK

-- number 8-3-0-7 -- end of the street -- coming up --

LOU

We beat the police.

LOU power-sliding to a stop at an ivied-wall ... jumping out with the camera ... filming as he sprints to an open gate and

LOU

enters the grounds, alarm heard and
THE HOUSE
is big and the lights are blazing and there’s
A DARK CAR
angled by the open front door and
TWO GUNSHOTS
explode from inside as
LOU
veers from entering the home and
A BIG MAN
plows out ... squeezes himself into the
DARK CAR
and pounds the horn and
LOU’S CAMERA POV
filming from the darkness as
A SECOND MAN
runs out... blood streaking a cheek ... jumping in the car
... spray of gravel ... tail-lights disappearing down the
drive and
LOU
emerges ... alone on the lawn ... house door open ... alarm
wailing ... LOU filming as he approaches and enters the home
and CUT TO
INSIDE THE HOUSE
there’s a shotgun on the marble foyer floor and a sweeping
staircase and a broad streak of red where
A BODY
was dragged and the alarm’s wailing and LOU’S filming as he
follows the blood trail into
A LIVING ROOM
with a soaring ceiling and antiques and
A DEAD LATIN AMERICAN WOMAN
shot in the chest slumped on a sofa and
LOU
films as he moves deeper into the house and enters
A HUGE, CUSTOM KITCHEN
with bullet-pocked appliances and wood panelling and
A MIDDLE-AGED WHITE MAN
lying in his underwear in a pool of spilled soda .. makes a slight gasping sound and
LOU
shoots the scene, utterly unaffected as he circles back and
LOU
leaving the kitchen ... back in the foyer ... taking
THE SWEEPING STAIRCASE
and moving quickly up the curved, carpeted steps to
THE SECOND FLOOR
where he films a dropped shotgun with a pistol stock and
follows a new blood trail down a broad hall and enters
A BEDROOM
decorated to a high degree where
A WHITE WOMAN
dead from multiple gunshots is sprawled on a sleigh bed with
designer sheets and
LOU
films from several angles before backing out and crossing
THE HALL
and walking into
A NURSERY
fit for a prince and it's dim and a night light projects
A ROTATING STAR PATTERN

on the ceiling as LOU films

A CRIB

and story-book wallpaper and there’s no sign of a baby and
the alarm doesn’t stop and

LOU

works fast and efficiently and he’s shooting every detail
before leaving the nursery and hurrying back down

THE HALL

and he rapidly descends the stairwell to FIND

RICK

standing scared in the foyer near the open front door ...

    RICK
What’s going on?!

    LOU
We’re leaving.

LOU exits and RICK follows and CUT TO

LOU

jogging down the driveway toward the front gate as
approaching SIRENS are heard in the distance ...

    RICK
What’s in there?! What’s going on?!

    LOU
You should have walked in and looked, Rick. If you were half-curious. That’s
what I’m paying you to do. You need to show initiative. There’s no better way
to achieve job security than by making yourself an indispensable employee.

    RICK
I heard gunshots. There was fucking blood on the floor.
LOU
All the more reason. You might have helped me. You might have learned a new skill that made you more useful and put us on a track toward growth.

LOU jumping in the car as RICK follows and

THE CHALLENGER
doughnuts the cul-de-sac ... speeds down the private street ... disappears into the night as

FLASHING POLICE LIGHTS
appear from the other direction and three POLICE CARS cut down the cul-de-sac with sirens screaming and CUT TO

THE K.W.L.A.
studio sign blazing against the night as

LOU
pulls up outside the station ... turning to RICK ...

LOU
Step outside for a minute.

RICK
Why?

LOU
Because I asked you to.

RICK gets out and LOU downloads the camcorder to his laptop ... fingers flying and CLOSE ON

COMPUTER SCREEN
as LOU edits out the two fleeing ASSAILANTS ... fast-forwards to the wounded MAN in the kitchen ... editing out the moment he gasps and CUT TO

NINA
in the glassed-in conference room ... leading a pre-broadcast meeting with her STAFF as

LOU
enters the newsroom ... eye-contact ... NINA stepping out ... draining a cup of coffee ...
NINA
I’ve been trying to reach you for the last hour. In the future, when you don’t have anything, man-up and don’t dodge my fucking calls. It’s a waste of my time.

LOU
I do have something.

NINA
What?

LOU
I have a home invasion triple murder in Granada Hills.

NINA
That’s just breaking now.

LOU
We got there before the police.

NINA
You have it?

LOU
I’m not going to list the many benefits of this piece. I think it’s best that you probably just watch it for yourself.

NINA
I could have had someone out there by now, why didn’t you call it in?

LOU
To increase your need and improve my bargaining position.

NINA
(into the conference room)
Frank, Jenny -- bay two, now.

LOU following NINA down the hall and CUT TO THE HOME INVASION FOOTAGE

starts on the main screen of an editing bay ... beginning with LOU already inside the house and CLOSE ON THE FACES

of NINA, FRANK KRUSE and a young producer named JENNY ... viewing his work ... curiosity ... horror ... gasps as
LOU

watches behind them ... proud to the point of serene as

NINA

picks up a phone ...

NINA

Get Linda in here.

Carnage on the screen is reflected in their expressions as

LINDA

to (middle-aged, managerial) ... crammed close ...

unblinking gaze ... hard eye ...

NINA

Home invasion in Granada. He got there before the cops. It's 10 minutes to air time, how much of this can we show?

LINDA

You mean legally?

NINA

No, morally. Of course legally.

LINDA

Have they been identified?

FRANK

It just happened, so you have to assume no. And that's just one of the issues.

LINDA

Well you can't broadcast their identities without notifying next of kin.

NINA

We're not identifying them.

LINDA

You are by proxy by showing their faces.

NINA

We pixilate the faces.

LINDA

Where did you get this?

NINA

Stringer.
(extending a hand)
Hello, Linda, I’m Lou.

(re: the screen)
Oh Jesus, is there a dead baby inside there?

No, the crib was empty.

For Christ’s sake, are we breaking the law by showing this?

Block the faces, don’t give the exact home address, do that, I guess, I mean, I don’t, I wouldn’t think so, no.

Journalistically and ethically --

This isn’t Hartford.

(re: the monitor)
Well, that’s mostly it right there. From this point on I just went downstairs and then I left.

(to NINA)
What did you pay for this?

The price hasn’t been negotiated.

(stabs the freeze frame button ...)

(to the room)
Give us a minute, please, thank you.

The OTHERS leave ... closing the door ...

How much?

A hundred thousand.
NINA
How much?

LOU
Fifty thousand.

NINA
I air in nine minutes. I need a number.

LOU
I’ve given you two.

NINA
5,000.

LOU
I got five for the food truck stabbings.

NINA
There were more dead.

LOU
Those were poor Mexican people in a roach coach. Two of them were illegals. These are three wealthy white people shot and killed inside their mansion, including a suburban wife shotgunned in her bed. I know you, Nina. I know your interest and excitement in this product is greater than the amount you’re offering.

NINA
7,500.

LOU
35,000.

NINA
8,000.

LOU
25,000.

NINA
9,000.

LOU
25,000.

NINA
10,000.

LOU
15,000.
NINA
10,000.

LOU
15,000.

NINA
Give me a serious number.

LOU
15,000. And that’s the absolute lowest that I’ll go.

NINA
Can’t do it. Never happen. There’s the matter of precedent. 10’s my last, best offer.

LOU stands to leave ...

LOU
Okay.

NINA
Stop. What? Where are you going?

LOU
Seven’s approached me at least several times. The ND there gave me his card. I think Seven will offer more. It’s a five minute drive.

NINA
Hold on. Goddamn it. 12.

LOU
15.

NINA
I can’t spend a month’s budget on a single story.

LOU
What if the story’s not over? The people who did this escaped. They’re still out there, walking around with the rest of us. If I had a family and I lived in a home that might make me nervous. I would want updates on what was going on. With this footage people will turn to your channel for the story. Now I like you, Nina, I look forward to our time together, but you have to understand that (MORE)
LOU
15,000 isn’t all that I want. From here on, starting now, I want my work to be credited by the anchors and on a burn. The name of my company is Video News Productions, a professional news gathering service. That’s how it should read and that’s how it should be said. I also want to go to the next rung and meet your team and the anchors and the director and the station manager, to begin developing my own personal relationships. I’d like to start meeting them this morning. You’ll take me around and you’ll introduce me as the owner and president of Video News and remind them of some of my many other stories. I’m not done. I also want to stop our discussions over prices. This will save time. So when I say a particular number is my lowest price, that is my lowest price and you can be sure I’ve arrived at whatever that number is very carefully. Now when I say I want these things I mean that I want them and I don’t want to have to ask again. And the last thing that I want, Nina, is for you to do the things I ask you to do when we’re alone together at your apartment, not like the last time.

NINA staring ...

LOU
Now. Tell you what. I have the van crash on Moorpark tonight. It was a couple of stringers, actually. That could lead by itself on an average night. I’d be willing to throw that in for free. So. What do you say? Do we have a deal?

NEWS SET

NINA introducing LOU to KEN and LISA ... sitting at the news desk, minutes from air-time and CUT TO

A WALL OF MONITORS

show a dozen local tv broadcasts ... a clock clicks 6:00 AM as SEVEN CHANNELS switch to local news and CLOSE ON
THE K.W.L.A.

main monitor as the usual intro is replaced by pulse-pounding music and a red banner warning ...

BREAKING NEWS

WIDER TO SHOW THE CONTROL ROOM

where NINA oversees a DIRECTOR, PRODUCTION ASSISTANT and TECHNICAL DIRECTOR operating the control board ...

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR
10 to open.

DIRECTOR
Standby 12.

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR
Track red.

NINA
Where's the title?

DIRECTOR
I didn't think we decided on one.

NINA
Horror house. What did we talk about? Slug it on the break.

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR
And 5 - 4 - 3 - roll C - 2 - 1 --

DIRECTOR
Fade lower frame.

TECH DIRECTOR fading the graphic to the bottom of the screen ... ANCHORS appearing and

ANCHORMAN
This is K.W.L.A. breaking news. In the last half-hour we have received word of an apparent home invasion triple homicide in the Granada Hills area of the San Fernando Valley. At present that number, that is the number of those dead, has not been confirmed by police, but K.W.L.A. has obtained exclusive footage from inside the crime scene in which at least (MORE)
ANCHORMAN
three bodies can be observed. We are
going to show segments of that footage
throughout the broadcast and throughout
the day as we break for police updates
and information. Again, we're about to
show exclusive K.W.L.A. video from inside
the crime scene.

NINA keying the ANCHORWOMAN’S ear-piece ...

NINA
It’s graphic. Repeat it.

ANCHORWOMAN
Before broadcasting this video we want to
warn viewers that these are extremely
graphic images. We have obscured the
address and the faces as well as any
identifying details and apart from that,
this is mostly raw and unedited actual
footage again of a triple homicide home
invasion that has just occurred in the
upscale San Fernando neighborhood of
Granada Hills.

NINA/OVER EAR-PIECE
Hit it again. Harder. Then roll.

ANCHORWOMAN
We have a team of K.W.L.A. reporters
setting up at the scene that we will be
speaking with shortly after we show what
I must repeat is extremely graphic
footage and I'm hearing from the control
room that we have that and we're going to
cue up that footage now.

LOU’S footage fills FRAME ... superimposed credit reading

VIDEO NEWS PRODUCTIONS
A PROFESSIONAL NEWS GATHERING SERVICE

LOU
watching from the shadows ... dreams blossoming and ...
ANCHORMAN
This footage was obtained exclusively by K.W.L.A. from Video News Productions, a professional news gathering service. It begins on the premises, inside the house, and that is what appears to be blood on the floor of the residence, leading into what apparently is the living area, or a living area, and there is the first body, restrained it seems to a chair, again the faces, all the faces, will be blurred.

NINA/OVER EAR-PIECE
They escaped. They’re on the loose.

ANCHORWOMAN
And that is the first of what we understand are three bodies in the home in Granada Hills, the result of what early reports suggest was a home invasion or robbery committed by a suspect or suspects who at this time are believed to have escaped. Who are still out there. And that’s a very frightening thought.

INTERCUT: NINA keying the anchorman’s ear-piece ...

NINA
Repeat that.

ANCHORMAN
It’s very concerning, particularly given the savagery of what we’re seeing and that looks to be the kitchen where you can see another body on the floor, and again I want to repeat, because it bears repeating, that the person or people who committed this brutal home invasion robbery are presently unidentified and at large, and that has to be a great worry not only to residents in the Granada Hills area but--

ANCHORWOMAN
All of greater Los Angeles--

ANCHORMAN
The entire Southland, absolutely.

LOU watching from the dark ... footage on display and ...

ANCHORMAN
... that’s the third body there in the bed of the home in Granada Hills --
NINA/OVER EAR-PIECE
Vicious attack.

ANCHORWOMAN
-- and the only thought I have, the feeling I have is the viciousness --

ANCHORWOMAN
The severity of the violence --

ANCHORMAN
An apparent family attacked and savagely killed in their own home in what is one of the quieter and safer and frankly most expensive neighborhoods in the valley --

ANCHORWOMAN
In Los Angeles --

ANCHORMAN
By unknown assailants who have committed a vicious attack in this upscale enclave. That’s a nursery there, and a crib --

NINA/OVER EAR-PIECE
Build it.

ANCHORWOMAN
And that is a child’s room, and you just pray that there’s nothing in that crib --

Tension builds until LOU’S tape shows the crib is empty ...

ANCHORMAN
Thank goodness. My understanding is there was no baby found in the house or any baby that was seen by the people who filmed this--

ANCHORMAN
Video News, a professional news gathering service, that apparently arrived before the police and entered the home to help or offer assistance and came upon the crime scene that we’re watching now.

NINA/OVER EAR-PIECE
We’re cutting to commercial then going to Joel and a police statement.
ANCHORWOMAN
And I’m getting word the police are
getting ready to make a statement from
the scene and Joel Beatty is there for
that and I think we’re going to now take
a break from this graphic footage, with
much more to come on the vicious home
invasion triple murder in Granada Hills.

ANCHORMAN
And we’ll be back after this ... 

The monitor cuts to a commercial as a make-up person darts
out to touch-up the anchors and CUT TO

CONTROL ROOM

DIRECTOR sitting back as an upbeat ad plays ...

DIRECTOR
That’s a 10 share.

NINA
I want theme music on the return. The
score we used for the Simi rail crash.

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT scrambling ... scrolling a computer as
the control room phone rings ... NINA answering ...

NINA
Hello.
(beat)
Thank you.
(beat)
Well actually he asked to meet you.

NINA glancing at LOU ... LOU watching the anchors get touched
up on one of the monitors and CLOSE ON

ANOTHER MONITOR

as a live feed cues from outside the crime scene ... JOEL
BEATTY preparing for a report ...

UNSEEN CAMERAMAN/VO

Picture.

JOEL BEATTY/OVER MONITOR

The police spokesman’s making an
announcement in 60 seconds.

DIRECTOR

We’ll break it.
TECHNICAL DIRECTOR/OVER EAR-PIECE
Breaking in 30.

DIRECTOR
Two-shot number one.

NINA/ON PHONE
We’re going back. I gotta go.

JOEL BEATTY/ON MONITOR
Nina, we’re getting a ton of heat from
the police out here on the video. Nina,
are you there? Nina.

NINA hangs up ... keying communication with the live feed ...

NINA
They can call the station.

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR
Fifteen seconds.

JOEL BEATTY/ON MONITOR
They want to talk to who shot it.

LOU going close, speaking directly to JOEL on the monitor ...

LOU
I shot it. It’s Video News Productions.
You can give them my number.

NINA
Lou, he can’t hear, it’s not directional.

DIRECTOR
Back in five, four, three, two, one --

THE COMMERCIAL FADES
and the ANCHORS return ... banner on the screen reading ...

K.W.L.A. EXCLUSIVE
HORROR HOUSE

Theme music ... score suitable for slaying dragons and CUT TO

MOUNT WILSON

at dawn and CUT TO
LOS ANGELES

brightening and CUT TO

LOU

in his apartment ... sitting on the side of his tightly made bed ... watching tv news and the continuing, building story of a triple homicide home invasion when there’s

A KNOCK ON THE DOOR

and LOU stands ... unlocking and opening it to reveal

A WOMAN

wearing a jacket and pants ... gold shield on her belt ... MAN in a suit standing beside her --

WOMAN
I'm Detective Fronteiri, this is Detective Lieberman.

LOU
Hello. I’m Lou.

DETECTIVE FRONTEIRI
You live here?

LOU
Yes. That's right.

DETECTIVE FRONTEIRI
May I come inside?

LOU
Why?

DETECTIVE LIEBERMAN
Why not?

LOU
You want to?

Yes.

DETECTIVE FRONTEIRI
I don't care.

WONDERFUL.
THE DETECTIVE

entering LOU’S apartment ... looking around ...

DETECTIVE FRONTEIRI
You were in Granada Hills last night. You shot the video in the house.

LOU
Yes, ma’am. I did. That’s right.

DETECTIVE FRONTEIRI
You went inside the house and you filmed all through the house and you even filmed the bodies. All before the police came.

LOU
That door was open, ma’am --

DETECTIVE FRONTEIRI
Detective.

LOU
It was open and what I did was I went in to see if I could help because the alarm was ringing.

DETECTIVE FRONTEIRI
An active crime scene.

LOU
I didn’t know it was a crime scene.

DETECTIVE LIEBERMAN
You knew what it was.

LOU
I know alarms mean someone’s in trouble.

DETECTIVE FRONTEIRI
And you sold it to be shown on tv.

LOU
We’re a professional news gathering service.

DETECTIVE FRONTEIRI
What did you see when you arrived?

LOU
Two men leaving in a car.

DETECTIVE LIEBERMAN
What kind of car?
LOU
It was dark. I couldn’t see what kind.

DETECTIVE FRONTEIRI
Describe the men.

LOU
Well they were just shapes, really. I was afraid so I hid and then I saw the shapes of two men. I remember the men were running, if that helps.

DETECTIVE LIEBERMAN
Do you have film of the men or the car?

LOU
No, I don’t. I didn’t start filming until I was inside.

DETECTIVE FRONTEIRI
I’d like a copy of that footage.

LOU
Do I have to give it to you?

DETECTIVE FRONTEIRI
Is there a reason you wouldn’t?

LOU
No. I made you a copy. I expected someone to come.

LOU takes a zip-drive from a drawer, hands it to her ...

DETECTIVE FRONTEIRI
We’ll be in touch.

The DETECTIVES leaves ... LOU filling a glass and watering the weedy plant on the windowsill as he watches

THE DETECTIVES
drive off and

LOU
pulls his computer from under his bed and turns it on and

THE UNEDITED CRIME SCENE VIDEO
begins from when he arrived at the house and
THE TWO MASKED MEN

seen fleeing ... one big ... the other’s mask ripped, face bleeding and

FREEZE-FRAME

of the man ... features visible ... LOU downloads it and

FREEZE FRAME

of the dark car ... LOU zooming ... heightening contrast and

A LICENSE PLATE

is seen ... LOU jotting the number ... turns to his computer and types

license plate search

WEB SERVICES

scroll ... dozens of internet ads offering to identify car owners from government records ... LOU typing and ANGLE ON

THE TV

news broadcast transmitting dread and danger and CUT TO

LOS ANGELES

in bright sun ... sound of overlapping TV NEWS BROADCASTS building a frenzy of home invasion fear ... day passing as

FOG

rolls in ... closes over the city like a sideways curtain ... darkness descends and CUT TO

A BUSY LOS ANGELES BOULEVARD

as emergency com-chatter rises ... louder and louder until

THE CHALLENGER

passes fast ... weaving around slower cars and CUT TO

LOU

driving ... RICK shotgun ... dash clock clicking 8:24 PM and

RICK

I’m tired. Why’re we starting so early?
LOU
One of the people in the house last night was alive. I cut that part out. I also cut out the men leaving in their car. I have a name and an address. We’re going to drive there and find the person who drove that car.

RICK
You know who killed those people?

LOU
One of them, quite possibly, yes.

RICK
You gotta call the cops.

LOU
And we will. At the right time. I’m offering you a real opportunity, Rick.

RICK
To do what?

LOU
I don’t usually share my business plan with you, but a moment has arrived that could allow the company to make enough money to expand to the next level. We could call this the critical moment. I’m inviting you, Rick, to be part of the team that pounces on this opportunity.

LOU stopping at a light ... looking at RICK ...

LOU
You’ve been asking a lot about your performance review. Well, for starters I’m seeing a great improvement with regards to your overall focus and order following. Given complex problems you’re developing a real ability to find clear, simple solutions. I’m also aware of your increased enthusiasm. It’s great to see how your eyes light up when you’re working on new ideas. I hope you’ll be inspiring us with your innovative thinking for years to come.

RICK
Thanks, man. I’m trying.
LOU
Which is why I'm promoting you to executive vice president of Video News.

RICK
What am I now?

LOU
You're an assistant.

RICK
Does it come with a raise?

LOU
Absolutely.

RICK
How much?

LOU
Pick a number.

RICK
75 a night.

LOU
Agreed.

RICK
What about more?

LOU
Well not now. We closed the deal.

RICK
I could've gotten more couldn't I?

NEIGHBORHOOD
in East Los Angeles ... foggy and forlorn as

THE CHALLENGER
passes ... drives down a street of box homes with fences and gated windows and CUT TO

INSIDE THE CHALLENGER
the scanners are turned low ... RICK watching the GPS ...

RICK
It's half way down the block, coming up on the right. Here, 36-57 North Burns.
LOU pulling up ... parking behind a dumpster and ANGLE ON THE DARK CAR from the home invasion tucked beside a bleak row home as LOU LOOKS THROUGH THE CAMCORDER

Night vision view ... zooming tight on the license plate ...

RICK
That’s the car?

LOU
That’s the car.

RICK
No shit? You think there’s a reward?

LOU
There is a reward.

How much?

LOU
50,000.

RICK
Do I get any of it?

LOU
I just gave you a raise.

RICK
That’s salary, I’m talking about a bonus.

LOU
Bonuses come at the end of the year.

LOU staring across the street ... clock clicking 8:48 PM and

RICK
So we gonna call it in?

LOU
We’re going to wait.

RICK
For what?
LOU
First we want to make sure he's actually inside. Then we want to find a more interesting place to film the arrest.

RICK
Where?

LOU
Anywhere we want. What we're going to do is we're going to wait for him to leave and then we're going to follow him. When he reaches what would be considered a better or more populated neighborhood we'll report his location to the police. He's a violent, wanted criminal. I have to believe that he's not going to just peacefully surrender.

RICK
Okay, I want more money. A lot more.

LOU
What makes a job desirable isn't just the dollar amount attached to it, Rick. You're on the ground floor of a growing business. Your reward is a career.

RICK
Fuck that. You're talking about some fucked up shit and you're asking me, you just expect me to be part of it.

LOU
I can't make people do things, Rick. You have a choice to do this and I have a choice if you don't.

RICK
You threatening to fire me? Hey, I got something too. Not calling criminals in, waiting for 'em to start shit so you can film it, that's against the fucking law. The cops would be majorly interested no fucking doubt. I want more money.

LOU
We can reopen negotiations, Rick, but remember that when it comes to your work reputation you can't un-ring the bell.

RICK
I want half of whatever we make tonight.
LOU
How did you arrive at that number?

RICK
There’s two of us sitting here.  50-50.

LOU
I’ll counter at 10,000.

RICK
You don’t set the numbers on this. I want half.

LOU
If you’re saying I can’t negotiate then I guess I have to give it to you.

RICK
Alright then. Now I feel good about it. Now I’ll go the extra mile. You never understood that, that’s been the problem. You gotta bring people in, man. I’m serious. You gotta talk to ‘em like they’re human beings. I’m saying this to help you, dude, for the future. ‘Cause you got a seriously weird ass way of looking at shit. You know you do. I mean you know what your trouble is? You don’t fucking understand people.

LOU staring at him ... listening ... com-chatter beat ...

RICK
Now I’m gonna take a nap now. We can do shifts. See, now we’re working together.

RICK reclining his seat ... shutting his eyes and

BLACK OUT

Murmur of emergency chatter ... doppler of distant sirens and

LOU V.O.
Wake up.

RICK OPENS HIS EYES

to the same scene ... dash clock blinking 12:24 AM ... LOU as we left him, staring across the street, still as a statue ...

LOU
He’s leaving.
ACROSS THE STREET

the man from the home invasion comes out ... face scratched ... climbing into the car ... driving off ...

RICK

Is that him?

LOU

That’s one of them.

LOU starts the Challenger and CUT TO

A BROAD BOULEVARD

of forever-stretching traffic lights flashing in fog as

THE CAR

pulls down a street ... stops at an apartment building and

LOU

kills the headlights and parks to observe ...

RICK

You’re too fucking close, man. Shit, this guy might’ve seen us and brought us here as a trap. You ever think of that?

LOU watching as

THE LARGE MAN

from the home invasion exits the apartment building ... backing into the car he’s so big ... car pulling out ... LOU following and CUT TO

INSIDE THE CHALLENGER

the scanners are burbling ... GPS blinking ... LOU following ... unblinking gaze and CUT TO

THE CAR

driving into a gas station and CUT TO

THE CAR

stopped at a traffic light and CUT TO
THE CAR

pulling into a bright, busy fast food restaurant ... the two MEN going in and CUT TO

INSIDE THE CHALLENGER

as LOU parks outside ... opens his phone ... dials 9-1-1 and

911 DISPATCH/OVER

9-1-1, what’s your emergency?

LOU/INTO PHONE

Yes, good evening, hello. I’d like to report the location of the two men responsible for the home invasion-murder in Granada Hills last night.

9-1-1/OVER

What’s your address?

LOU/INTO PHONE

I followed them and they’ve just pulled into a restaurant called Chinatown Express at Western and Third. I can see them inside.

911/OVER

Okay, this is the Chinatown Express at Western and Third.

LOU/INTO PHONE

That’s right. I can see them at the counter and they’re ordering. These are the men wanted for the triple murder in Granada Hills last night.

911/OVER

What’s your name, sir?

LOU/INTO PHONE

Louis Bloom.

911/OVER

Do you have a description of the men?

LOU/INTO PHONE

Yes I do. They’re both Latin American men. What you’d probably call Hispanic. One’s big, very much on the heavy side, and the other’s face is scratched. He has red scratches across his face.
911/OVER
How old are the men?

LOU/INTO PHONE
I’d say they’re 30. Maybe perhaps 35.

911/OVER
What are they wearing?

LOU/INTO PHONE
The big man’s wearing sweat pants with a camouflage pattern and a white t-shirt, and the man with the scratches is wearing black pants and a white-t. He looks like he has a gun.

911/INTO PHONE
The suspect is armed?

LOU/INTO PHONE
I believe so, yes. I’m sorry, I have to hang up otherwise they might see me.

LOU hangs up ... turns up LAPD DIV-1 and

SCANNER
-- All Wilshire units, possible 1-8-7, suspects there now, Western and Third, at Chinatown Express. Suspects are two male Hispanics. Number one, large build, number two with scratches on his face, inside the location, possibly armed. Code three, incident 3-5-7-7. R.D. 97-73.

LOU reaching in the backseat, pulling the camera as

RICK looks from the scanner to the restaurant ... the two MEN waiting on line to order ...

RICK
There’s fucking people in there.

LOU
I count 6.

RICK
Oh shit, man. They could start shooting.

LOU
They could.
RICK
You said we were waiting for a better neighborhood with more people, not a fucking crowded restaurant.

LOU
We work with what we’re given.

LOU hands RICK a small camcorder ... 

LOU
You’re going to go around and get an angle inside from those dumpsters over there. Steady hands, use the zoom, and no fast pans. I’ll be filming from here.

RICK
Fuck that. I’m not leaving the car.

LOU
I want a second angle from behind the dumpsters. We can cut them together. Two angles. Believe me, it’s more dangerous here in the car.

RICK
I don’t believe anything you say. This is fucked.

LOU
Do you know I’ve never once cursed in front of an employer.

RICK
I’m not going out there. I’m not doing it.

LOU
You’re making a mistake.

RICK
I don’t care about my fucking title.

LOU
What if my problem wasn’t that I don’t understand people but that I don’t like them? What if I was the kind of person who was obliged to hurt you for this? I mean physically. I think you’d have to believe afterward, if you could, that agreeing to participate and then backing out at the critical moment was a mistake. Because that’s what I’m telling you, as clearly as I can.
RICK takes the camcorder ... gets out of the car and CLOSE ON LOU
powers the camera ... wipes the lens ... looking through and CAMERAS POV
inside the restaurant ... perfect view through plate glass ... the two MEN at a table ... waiting for their order and PAN TO RICK in shadow behind the dumpster ... looking inside as LOU glances in the rear-view, SEES A POLICE CAR silently slide into the parking lot and LOU presses RECORD and LOU zooming tight on the two MEN inside the restaurant ... sitting at a table and LOU zooms to two POLICEMAN as they enter ... passing the two MEN at the table ... going to the counter and WE SEE On the camera viewfinder ... the two cops at the counter ... looking up at the menu ... conferring about food ...
LOU unsure what’s happening ... zooming in on the cops ... seeing them talk between themselves at the counter ... utterly casual and LOU pans to the two MEN at the table ... talking while they await their order ...
LOU watching ... waiting ... nothing happening as RICK films from a second angle ... glued to his viewfinder ... the two MEN and the COPS only 15 feet apart and
LOU

staring ... not understanding ... zooming in closer to see ... the HEAVY MAN’S hand slide beneath the table and rest by his waistband and

LOU PANS

to the COPS to see ... one of the COPS spotted the move ... hand settling on his hip ... near his gun ... body language of both COPS changing as the angle slightly from the counter ... still pretending to decide what to eat and

RICK

filming as the second POLICE CAR pulls up ... two more COPS emerging and

LOU’S CAMERA

shifts to the second police car ... two COPS radioing their arrival ... slowly approaching the front door ... hands on holsters ... stepping inside as

LOU ZOOMS IN

as the HEAVY MAN spots the two COPS coming through the door ... electric beat and ... the HEAVY MAN stands while drawing a gun and ...

THE NEXT HAPPENS IN SECONDS

HEAVY shoots the lead of the two arriving COPS ... who fires and shoots HEAVY as he falls ...

SCRATCHED FACE begins a gun battle with the two COPS at the counter ... both COPS hit ...

Window shattering as ...

SCRATCHED FACE is hit in the shoulder ... propels himself through the broken glass ... crashing outside ...

GUN blazing ... leaping in the ESCALADE and speeding away as

ONE OF THE COPS

sprints around the front .. firing at the fleeing Escalade and

THE ESCALADE

navigates a sharp right hand turn and
LOU
starts the engine ... car leaping forward ... LOU stopping in
the street as

RICK
jumps in ... clawing to close the door as

A POLICE CAR
wails into view ... COP on the street waving it down the
alley as

LOU
fishtails in pursuit ... nearly hits the COP and

RICK
Oh fuck fuck fuck! Oh my God!

LOU
Did you get it?

RICK
There’s people dead in there!

SCANNERS
blaring com-chatter of the shooting and locations as

LOU
floors it ... eyeing the following police car and escaping
car’s tailights ...

LOU
Aim the camera at the car and start
filming.

RICK
This is fucking fucked!

LOU
Film the car. I’m relying on you to
deliver a winning performance, Rick.

Speed climbing as they skid onto Third and

RICK
starts filming as they trail
THE POLICE CAR
close behind ... pursuing the CHASE CAR ...

LOU
Wide angle. Get it all. Nice and centered.

SPEEDOMETER
sweeping through 80 ... 90 ... 100 as

SCANNERS
-- 7-A-27, we just turned Northbound on Western. Requesting back-up and an air unit.
-- Any air unit, come up on Wilshire frequency.
-- Northbound, 70 miles an hour, approaching a fresh red.
-- Black Escalade, give me an E.T.A. on that air unit.
-- Stand-by.
-- Heading North on Western.
-- Another red --

THEY APPROACH AN INTERSECTION
and

A CAR
appears ... going fast ... sailing into view and

BROADSIDING THE POLICE CAR
directly in front of us... two cars tumbling away and

SCANNERS
-- 7-A-27 come in.
-- 7-A-37 come in.
-- No response from 7-A-27.

LOU cranking the volume ... filling the car with overlapping scanners ...

LOU barreling by the crash ...

RICK
filming through the passenger window and
LOU IS THE CHARIOTEEER
of a hyper-speed weaving train of madness ... destruction in the rear-view ... dollars ahead and CUT TO

AN INTERSECTION
of two major avenues ... fast TRAFFIC taking the light as
A POLICE CAR
skids through ... directly in front of the Escalade ...

ESCALADE ramming into the police car from behind ... several times ... accelerating and launching it sideways ... POLICE CAR crashing violently as

THE ESCALADE
veers ... losing control and split-second view of

AN EXPLOSION OF GLASS AND STEEL
as the Escalade crashes head-on into a line of parked cars and CUT TO

LOU
brakes hard and he’s heading straight for the truck at 90 MPH
and

LOU
cuts the wheel at the last second and

THE CHALLENGER
threads the wreckage to come to

A STOP
some 100 feet away as

LOU
jumps out with his camera and calls to RICK ...

LOU
Let’s go. Get up there and film it.

LOU jogging toward the mangled CHASE CAR as
RICK follows ... frightened but filming with the camcorder and

LOU’S CAMERA POV

zooming on the crashed CHASE CAR and

THE SCRATCHED FACE DRIVER

is glimpsed in the wreckage ... bloody and

RICK’S VIEW

as he films through the windshield of the crashed SUV as

SCRATCHED FACE

raises the gun and aims and

BAM!

BAM!

BAM!

as

RICK

takes three SHOTS point-blank to the chest and

THE COPS

open up from the opposite direction ... firing dozens of shots and CUT TO

LOU

filming as

SCRATCHED FACE

is shredded ... frantic law enforcement overkill ...
collapsing back into the wreckage and the

COPS

swarm as

LOU

backs away and approaches
RICK
flat-backed on pavement ... bloody ... breathing his last and

LOU
zooms close as

RICK
speaks ...

          RICK
-- you saw him --

LOU
stops shooting ... crouching down ...

          LOU
I can't jeopardize the company's success
to retain an untrustworthy employee.

          RICK
-- you're crazy --

          LOU
You took my bargaining power, Rick. You
used it against me. You'd have done it
again. Just admit it.

          RICK
I don't know ... I don't know ...

          LOU
I know ... I know ...

RICK dies as

LOU
looks up and sees

EMERGENCY VEHICLES
coming from all directions and

LOU
taking RICK'S camcorder and walking through a swarm of

FIRST-RESPONDERS
and speed-dialing his cell and climbing into
THE CHALLENGER

and pulling away and CUT TO

THE K.W.L.A. SIGN

blazing through fog ... neon letters humming with current as

THE CHALLENGER

speeds into the parking lot ... LOU exiting with the two
cameras and CUT TO

INSIDE THE STATION

as LOU strides through the newsroom ... straight and tall ... saying hello to people he walks by ...

LOU

Hello Dean ... Hello Meredith ... Hi
Jenny ... Good evening, Charles ...

PEOPLE nod as LOU passes the ANCHORS coming from make-up ...

LOU

Hello Lisa. Hello Ken.

LISA

Hi.

KEN


LOU

Yes. Hello. Nice to see you.

KEN

Got anything good for us tonight?

LOU

I think so. I’m actually on my way to show it to Nina right now.
(calling back)
I can tell by your tie it’s Friday.

KEN laughs as he and LISA continue down the hall and CUT TO

EDITING BAY

as NINA and the EDITOR sit in darkness ... watch LOU’S footage ... stunned silence ... sirens and crash sounds and
brakes and gunshots coming from the screen and CLOSE ON
THE MONITOR
as the footage ends with RICK dying on the pavement ...

NINA
(to the EDITOR)
You can go.

The EDITOR leaves ... NINA turns to

LOU

in the shadows ...

NINA
Wasn’t that your partner?

LOU
As a matter of fact that’s him.

NINA
Well. I’m floored. I mean it’s amazing.

LOU
Thank you.

NINA
I mean ... just amazing.

LOU
Thank you.

NINA
Thank you. Thank you for bringing it to me.

LOU
You’re welcome.

NINA
I want it. Obviously.

LOU
How much do you want it?

NINA
You tell me.

BLINDING BRIGHTNESS
as the news set lights flood on and CUT TO
THE CONTROL ROOM

is busy ... LOU’S footage on several screens ... NINA riding herd as TECHS slug segments ... set music ... copy typed as

THE WALL CLOCK

clicks 5:56 AM and

DETECTIVE FRONTIERI AND HER PARTNER

come through the door ... looking around ... seeing the footage on the screens ...

DETECTIVE FRONTIERI
(to an ASSISTANT)
Who's in charge here?

The ASSISTANT points to the DIRECTOR ...

DETECTIVE FRONTIERI
(approaching the DIRECTOR)
Who are you?

DIRECTOR
Who are you?

DETECTIVE FRONTIERI
(showing her badge)
LAPD. Major case. Pull the footage on these screens. Round it up. Let’s go. All copies.

NINA
Can I help you?

DETECTIVE FRONTIERI
You can help yourself by collecting up every copy you have of the shoot-out, the chase, the crash -- all of it. Now.

NINA
It’s K.W.L.A. property.

DETECTIVE FRONTIERI
It’s evidence.

NINA
Of what?
DETECTIVE FRONTIERI
I got a cop near death in the hospital, two dead and four wounded and a dozen major crimes stretching a mile of Third. That tape is evidence.

NINA
It's news footage bought and paid for from an independent contractor.

DETECTIVE FRONTIERI
How do you think he got it?

NINA
If there's an issue speak to him.

DETECTIVE FRONTIERI
Don't get in the way of this.

NINA
Unless you have a judge's order we're going with it in four minutes.

Charged beat as the SECOND DETECTIVE looks at the wall of monitors and SEES

LOU
on one of the screens ... standing in the sound stage ... staring at a live shot projection on the weather board of sunrise over MOUNT WILSON and --

SECOND DETECTIVE
Hey, isn't that him?

DETECTIVE FRONTIERI
(seeing LOU, to NINA)
I'll make a note of your refusal to cooperate.

The DETECTIVES leave and CLOSE ON

CONTROL ROOM MONITORS

as the DETECTIVES are seen entering the sound stage and

NINA

watches them roughly arrest LOU ... handcuffing him and escorting him out a side entrance as

FRANK

enters the control room and approaches her ...
FRANK
Joel’s got a source in the sheriff’s department who says they’ve found drugs at the Granada Hills house. Cocaine in wrapped packages hidden in a crawlspace. Over 50 pounds. He’s confirmed it with an investigator at the scene. It wasn’t a home invasion, it was a drug robbery.

NINA
Give it to the noon crew.

FRANK
This is news.

NINA
It detracts from the story.

FRANK
It is the story.

NINA
The story is urban crime creeping into the suburbs. Innocent victims. That’s the story.

FRANK
Jesus, you sound like Lou.

NINA
I think Lou is inspiring all of us to reach a little higher.

DIRECTOR
60 seconds.

NINA
(donning a headset)
I want a banner on the wrap-around and music through the dissolve ... Okay Bill if you’d like to put Joel up on three before you forget ...

DIRECTOR
45 seconds ... 45 seconds to the show ...

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR
It’ll probably be coming out of edit four. 20 to the roll, 30 to the show.

NINA
Standby 12. After the break ready to roll 33.
DIRECTOR
15 to the roll.

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR
We’ll be coming to you with a box.

DIRECTOR
And 10 - 9 - 8 - 7 - 5 seconds - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1 -

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR
Roll 24 and put it up with track.

NINA
Big energy.

MAIN MONITOR
as a commercial ends and a banner graphic appears

K.W.L.A. BREAKING NEWS

Driving, end of humanity score and CUT TO

VIDEO VIEW OF AN INTERROGATION ROOM

LOU alone ... calm and seated as

DETECTIVE FRONTIERI
enters ... sits across and CUT TO

INSIDE THE ROOM

LOU and DETECTIVE FRONTIERI regarding each other ...

DETECTIVE FRONTIERI
You understand you’ve been read your rights and you’re here voluntarily?

LOU
That’s right, yes.

DETECTIVE FRONTIERI
That this is being recorded and filmed?

LOU
From the camera up there, yes. Wide angle.
DETECTIVE FRONTEIRI
Would you tell me how it is you were at the Chinatown Express tonight and called in the 911?

LOU
Of course. I’m happy to. It began earlier in the day. I was watering my plant and I looked out my window at my apartment, the one you visited, and I saw a dark colored car with two men parked across the street. I didn’t think much about it, otherwise I would have reported it then. We began our night, my employee and myself, and around approximately 12:38 I looked in the rear view mirror and saw that we were being followed by what looked to be the same men in the same car. I made an evasive maneuver, circled back and tailed them to the Wendy’s, at which time I witnessed them go inside and I recognized them as the men from the home invasion.

DETECTIVE FRONTEIRI
You told me you didn’t see the men, that you didn’t get a good look at them.

LOU
Well it came back to me when I saw them going in. Their shapes and their movements. Then I saw that one of them had a gun under his shirt and so of course I immediately got my phone and I called 911.

DETECTIVE FRONTEIRI
And started filming.

LOU
Exactly. That’s what I do.

DETECTIVE FRONTEIRI
That’s your story?

LOU
That’s what happened. That’s why I’m here talking to you. I think they tracked me down after seeing my footage.
DETECTIVE FRONTEIRI
Would you like to know what I think?

LOU
Yes, please.

DETECTIVE FRONTEIRI
I think you withheld information. I think you saw the two men at the murder house in Granada Hills and you saw the car and you sat on it to start something you could film. What do you think about that?

LOU
I think it would be very unprofessional for someone to do that in my business.

DETECTIVE FRONTEIRI
It would be murder.

LOU
I can understand why you’re looking into it but I didn’t do anything like that, nothing that could be considered wrong.

DETECTIVE FRONTEIRI
You left the scene of an accident.

LOU
I wasn’t involved in the accident. I avoided it and stopped.

DETECTIVE FRONTEIRI
You don’t fool me for a minute.

LOU
I’m glad.

DETECTIVE FRONTEIRI
I think everything you’ve said is a lie.

LOU
I wish my partner was here to support what happened.

DETECTIVE FRONTEIRI
Your dead partner.

LOU
That’s right.
DETECTIVE FRONTEIRI
You left your dead partner.

LOU
The ambulances had arrived. They’re trained professionals.

DETECTIVE FRONTEIRI
You seem real broken up about it.

LOU
He died doing what he loved.

DETECTIVE FRONTEIRI
You filmed him dying.

LOU
That’s my job, that’s what I do. I like to say if you’re seeing me you’re having the worst day of your life.

VIDEO CLOSE-UP

of LOU’S face ... waiting for the next question and CUT TO SUNRISE over Los Angeles as

LOU
leaves the POLICE STATION ... squints at the sky ... stops on the sidewalk to listen to the music of 9-1-1 coming from A PARKED POLICE CAR

with its windows down as the COPS inside give him a look and

LOU
smiles ... starts down the street ... blending with other PASSERSBY and DISSOLVE TO AN ISLAND OF FLUORESCENT LIGHT in a gas station parking lot where

TWO NEW VANS

stand side-by-side ... both bearing the logo
VIDEO NEWS PRODUCTIONS
A Professional News Gathering Service.

Two young MEN and a young WOMAN stand outside the vans ... each wearing matching shirts with the Video News logo as

LOU

steps into the light ... looks them over ...

LOU

Tuck your shirt in, Bob, please. Thank you.

One of the employees tucks in his shirt ...

LOU

(addressing them)

Congratulations. Your selection by Video News Productions is evidence of the hiring committee’s recognition of your employment history and unique personal qualities. It is my hope that through hard work and commitment you will move through the intern program and continue to pursue your career goals as full-time employees of Video News. I can tell you from experience that the surest way up the ladder is to listen carefully and follow my orders. You may be confused at times and other times unsure but remember that I will never ask you to do anything that I wouldn’t do myself.

The three EMPLOYEES staring at him ...

LOU

That’s it.

LOU climbs in one van, followed by one of the EMPLOYEES ... the other two EMPLOYEES get into the second van ... engines start and

THE TWO VANS

head into the Los Angeles night in opposite directions ... sound of emergency com-chatter filtering in and HOLD SHOT AS
THE MOON
breaks the rim of the mountains ...

ANTENNAS ON MOUNT WILSON
framed in silhouette ... perpetual POLICE CHATTER heard over as credits roll ...

MOON
climbing into the night and

THE END