

PURSUIT

FADE IN:

An out-of-focus circle, could be a clock. It jumps up, down, to the left... as if pitched by ocean waves.

Sliding into focus... an orange line sweeps through a loop of digits, climbing, straining, higher, higher...

The fluorescent hand trembles at 8,500 rpm.

The HOWL of three-hundred horsepower at redline.

EXT. WESTERN SAHARA DESERT - DAY

A Peugeot 206 World Rally Car vaults over a hill, roars into the blue of the African sky. Scenic. But what goes up...

INT. CAR

...must come down. Hard. The impact plunges through the carbon fiber seat and bolts up the DRIVER'S spine. But past the open visor of the black racing helmet, fierce eyes dig for more.

EXT. CAR

Six cylinders shriek, Pirelli Scorpions churn baked earth.

INT. CAR

In the passenger seat, the NAVIGATOR eyeballs his compass and laminated topo map. The 206 hurls down a dry river bed with steep banks on both sides.

Behind them, a Subaru Impreza power-skids into view.

The Peugeot's driver drops the hammer, the engine wails.

NAVIGATOR

We got a pinch in half a click! Roll
topside!

DRIVER

How wide?

NAVIGATOR

No go! We clear on top, drop down on
the other side!

DRIVER

How wide!

NAVIGATOR

One and a half, maybe two meters!

Ahead the river closes to a narrow gap. Old irrigation gate.
The driver glances in his rearview. The Impreza's on their ass.

DRIVER

Shocks got enough travel!

Taped to the dash, a photo of a real-easy-on-the-eyes brunette.

The Peugeot charges the narrowed banks. Looks damn tight.

The driver touches his helmet, then the picture of his wife.
Always a kiss before pissin' in the face of physics.

The gap's closing in fast. No way the car's going to fit
through THAT.

The driver yanks the wheel, sending the Peugeot up the left
bank, then right away he sends the car back down. The 206's
front wheel digs into the river bed, the left side of the car
lifts off the ground.

On two wheels, the sideways-tilted car smokes through the river
gap. The Pireellis hit the dam wall and the Koni shocks
compress... sparks fly off the roof as rock scrapes sheet metal.

A flick of the wheel, and the 206 drops back down to all four
without missing a beat.

The men look up at a gash in the roof. Sunlight peeks through.

NAVIGATOR

Always wanted a sunroof.

They bump fists: they OWN this race. Just another day in the
office with the world's best rally car driver.

The driver puts his hand through the busted roof, waves buh-bye
to the competition stopped back at the irrigation gate.

EXT. AT IRRIGATION GATE

The Subaru's NAVIGATOR tears off his helmet. Pwned.

INT. CAR

Up ahead, a channel has eroded into the right river bank, a
large pile of deadwood blocks the riverbed and the left bank.

NAVIGATOR

Not on the grid. Flash flood must've
dumped it.

DRIVER

Surprises are God's candy. Up we go.

NAVIGATOR

Bank's been washed, it's too soft!
Gotta crawl it!

The Peugeot climbs the right bank.

DRIVER

What's rule number one?!

NAVIGATOR

We're gonna bottom out!

Half-way up the bank, the driver levels off. The deadwood and flash-flood trench are moments away.

DRIVER

Rule number one. Accelerate. Rule two?

NAVIGATOR

(rote)

Rule number two. When in doubt, see rule number one.

The driver smiles, throws the 206 into top gear, opens the throttle wide.

The Peugeot devours 150 feet per second. Three thousand pounds of wailing metal charges the gash in the river's bank.

--And that's when things go south.

The speeding car starts to sink. Flood waters have eroded the once-thick scorched crust of the African earth.

DRIVER

Not good.

EXT. CAR

Quad-caliper Brembo brakes clamp down on cross-vented discs, but it's too little, too late. The Peugeot's seventeen-inch mags chew channels into the sandy earth and get buried to the axle.

The front spoiler plows into the trench...

...the Peugeot flips end-over-end...

...and crashes roof-down onto the pile of wood.

INT. PEUGEOT - MOMENTS LATER

Silence.

The driver hangs upside-down from his three-point harness. Opens his eyes. A tree with a tangle of branches has busted through the front windshield.

He looks at the navigator... can't see him through the branches.

DRIVER

Bill?

Nothing. He takes off his Nomex gloves, unfastens his helmet, it falls to the roof. CLAY REYNOLDS, rough charm.

He braces one hand against the roof, with the other opens the three-point. He drops out of the seat... crouches on the roof... pulls apart the snarl of dead wood... and sees...

A six-inch-thick tree branch bored through the helmet's visor and buried itself deep inside Bill's head.

EXT. CENTRAL CALIFORNIA - DAY

SUPER: FIVE YEARS LATER

High above the redwoods of the Los Padres National Forest. We descend upon a car far below, that moves along a trail....

EXT. LOG CABIN - DAY

...and follow a Porsche Cayenne as it pulls up to a log cabin planted deep inside redwood country. The SUV's door opens.

Nearby, a snail creeps along the forest floor, faster than nothing. A shoe heel comes down, misses the critter by an inch.

The Pradas belong to the Cayenne's driver, NIKA POKROVSKY, twenties, enough Russian sex appeal to boil blood.

Clay comes out of the woods with an axe, a longneck Heineken, and a load of firewood. He's scruffier... the fierceness in his eyes has surrendered.

NIKA

Figured you for a big-block Chevy kind of guy.

She gestures towards a twenty-year-old mangy Mazda pick-up begging for a mercy killing.

CLAY

Gets the job done.

He plants the axe in a stump, tosses the bottle into the woods... it CLINKS against a growing pile of empties.

NIKA
What job is that?

Clay stacks the wood under an awning.

CLAY
And you are... who?

NIKA
Sorry. Nika Pokrovsky, Fowles TV.

He tosses his gloves onto the woodpile.

CLAY
You're four years late for your story.
"Arrogant rally driver kills best
friend, crushed by guilt quits circuit,
trades one-oh-four octane for one-
eighty proof."

He opens the front door...

NIKA
You forgot something.

Clay mock-thinks.

CLAY
Oh right. "Slams door on reporters."

Boom.

INT. LOG CABIN

Comfy and clean 'cept for a big ol' pile of nasty-looking bills.

NIKA (O.S.)
(through door)
You forgot "WORLD'S BEST arrogant rally
driver."

Clay rolls his eyes, opens the door.

CLAY
Kissing my ass isn't going to get you
anywhere.

NIKA
Too bad. I'm a good kisser.

Snappy comeback #3 catches in Clay's throat as his eyes slide
along her succulent curves and linger on her lips...

CLAY
No thanks.

He closes the door.

NIKA (O.S.)
(through door)
Now I forgot something. Two million
U.S.

INT. CABIN

Clay's frozen in mid-step. Two million?

An envelope slides under the door.

NIKA (O.S.)
Here's fifty large. Yours even if you
say no.

Clay's eyes go to the envelope on the floor, then to the flock
of overdue notices...

NIKA (O.S.)
That kind of bank will buy you a whole
lot of hermit time. Plus a new truck.

Clay looks around his digs: cozy enough... everything in its
place... but pretty damn empty.

His eyes land on a bottle of Absolut on the kitchen counter,
next to a half-full tumbler.

He turns, opens the door.

CLAY
You drive.

EXT. ANTELOPE VALLEY DESERT - DAY

Hilly desert, middle of nowhere. The Cayenne pulls up, Nika and
Clay climb out.

Waiting for them is DYLAN FOWLES, leaning against a Ferrari F430
Spyder. Dylan gladly paid twelve bucks for the bottle of
Italian spring water he's drinking. 'Nough said.

A mod'ed Subaru WRX is also parked nearby.

DYLAN
Thanks for coming out. Dylan Fowles.

CLAY
Sounds familiar.

Shake hands...

DYLAN
Done a few TV shows that have been...
controversial.

CLAY
(nods to the Ferrari)
Controversy's been good to you.

DYLAN
That it has. That's why you're here.

Nika heads over to the WRX.

DYLAN
You were the first to crack twelve
hours at Pike's Peak.

CLAY
That was a long time ago.

Dylan walks over to a a telephone-pole stump that's covered with
tacked-on papers, like a makeshift bulletin board.

Nika throws Clay a helmet from the Subaru.

DYLAN
(re: the trail)
"The Devil's Claw." Wannabee Baja
runners pound it for practice. It's a
slow course, no real straights, but a
technical ball-buster.

He reads a bold-lettered posting on the message tree.

DYLAN
Record for the short run is 5:42.
(beat)
Six years ago.

Clay looks down at the helmet he's holding...

CLAY
I don't drive anymore.

NIKA
(to Dylan)
Told you we were wasting our time with
him. He hasn't been behind the wheel
since Dakar.

Clay stares into the helmet's dark mirror...

DYLAN
(to Nika)
How 'bout that kid, the one winning all
those Playstation tournaments?

That does it. Clay slips on the helmet. Nika and Dylan watch him head for the Subaru, get behind the wheel...

NIKA
(whispers)
Playstation?

DYLAN
Worked, didn't it?

Clay fires up the four cylinders. Shifts, drops the clutch.

The car springs forward about thirty yards, then he yanks the handbrake and jerks the wheel.

EXT. DESERT

The WRX rips a perfect 180, tosses a cloud of dust into the hot air. Nika and Dylan give each-other a look. *What the hell?*

INT. SUBARU

Clay shifts into reverse, the gas pedal finds the floorboard.

EXT. DESERT

The WRX roars into the course. In reverse.

Nika clicks a stopwatch.

DYLAN
What do you think?

NIKA
He hates himself. But somehow he's
still more arrogant than you.

EXT. RACE COURSE

A real gauntlet of automotive pain: trails along steep inclines that'll roll cars entering too slow, hairpin turns on rock-hard deep-rutted dirt that'll snap an axle if the angle's right, loose gravel that'll toss you into a spin to Kansas.

Clay chews up the track something fierce, audaciously hurling the car forward. Excuse me, hurling the car *backward*.

INT. SUBARU

The poor engine wails, the tachometer's buried in the red. The car's running so fast in reverse that the good engineers at Subaru would grab their pocket-protectors in agony.

Clay's taking a brutal beating as he twists his body to look out the rear window while flinging the car through the course.

EXT. DESERT

Nika and Dylan wait. The engine's howl grows louder, closer...

Then with a hellish scream, the backwards Subaru appears from behind a hill, looking like an automotive zombie torn from a wrecking yard grave. Smoke billows from the hood, blown tires shed shards of rubber, the passenger side door is... missing.

Clay throws the car into a skid... the nose swings around and stops just a foot from an unflinching Nika. The WRX hisses... spits... and slips away to the Great Pit Stop Upstairs.

Posted on the TOP DIRT DAWGS telephone pole: "Ferrell Ramey, 5:42, January 9, 2002."

Dylan checks Nika's Seiko: 5:44. Nice.

Clay crawls out the driver's window, tosses his helmet to Dylan.

CLAY

There's a weird rattle near the glove box... might wanna check it out.

DYLAN

Theatrical. I like it.

CLAY

Third rule of racing: put on a good show first, win the race later.

(beat)

Now. Why am I here?

DYLAN

I have some special cars from one of my reality shows, lots of lipstick cameras. I want you to steal one, get in front of the LAPD, put on a chase.

CLAY

How's that make you happy?

Nika returns with a water for Clay.

DYLAN

While you're evading arrest, I sell broadcast rights to your video feed.

CLAY

Maybe I've been living in the woods too long, five minutes on Channel 9 ain't worth two million bucks.

DYLAN
That's why I'm talking to you. I want
four hours. Minimum.

CLAY
Four hours? Nobody can do that.

NIKA
You can.

CLAY
I'll spend twenty in Folsom.

DYLAN
We have an exit. You'll walk away.
Two mil goes a long way in Mexico.

CLAY
You're talking FANTASY ISLAND, not
reality. No thanks.

Dylan motions to Nika. Ace-up-the-sleeve time.

NIKA
Your ex. She needs money.

CLAY
Leave her the hell out of this.

NIKA
You could help.

Nika hands him a snapshot of a little girl.

CLAY
What's this?

NIKA
Your daughter.

This stops Clay cold. He looks at the pic. Can't be.

NIKA
She had a thing with her heart. They
fixed it, she's fine. But they have
bills. A lot of bills.

CLAY
Bullshit.

He heads for the Cayenne...

NIKA
They're wiped out. Bank's taking the
house.

(MORE)

NIKA (cont'd)
 (pulls out cell)
 Call her.

He hits the gas, the Porsche kicks up dirt... and he's gone.

Dylan looks at Nika.

NIKA
 Patience.

Dylan heads for his Ferrari.

Nika taps a text into her phone.

EXT. OUTSIDE JPL

Gated compound. Office buildings mix with hangar-like structures. A sign: "California Institute of Technology Jet Propulsion Laboratory"

INT. JPL HANGAR

A ginormous hangar with a high-tech NASA vibe. A lab-coated TECH's cell chirps, he reads the text. Behind him, cleanroom-suited CREW work on something... something big.

EXT. HOUSE IN THE 'BURBS - THAT NIGHT

Clay stands in front of a house. In the yard's a FOR SALE - FORECLOSURE sign. A kid's swing hangs from a magnolia tree. A pink bicycle with training wheels is in the front walk.

EXT. HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Clay waits at the front door. SUSAN COLLINS answers. She's the woman from the dashboard photo.

SUSAN
 You shouldn't be here.

CLAY
 I'm leaving. I just... needed to know.

SUSAN
 Why, Clay? Five years you didn't want to know. Now you do?

A sleepy ASHLEY (4), comes in from the hall but shyly stops short when she sees Clay.

She's beautiful. She takes Clay's breath away.

SUSAN
What is it, elf?

ASHLEY
I'm thirsty.

SUSAN
Go back to bed, I'll bring some juice.
Ashley stays put, fascinated by the strange man.

SUSAN
Go on, elf, I'll be right there.
The girl tears herself away. Clay's eyes linger on the hallway.

CLAY
You were right. You were right not to
tell me.
He gives her an envelope.

CLAY
Whatever you guys need.

SUSAN
She needs the guy I knew before Dakar.
A beat. He turns, goes down the walk... Susan calls after
him...

SUSAN
Ashley. Her name's Ashley.

INT. ROOM

Endless white in every direction. In the distance, there's
something, just a black speck right now... But it grows quickly
in size as we hurtle towards it...

Closer... closer...

It's a tree, dead and barren... a poisonous tangle of blackened
branches racing towards us...

One wooden limb, cracked and oily, speeds right at us,
unavoidable, blackening everything...

INT. CABIN

Clay wakes up. Looks at the clock. Just past two AM. Next to
the glowing digits is a party-sized bottle of Stolli.

A long beat. He reaches...

...His hand goes past the bottle to the photos of Susan and Ashley. He takes a long look at his family.

INT. NIGHT CLUB - SAME

Dylan and Nika do bottle service.

Nika's cell rings, she looks at caller ID. Smiles. Hands the phone over to Dylan.

INTERCUT

CLAY

What's my exit?

DYLAN

Your vid feed goes dark out by the Van Nuys airport, some kind of glitch. There's an abandoned hangar I used as a set for one of my shows. You drive in, bail, I pay some kid to drive the car a couple of blocks. The cops grab him while you crawl a fuel tunnel to a getaway truck. Kid's under sixteen, gets a slap on the wrist. You catch rays in Cabo San Lucas, your family's taken care of forever.

Clay thinks that through...

CLAY

Quarter up front. And the mods on the car are gonna cost you.

DYLAN

Whatever you want.

CLAY

My navigator's my call. If I wanna bail early, the exit's good to go from minute one. The money's in escrow for my wife 'case I'm out of the picture.

(beat)

And nobody gets hurt. Something I don't like, I'm out.

DYLAN

What's not to like?

CLAY

You.

DYLAN

You go tonight. Nika will call you.

Dylan hangs up... pours them both drinks...

DYLAN

When you dropped this idea on me, I was
pretty sure you were one crazy bitch.

The clink glasses...

DYLAN

Where've you been all my life?

EXT. LOS ANGELES, WAREHOUSE - DAWN

Warehouse district.

With his best casual-stroll, Clay walks by a building, quietly
counts the windows that go by....

CLAY

Four... five... six.

He stops, looks around, pushes against the glass with a latex-
gloved hand. It swings open, he climbs in.

INT. WAREHOUSE, OFFICE

"Not Armed" glows red on the building's alarm panel.

Clay switches on a Maglite, finds a padlocked key box. He pulls
a bolt cutter from a backpack... pops off the MasterLock.

Inside, twenty identical car keys with alarm fobs.

INT. WAREHOUSE, FLOOR

The sweep of Clay's beam reveals a neatly-parked row of 2009
Audi Avant Quattro 3.2 four-wheel-drive station wagons.

CLAY

Station wagons?

Clay clicks the key fob, one of the Audis chirps. It sounds
like a booming gong in the big quiet warehouse.

INT. LAPD STATION - SAME

SWAT locker room. Quiet at this hour, 'cept for OFFICER MASON
DANNER (30's), emptying his locker... and not looking happy.

He pulls pix off the door: grad day from the Academy... his crew
in full assault gear... Halle Berry in boxing gloves and not
much else... news clippings about SWAT kicking ass.

INT. WEAPONS CAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Mason carries the tools of his trade to a WEAPONS CLERK: Kimber .45 auto, Benelli shotgun, H&K MP5.

The clerk starts logging the guns. Awkward silence. Then:

CLERK
Where they put you?

MASON
Traffic.

CLERK
Damn, Mason. All the review board
cares about these days is politics and
public relations.

Nada from Mason.

CLERK
Put in your papers for detective?

MASON
Nope.

The clerk waits for it, but Mason's done talking.

CLERK
Okay... we're all good here. I'll...
be seeing ya?

MASON
Yeah. Seeya.

EXT. INGLEWOOD INDUSTRIAL PARK - LATER THAT NIGHT

Clay's parked the Audi outside what looks like an abandoned textile plant. He's looking for a way in.

VOICE (O.S.)
Freeze, *pendejo*.

Clay does just that as the pipe of a TEC-9 presses into his temple. On the other end of the fire stick's a bad-ass Latino BUTT-UGLY THUG, so ugly he trick-or-treats by phone.

CLAY
I'm here for Pedro.

INT. CHOP SHOP

Air wrenches and arc welders pull apart about a dozen high-end cars down to their frames.

INT. OFFICE

Clay's pushed into the room. Behind a desk sits PEDRO, the captain of this ship: Hispanic, lots of tats on his muscled arms. He doesn't look up from raking his desktop Zen garden.

BUTT-UGLY THUG
Jefe, this cabrón was eye-ballin' the place.

PEDRO
 This *pienche* rock. It screws with my Chi no matter where I put it.

He moves a rock, still not lifting his head...

CLAY
 Your boys are choppin' some jacked rides.

Pedro rakes around the rock...

PEDRO
 (profoundly)
 That is what we do.

CLAY
 Your guys are slow and sloppy... I had to meet their sucker boss, see if I could get paid dragging my ass.

Oh-oh. The rake stops. Zen definitely leaves the building.

PEDRO
 I think I'll just take YOUR Chi, you *hijo de la chigada*--

Pedro finally looks up. Anger melts into a big smile.

PEDRO
 Clay! My *amigo*!

The two men embrace. Old friends. Butt-Ugly Thug leaves.

Pedro pours tequila into a couple of rocks glasses.

CLAY
 No thanks.

PEDRO
 The cactus, she is a wicked mistress.

Pedro hands a bottle of water to Clay.

PEDRO
 How long? Four, five years?

CLAY
(toasts)
Old times.

PEDRO
Good times.

They toss back their drinks.

CLAY
I need your skills, P.

PEDRO
Anything, *carnal*.

Clay hands over a piece of paper.

PEDRO
(reading off list)
Run flats, moly-b roll cage,
intercooler, GPS--

CLAY
--military spec. I need to resolve
down to a foot.

PEDRO
...nitrous, bored cylinders, ballistic
glass, ceramic brakes, two-hundred-
gallon kevlar fuel cell? What're you
doing, racing *el diablo* himself?

CLAY
Worse. I'm gonna drive the 405.

PEDRO
How soon?

CLAY
A week.

PEDRO
You are *loco*.

CLAY
This car, nobody's built anything like
it. That's why I came to you.

PEDRO
It is one *muy* wicked ride.
(beat)
Okay.

They clink glasses, drink.

Clay puts the tumbler down next to the Zen garden, studies the lay-out for a sec, then moves the rock a bit to the left.

Looks like the right move, 'cause Pedro's eyes widen...

PEDRO

I feel the Chi, it is like a fountain!

Clay heads for the door...

CLAY

Leave the cameras in the car, I'm going to need 'em.

EXT. STUDIO LOT

SUPER: NEXT DAY

The main gate to a studio lot.

INT. CONTROL ROOM

A switch is flicked, fluorescents spill over what looks like a broadcast/fx studio: lots of next-gen a/v, CG, and telco gear.

Dylan and Nika stroll through the rows of equipment, stop in front of a wall covered entirely with flat-screen monitors.

DYLAN

If this isn't an altar, I don't know what is. And like most holy places...

Dylan takes in a deep breath.

DYLAN

It smells like money.

A framed wall poster shows a handful of the Audi station wagons bounding across a tundra. "Speed Zone: Reality at 100MPH"

NIKA

Money pit, no?

This appears to be a bit of a sore spot for Dylan.

DYLAN

If those idiots had spent more than a dime on promo, "Speed Zone" would be top ten! They screwed me.

NIKA

That's why I came to you with this. No one does it better than you.

DYLAN

This time around, it's all mine. No
one can pull the--

She brings her fingers to Dylan's lips...

NIKA

Shhhh...

She kisses him.

EXT. ANAHEIM CALIFORNIA, EXTREME KARTING TRACK - DAY

Single-cylinder Kart racers squeal around a tight corner. One
lead-footed teenager sends her Kart into a stack of tires,
another spins out into the grass. No pros here.

INT. EXTREME KARTING FRONT OFFICE

Kids plunk down Benjamins for a Danica Patrick fantasy.

Clay goes to an office door, reaches for the handle. A beat.

INT. ADMIN OFFICE

Lots of rally car award plaques, statuettes, news clippings.

EASTON GRAVES, fit 50's African American, hangs up the phone.
He's the rival rally car navigator from the Saharan desert race.

EASTON

I'll be damned, Mr. Clay Reynolds.

They shake.

EASTON

Where you been?

CLAY

The woods.
(beat)
Nice desk.

EASTON

Never got a chance to say I'm sorry,
'bout Bill.

Clay doesn't want to go there. He looks around the office...

CLAY

What's this about?

EASTON

Subaru said I was slowing down, offered me a grease-monkey gig. I declined.

CLAY

Were you slowing down?

EASTON

Hell no, top of my game.

Clay smiles, looks around, finds a book of navigation tables.

CLAY

Distance between 34 degrees, 6 minutes, 44 seconds north... 11, 24, 40 west... and 36, 12, 21 north... 115, 13, 22 west.

Easton writes nothing down, just stares out the window.

EASTON

Two-hundred thirty-one miles. City centers, Los Angeles to Sin City.

CLAY

Damn, East.

EASTON

It's these trenches on my face. Too old for the eighteen-to-thirty-five demo.

Clay studies his friend. Awkward silence. Then:

CLAY

You interested in early retirement?

INT. ADMIN OFFICE - AN HOUR LATER

EASTON

That's the first chapter in the Book of Bad Ideas. It's the Grand Poobah of bad ideas, it's the Queen Bitch in the Sky that squeezes out bad ideas.

CLAY

Look, forget I was here. You got yourself a life.

EASTON

Yeah I got a life. This place is bust when that Raceland opens in Fullerton. Haven't spoken to Marcy in years. And the one thing I was put on this dirt ball to do, they won't let me.

CLAY

We do this, we go out of country for
good. No going home.

EASTON

Home? Home's sittin' behind five
hundred horsies clawing me across Momma
Earth so hard she's begging for mercy.
(beat)
I'm in.

INT. CHOP SHOP

As usual, the finest talents belong to felons: automotive
magic's happening here. The Audi's been gutted and fitted with
an alloy roll cage, carbon-fiber bucket seats, five-point race
harnesses.

Kevlar sheeting is being stretched inside door panels, all the
glass is being traded for tinted ballistic-grade composites, and
a massive fuel-cell is being craned into the rear hatch.

Heavy-gauge steel skid plates protect the undercarriage, cast-
aluminum push bars extend beyond the bumpers.

And God only knows what's going on under the hood.

DREAM:

That pitch-dark branch... its slivered end surges towards the
fleshy dale between our eyes...

INT. CABIN

SUPER: FIVE DAYS LATER

Clay wakes. The clock: 6:15 AM.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

-- Easton walks out the front door of his house. Drops the
house key in a stamped envelope, puts the envelope on his
mailbox for the mailman. One last look back.

-- Dylan's alone in the control room, looking at the SPEED ZONE
poster.

-- Ex-SWAT Officer Mason Danner sits in an LAPD cruiser behind a
freeway bridge, aiming a radar gun. Bored out of his friggin'
mind.

-- Outside his warehouse garage, Pedro turns a key, the massive industrial door rolls open. Morning light falls onto the modified Audi inside: a magnificent brute, hungry for blacktop.

-- An empty McDonald's parking lot. Nika, poured deliciously into tight leather, talks to the unseen driver of a Grey Dodge delivery van.

EXT. OUTSIDE JPL - SAME

SUPER: JET PROPULSION LABORATORY

A SWAT Mobile Command Center idles outside JPL's payload gate.

INT. SWAT MOBILE COMMAND CENTER

Like a miniaturized version of NASA's mission control. LAPD SWAT COMMANDER LANDON PIERCE (40's) is there along with some other OFFICERS.

OFFICER JOHN VALEZ (20's) comes in, hands Pierce some coffee.

Pierce taps a keyboard. A route-map lights up on a flatscreen.

CMDR PIERCE

The route the suits in D.C. pulled out
of their computers. Whaddya think?

Valez studies the map...

OFFICER VALEZ

No pinch points... low
predictability... alternates never more
than a mile away. By the book.

CMDR PIERCE

Uh-huh.

Valez is clearly missing something. Looks again.

OFFICER VALEZ

What's the payload?

CMDR PIERCE

Treasury Department satellite. Got
some kind of magic decoder thing in it.
Gives you access to the Fed's pile of
coin. Keys to the kingdom.

OFFICER VALEZ

Government's still got money left to
steal?

(beat)

Satellite. So we're talking heavy
transport. Lessee... here.

(MORE)

OFFICER VALEZ (cont'd)
In Sunland. They're going to hit a six
percent grade... semi's gonna slow to a
crawl. Makes a big juicy window for
any bad guys.

Pierce raises his coffee. Props.

CMDR PIERCE
Find a couple of ways around it, upload
the new route to D.C.

INT. SUSAN'S LIVING ROOM

Ashley, dressed for pre-school, answers the phone.

ASHLEY
Hi.

INT. CABIN - INTERCUT

Clay's heart skips at the sound of his little girl's voice.

CLAY
Hey Ashley.

ASHLEY
Mommie's late, she's brushing her
teeth, but I'm ready and I have a new
magic *mochila* backpack and it--

Susan comes in, toothbrush in her mouth. In just a bra and
panties, she's looking like a Victoria's Secret Colgate ad.

SUSAN
(takes phone)
Thanks honey, I'll talk to them.

CLAY
It's me.

SUSAN
Where did you get fifty thousand
dollars?

CLAY
There's more on the way.

SUSAN
What are you doing, Clay?

CLAY
I'm sorry, about the booze, about
everything.

He hangs up. Susan's left with a dial tone and Ashley tugging at her leg.

EXT. ABANDONED AIR STRIP - EARLY MORNING

A rusted grate in a field of weeds. From beneath, a pair of hands shoves it open. Clay climbs out, then Easton. They take in the twilight scene.

To their left, cracked, weed-riddled tarmac and an abandoned hangar. Past that, a fence and the Van Nuys airport.

To their right, a not-yet-busy freeway. And on the shoulder, a UN-HOLEY GOOD DONUTS truck.

EASTON

We're making our getaway in a donut truck?

Clay looks up and down the stretch of freeway. Then, as the sun breaks the horizon...

CLAY

Good day for a drive.

Overhead, a C-23 cargo plane roars in for a landing...

INT. VAN NUYS AIRPORT, TARMAC - MINUTES LATER

SUPER: VAN NUYS AIRPORT

...The plane rolls into a cargo loading area.

A couple of LAPD SWAT OFFICERS watch. One keys a throat mic.

SWAT OFFICER

Plane's rolling in.

INT. SWAT MOBILE COMMAND CENTER - INTERCUT

Valez and Pierce are on com headsets.

OFFICER VALEZ

Copy that.

SWAT OFFICER

What's the ETA?

Pierce scans his screens: traffic... weather... utility company alerts... Homeland Security intel scroll...

CMDR PIERCE

We're green 'cross the board. Thirteen hundred or close to it.

INT. JPL, HANGAR

A heavy-alloy container's being buttoned up and craned onto the back of a flatbed.

A few of the lab-coated TECHS seen earlier watch on. Among them's Nika's inside man. He looks around, pulls out his cell, types in a text.

INT. PORSCHE - SAME

Nika's behind the wheel of her Cayenne. Her cell beeps, she looks at the message.

INT. CONTROL ROOM

Dylan's pulled his SPEED ZONE team out of retirement. The room's filled with maybe a dozen people.

DYLAN

Thanks for coming out on such short notice. It looks like we've been given a second chance, in a way none of us could've imagined.

Dramatic-effect pause.

DYLAN

Last year, LA saw 781 car chases. A lot of 'em went live on local news. A couple went national, pulled in ratings that'd make Randy, Simon, Paula, and that new chick real jealous.

The lead BROADCAST TECH, who'd feel right at home on the cover of POCKET PROTECTOR REVIEW, pipes in.

BROADCAST TECH

Five bucks a month, a web site calls your cell whenever a chase is on TV.

DYLAN

Here's the deal. One of our cars was stolen a week ago. Last night, tracking and video came on-line, for about an hour.

The tech thinks this through...

BROADCAST TECH

The gear's keyed to the ignition... when the engine runs, we get a signal.

DYLAN

Next time that car rolls, we go live.

Dylan turns to his SALES GUY... who always says good-bye with a wink and a "bang" from a finger-gun.

DYLAN

We sell broadcast rights every ten minutes to the highest bidder.

(to Broadcast Tech)

We need airtight encryption on the video feed. They have to go to us.

(to everyone)

Whatever your pay was for the twelve episodes, double it. One day's work.

Wow. They like the smell of that pile o' green.

SALES GUY

What makes you think he'll run?

DYLAN

Word is he's got priors. He's been real naughty. LAPD will want to take him down, and he knows it.

(beat)

We squeeze four hours out of this guy, we make television history.

Gear lights up, phones get dialed, monitors flicker to life.

INT. CHOP SHOP - SAME

Pedro's at the Audi doing the Bob Barker model thing in front of Clay and Easton.

PEDRO

...tires are self-healing, you'd need a point-blank twelve-gauge to blow them.

Well, that just might happen, so:

CLAY

We'll need a spare.

PEDRO

Of course, behind the back seat.

Easton checks out the interior. Looks a lot like the cockpit of a stealth bomber.

PEDRO

Mil-spec GPS, all-band radio, 3G wireless 'net, everything you wanted.

EASTON
The gear is tight.

Next stop: the engine. Which somehow looks angry.

PEDRO
Dual turbos good for five hundred cubic
feet, twin intercoolers, nitrous
fogger, engine internals all race-
grade...

Clay takes in the hell-monster engine.

CLAY
Put it on the dyno?

PEDRO
No NOS, at maybe four thousand turns...
you got under your foot a thousand and
two horses.

That's a lot.

CLAY
A thousand and two?

PEDRO
(profoundly)
Sí, two.

Clay takes a walk around the car.

CLAY
Let's go for a ride.

EXT. FREEWAY BRIDGE

Mason walks away from a cheesy '77 Camaro that he's given a
ticket to. The car peels out, the teenage DRIVER throws Mason
the finger while the pimply PASSENGER leans out his window...

PASSENGER
Po-po pig!

Mason climbs in his Caprice, slams the door.

INT. CAPRICE

Humiliated. Angry. He tosses his citation pad onto the
passenger seat, it lands on some paperwork: REG 432, PETITION
FOR EARLY DISCHARGE

INT. CHOP SHOP - LATER

Easton and Clay suit up. One-piece Nomex suits, heat sleeves, Fast Tech gloves, Puma driving shoes, hands-free mics.

Clay reaches for a Shoei helmet, but Easton stops him...

EASTON

We're going to need all the peripheral
eye-info we can get.

Clay hesitates, takes his hand off the helmet.

CLAY

Guess I won't wreck.

They climb in, strap in. Pedro's at the driver's door.

PEDRO

What you want, she will do, I can
promise you this.

CLAY

Thanks, P.

PEDRO

Be safe, my *amigos*.

Clay fires up the engine, if you wanna call it that: it sounds like the God of Thunder himself, pissed at being squeezed into eight cylinders.

INT. AUDI

Clay and Easton look at each-other. So that's what one-thousand-and-two horsepower sounds like.

Easton's gear starts up: digital map, TV monitor, police scanner, lots of other groovy electronics.

LEDs pop green on the inside and outside lipstick cameras.

INT. CONTROL ROOM

Something beeps, the Broadcast Tech jumps.

BROADCAST TECH

Holy shit, we got something!

His fingers dance across the control board. Everyone's eyes go to the monitors. One by one, static's traded for video: six interior and six exterior angles.

Clay and Easton's mugs fill a few of the screens.

BROADCAST TECH
That dude looks real familiar...

DYLAN
Kill the face cams.

BROADCAST TECH
But--

DYLAN
--Do it.

EXT. INGLEWOOD INDUSTRIAL PARK

The Audi speeds through empty streets as Clay puts the car through its paces, throwing it into corners, slamming on the brakes, smoking the tires off the line.

The car dives around a corner and squeals into an uncontrolled spin before coming to a stop.

INT. AUDI

The LED's on the lipstick cams facing Clay and Easton go dark.

CLAY
Ocean of gas back there's throwing the
center of gravity all over the map.

EASTON
But she's a fast bitch.

Clay looks at Easton, revs the thundering engine into the red...

CLAY
Oh yeah, she's fast.

We travel down Clay's leg to the bored-aluminum gas pedal, up the throttle tunnel past the firewall and into the engine bay, where the motor management computer's microchips crackle with a million instructions per second...

Outside, oxygen's sucked into the ram-air hood-scoop, rushes through a chilled intercooler, surges through the spiral conch-like tunnels of a turbocharger at ever-increasing speeds...

The cooled densified air streams past an intake valve into the belly of the beast, just as the nozzle of a fuel injector fills the cylinder with a high-octane cloud...

And we rest on a four-pronged platinum spark plug, just waiting for this party to get started. Bzzzt.

BOOM! A pressure wave big enough to kill a man. And as another 100 explosions ignite *that very second*...

Clay drops the clutch.

EXT. AUDI

Four massive patches of two-fifty-millimeter tire tread claw into the blacktop and catapult the car to sixty miles per hour in three-point-oh seconds.

INT. CONTROL ROOM

Silence as everyone's glued to the flat-screens. Feeds from lipstick cameras inside the car, feeds from cameras outside the car, one screen for the car's metrics: speed, RPMs, mileage.

BROADCAST TECH

He just pulled zero-to-sixty in three flat. Our cars never turned in anything below nine.

A MIXER TECH looks at the video coming from inside the car...

MIXER TECH

Look at all that gear. Police band, GPS...

DYLAN

Looks like they took our prototype. Most of the stuff was too pricey to put into the production cars.

The techs throw each-other looks.

MIXER TECH

(mouths to Broadcast Tech)
Prototype?

DYLAN

Even better. Car's faster, they've got ears on the cops.

(turns to his crew)

Ladies, gentlemen, this is going to be one helluva ride.

EXT. SWAT MOBILE COMMAND CENTER

A guy in a Sears Catalog suit pops his head into the command center. A Fed.

FED

We're ready when you are, Commander.

EXT. OUTSIDE JPL

The Fed heads to his government-issue Chrysler 300 as an open-air eighteen-wheel flatbed rolls out of JPL, hauling the container.

The mobile command center, a SWAT personnel carrier, four LAPD cruisers, and a JPL van are running escort.

Across the street from the JPL compound? The grey Dodge delivery van. As the eighteen-wheeler hits the road, the Dodge's V-8 fires up.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Cube farm. Susan's in one, on the phone, a pile of bills on her desk. PAST DUE... FINAL NOTICE... COURT SUMMONS.

SUSAN

That's like a quarter of what we owe,
that's got to count for something.

(beat)

I'm not trying to get away with
something here, I'm only asking for
time. I just need more time.

(beat)

Hello?

Dial tone.

She hangs up. Exhausted, and it's not even noon. Her eyes travel to a picture of Ashley happily fingerpainting...

INT. AUDI

Easton listens to local police chatter through an earpiece, scans through a digital map of LA...

EASTON

Speed trap here, on the one-oh-five...

He punches up a real-time map of freeway traffic conditions.

EASTON

I got access to the freeway cams.
Traffic's moving real nice. Looks like
our starting flag.

Clay pulls out the pic of Susan... with the pic of Ashley taped next to it. He wedges them into a seam on the dash.

CLAY

We do this safe. No one gets hurt.

EASTON

You got it.

CLAY

Let's go get us a ticket.

INT. CHOP SHOP - SAME

A couple of THUGS carry a sixty-five-inch Sony plasma into Pedro's office. A DIRECTTV TECHNICIAN lays coax. Pedro tries deciphering a TiVo manual but gets frustrated...

PEDRO

Chinga!

He fiercely rakes some sand.

INT. CONTROL ROOM

The Audi weaves in and out of light traffic, picking up speed. The car's video feed comes in clear.

The Sales Guy's already working the phones.

SALES GUY

(into phone)

Damndest thing, Roge. Car got jacked, we got the guy on video, right now.

(beat)

Hell yeah, live! Cops will be on him any minute. You want in?

EXT. FREEWAY BRIDGE

Mason aims his Stalker out his open window, it ticks off speeds: 66... 70... 59...

INT. AUDI

The car's really moving now, the engine happily roaring, the air shrieking by outside.

EASTON

Did I mention this is a bad idea?

CLAY

I believe you did.

Easton smacks his lips.

EASTON

Damn I like the taste of bad ideas.

EXT. FREEWAY BRIDGE

Mason's gun's LCD reads: 65.

But wait, what's that? Something in the distance... like the far-away rumble of thunder... closer, louder... like the howl of an angry wind, the wail of a thousand chainsaws...

The Audi rockets past like a bullet from the gun of God himself.

MASON

Holy--

The shockwave slams Mason's hand against the door frame, he drops the Stalker.

Mason guns the Caprice, burns rubber...

...Leaving the radar gun behind on the blacktop, blinking in silent witness. If radar guns could be impressed, this one's writin' home to momma:

187 MP/H

INT. CONTROL ROOM

The metrics monitor almost agrees: 188 MP/H.

Dylan, master of his domain, is in the back with Nika.

DYLAN

This is genius.

EXT. FREEWAY

A chopper from KCAL-9 appears overhead. The gyroscopically-stabilized nose-mounted camera takes in the action below.

INT. AUDI

EASTON

News got here before the cops.

CLAY

What'd you expect? This is L.A.

Easton punches-up a picture-in-picture on his computer's LCD display, tunes into Channel 9. And there they are.

Two police cruisers screech onto the freeway behind the Audi.

Clay scrubs off some speed.

EASTON
What're you doing?

CLAY
Keeping it interesting. We're on TV!

EXT. FREEWAY

The eighteen-wheeler with its mystery cargo heads down the 210. LAPD, SWAT, the JPL van, and the Fed run escort.

INT. SWAT MOBILE COMMAND CENTER

Pierce spots the news footage...

CMDR PIERCE
We got a police pursuit.

OFFICER VALEZ
We scrub?

CMDR PIERCE
Traffic cascade should stay out of our zone. Let's keep an eye on it.

INT. CHOP SHOP

On the big screen, the Audi dances elegantly around traffic. The pursuing police cars swerve clumsily. Pedro and his gang have gathered around with pork rinds and Tecate.

A KCAL REPORTER broadcasts from the chopper...

KCAL REPORTER (V.O.)
...east-bound on the one-oh-five freeway, clearly in excess of one hundred miles per hour...

The screen fills with the image of the Audi as the copter-cam zooms in. Pedro turns to his SHEET-METAL MAN.

PEDRO
Nice work on the fenders... they flare just enough to be bad-ass but not too much like in the cartoons.

The men clink their long-necks.

INT. CONTROL ROOM

The Sales Guy yells across the buzz of the room to Dylan.

SALES GUY

KCAL wants fifteen minutes for five K.

Dylan nods back a "yes," and then to the Broadcast Tech:

DYLAN

Give KCAL the decryption key 'til...
(looks at clock)
Half past.

BROADCAST TECH

You got it chief.

NIKA

(to Dylan)
Five thou? You're giving it away.

DYLAN

Wait. We'll see six figures for the
next fifteen.

INT. LAPD STATION

On the admin floor, a small crowd's gathered around a seventies-era wall-mounted TV.

KCAL REPORTER

The car apparently was stolen from the
SPEED ZONE reality TV show. KCAL has
obtained exclusive footage from cameras
inside the car.

The TV footage switches to the lipstick cameras. Rear-firing cameras show the LAPD in pursuit, outside side-firing cameras give a sense of speed by showing the cityscape rushing by.

Two inside cams are angled on the dash: Clay's hands on the wheel, Easton working the com and nav gear... but their upper bodies are out of frame, their faces off the broadcast.

INT. MASON'S LAPD CRUISER

Mason catches up to the pursuit, joining other cop cars.

INT. AUDI

Behind, Mason and a half dozen cruisers struggle to keep up... above, two news choppers and an LAPD bird... ahead, not enough traffic to keep things interesting.

EASTON

Time to take it up a notch?

CLAY

Read my mind.

Easton punches up the map.

EASTON

Take Sycamore... it'll be tight for a
half a click, then we hit fat blacktop
with plenty of room for dancing.

The Sycamore exit's up ahead on the right... but Clay pulls into
the far LEFT lane. The cops follow his lead like a gasoline-
powered Conga line.

The exit's coming up fast, with four lanes of commuters between
it and Clay... He looks for his opening... waits... waits...

Now.

EXT. FREEWAY

The Audi cuts across four lanes at a clean forty-five degree
angle, missing cars by inches... and down the exit she goes.

All the black-and-whites can do is hit their brakes.

INT. CONTROL ROOM

As the Audi barrels down the Sycamore exit...

SALES GUY

KTLA, thirty grand!

NIKA

Long way from six figures.

Dylan ain't happy. He dials his cell.

INT. AUDI

Clay cell rings, he answers through a head-set.

CLAY

Go.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - INTERCUT

DYLAN

What's your third rule?

CLAY

What?

DYLAN
Your third rule of racing.

CLAY
Put on a good show.

DYLAN
Then do it. Hear they're changing the
locks on your kid's house next week.

Clay kills the line, mashes on the brakes.

EXT. STREET

The Audi's at a dead stop. A Big Cat construction crane blocks the street solid, moving into a high-rise construction dig at maybe an inch an hour.

Clay looks around... no side streets, no sidewalks... then behind him... an angry wall of LAPD coming up fast...

EASTON
I think we're up a notch.

INT. CHOP SHOP

Chip-munching and beer-drinking have come to a screeching halt.

INT. LAPD STATION

In the TV audience, a wager concludes...

COP #1
Seventeen minutes ain't bad.

COP #2 holds out an open palm...

COP #2
But it ain't twenty.

COP #1 slaps an Andrew Jackson into the outstretched hand.

INT. OFFICE

Susan joins a group of OFFICE WORKERS watching TV in one corner of the room.

We move closer to the TV... into the TV, and...

INT. AUDI

...back into the Audi.

CLAY

Whaddya say we go muddin'?

EASTON

Can't play without getting dirty.

Easton reaches for a dial on the dash labelled SHOCK TRAVEL and notches it from "1" up to the max of "4."

EXT. AUDI

Outside the car, we scoot past the left front tire and onto one of the bright yellow Koni struts: an additional six PSI of nitrogen is pumped into the shock absorber's pressure chamber.

The Audi's ground clearance grows by six inches as the LAPD cruisers squeal to a halt ten yards away.

Tires grab pavement and the Audi jumps the curb and crashes through the construction site's chain link fence.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE

A big dig. Lots of heavy machinery and building material litter the lot, making for an industrial-style slalom run.

Clay makes quick work of the obstacle course. The car's added height and four-wheel-drive gobble through mud pits and deep dirt ruts. Some of the LAPD cruisers aren't so lucky and spin their wheels in the muck.

Around a blind corner of stacked t-bars, liquid concrete pours down a chute into a grated form. No time to go around. The Audi drives through the stream and gets covered with the stuff.

INT. AUDI

Clay hits the wipers. The glass clears, they see a hole ahead.

A BIG hole. The high-rise's quarter-acre concrete foundation, sunk down twenty feet, bristling with a field of exposed rebar.

Hard to miss is a two-hundred-foot-tall tower crane lowering a big plate of steel into the pit. Hmmm. The plate looks thick enough, and clearance between the two anchor cables looks good.

But the edge of the dig is seconds away.

CLAY

How fast?! Gotta hit it dead center!

And so we take a little side journey into the mind of a genius.

The scene becomes Easton's chalk board. A white downwards arrow draws itself next to the steel plate: "rate of descent, 1.5 feet per second." A dotted line establishes the distance and angle between the edge of the pit and the steel: "15 feet/33 degrees." Lightning fast, more measurements appear on the canvas... and then the calculations: speed and weight of the car, the rate of descent's impact on jump distance/angle, etc.

Then as quick as the numbers arrived, they say good-bye...

And we're back to the roar of the engine and a sharp-toothed hole in the dirt coming too fast and promising lots of pain.

EASTON

Fifty-four!

But Clay's in another place...

INT. PEUGEOT (FLASHBACK)

A snarl of deadwood smashes through the windshield...

INT. AUDI

EASTON

Clay!

Clay snaps out of it, but hesitates, putting both hands at five o'clock as if he's gonna pull a sharp left...

EASTON

Fifty-four!

...Clay doesn't make the turn. Instead, he taps the brakes, the speedo drops from 63 to 54, the car vaults into the air.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE

Mason and other cops skid to a halt at the edge of the dig.

The Audi lands on the steel plate, dead-center and at a dead stop. Dead-center's important, because the plate's balanced only on two cables attached along its center-line.

The steel cables, anchor points, and crane groan under the weight. The plate continues its downward journey.

A drop of wet cement slides off a door, plops onto the plate.

INT. AUDI

Easton and Clay look at each-other. Big grins. Now just to ride this elevator down to home-free.

But in the back seat, inside the two-hundred-gallon fuel cell, momentum gives the gasoline a push, and it sloshes forward...

Imbalance.

EXT. AUDI

The steel plate tilts forward, threatening to slide the Audi down onto the forest of rebar below...

Lickety-split, Easton unsnaps his harness and throws his weight.

The steel plate rights itself... then starts tilting the OTHER way... Easton compensates, and...

Balance.

The crane lowers the plate... lower... lower...

The ground close, the Clay drives forward an inch... the steel plate tilts, its edge hits the concrete... the car drives off.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE

Mason's out of his car. He can only watch as the Audi winds through the rebar and goes up a ramp on the far side of the dig.

INT. CHOP SHOP

Parr-tae! Pedro and his crew cheer, toast, say highly disrespectful things about the mothers of LAPD officers.

INT. OFFICE

Here, the crowd of white-collars can't believe their eyes.

SUSAN
That's some driving.

INT. LAPD STATION

The cops gawk at the TV in silence, stunned.

Cop #2 holds out his hand, Cop #1 returns the twenty bucks.

INT. SWAT MOBILE COMMAND CENTER

Valez and Pierce look at each-other.

OFFICER VALEZ
That was something.

INT. CONTROL ROOM

MIXER TECH

So way better than "Survivor."

A line on the Sales Guy's phone rings. He answers. Another line lights up. And another. Then ALL the lines blink red.

Dylan's all smiles. He answers his cell.

DYLAN

Now that's more like it.

INT. AUDI

Clay's on his headset.

CLAY

You mention my family again, I'm parking this car.

He hangs up. Easton sets the shocks back to "1," dropping the car for better street handling.

CLAY

Something's wrong, she's not feelin' right.

Easton flips to a local TV broadcast. The footage shows hardening cement clinging to the Audi's sheet metal.

EASTON

Cement's adding weight. Gonna screw with our aerodynamics.

Clay gives Easton "the look."

EASTON

No.

CLAY

Yes.

Easton looks behind him... no LAPD. They're still jammed up at the construction site. He switches his computer over to the 'Net and starts typing... head shaking.

EASTON

Left here.

Half a block away: ANDY'S HANDY CAR WASH.

EXT. CAR WASH

Clay scoots past the line of cars getting vacuumed and slips into the automated car wash tunnel.

The LAPD catch up and screech to a halt. A couple of cruisers try to jam up the wash tunnel's exit, but street access to the exit's blocked by a tight stack of cars getting dried off.

Mason and other cops jump out of their cars... draw their thirty-eights and twelve-gauges. Among them's an LAPD CAPTAIN, early 40's, prefers kissing ass to taking down perps. This is his ticket to making Commander.

LAPD CAPTAIN

(re: news helis)

World's watching, gotta do this clean.

(shouts)

Do not injure occupants! Front tires and engine only! Good shots only!

(beat)

Fire!

INT. AUDI

Through the spray of soap and whirling brushes, Clay and Easton see what's coming.

EASTON

Your boy Pedro armor-up lots of cars?

CLAY

Yeah, sure, you bet.

(beat)

This one.

Easton does the sign of the cross.

EXT. CAR WASH

The boys in blue send a cloud of lead downrange. Bullets drill through the car wash's thick plate-glass.

Mason unloads his Smith & Wesson, a .44 magnum short-barrel. We follow one of the steel-jacketed slugs as it hurls out of the four-inch barrel in a blast of flame and hot smoke... soars over the sidewalk... punches through the glass...

INT. CAR WASH

...smacks into the Audi's left front fender...

...burrows through the thin skin of sheet-metal... and says hello to twelve bonded layers of Kevlar, ending its brief but glorious existence on Layer 3.

EXT. CAR WASH

The car wash's plate-glass takes one too many hits and shatters. Punctured hoses and damaged wash bots spray soap and water out of the wash tunnel, showering the cops.

INT. AUDI

Clay and Easton sweat out the rinse-off stage as bullets steadily hit the car... THUNK... BLING.

CLAY
Come on, come on...

Done at last.

Clay throttles out of the tunnel... only to be stopped by an ATTENDANT directly in his path, listening to MP3's on padded headphones. The guy's oblivious to what's going down. He starts toweling off the Audi.

Easton rolls his window down a crack and sticks out a twenty.

ATTENDANT
(overly loud)
Thanks, dude!

The shiny-clean Audi peels out into an alley... the ANDY'S HANDY CAR WASH sign falls off the decimated wash tunnel. CRASH.

Mason holsters his pistol, frustrated... but maybe just a slice of smile?

INT. CONTROL ROOM

The room's humming. The work's fast, furious, high-pressure... sweat's sliding down brows, pencils get gnawed.

SALES GUY
(hangs up phone)
We're going national. NBC.

INT. TGIF RESTAURANT

SUPER: DES MOINES, IOWA

Middle-management suits do lunch. Someone at the bar notices "Breaking News" on the big screen.

On the TV, the Audi screeches away from the car wash.

INT. WASHINGTON, D.C.

SUPER: CONGRESSIONAL CAFETERIA

Staffers and lobbyists take in the action in the dining hall.

The footage cuts to the Audi's rearward-facing cameras, showing the rapidly-receding figures of a bunch of humiliated policemen.

INT. CONTROL ROOM

Nika's doing a walk-around, rallying the troops with a close whisper in an ear or a lingering hand on a shoulder. Since the troops are mostly twenty-somethings who date their Nintendo DS's, the effect's a lot like mainlining crank.

She goes over to the Broadcast Tech, whispers...

NIKA

Do it.

The tech glances at Dylan. Not looking this way. He flicks two switches on the "CAR CAMERAS" control board.

EXT. CITY STREET

The chase is back on. Behind the Audi's a rolling buffet of law enforcement: LAPD, Sheriff's Department, CHP, a couple of motorcycles... maybe two dozen vehicles in total.

The sky above's just as crowded with police and news 'copters.

INT. AUDI

Easton's reading the map, giving directions...

EASTON

Left on Wilshire. Lots of lanes.

On the gas gauge, a quarter tank's already been burned.

The guys don't see LEDs pop green on two inside lipstick cams.

INT. MASON'S LAPD CRUISER

Mason peels off from the pack, heads down a side street...

EXT. CITY STREET

The Audi moves with the grace of a mountain goat as Clay takes it over a median, through oncoming traffic, onto a sidewalk.... nimbly avoiding pretty much everything.

Not so with the pursuing officers. It's carmageddon. The Audi's moving too fast, the two-day LAPD vehicular pursuit training course too inadequate... there goes a newspaper box... a hot-dog cart... a five-car pile-up...

EXT. CAMERA TOWER

...and a camera tower at a photo-enforced intersection as a Highway Patrol cruiser smashes into it. The camera falls onto the car's hood... putting the dazed and disgraced officer smack in the middle of the cam's cross hairs. Smile. Click/Flash.

INT. MASON'S LAPD CRUISER

Mason's pushing the Caprice something fierce.

DISPATCH

(over radio)

...heading east on Wilshire at
Fountain...

He hangs a sharp right... hits Wilshire... and screeches to a halt outside the Peterson Automotive Museum, next to a couple of LAPD cruisers with flashing lightbars.

Cops are poised to toss Stinger spike strips across the road.

Mason jumps out of his car...

MASON

Get your cars off this street! You're
mailing him a damn invitation!

INT. CHOP SHOP

Lots of joy in this room. Tequila toasts all 'round.

Something on the TV catches Sheet-Metal Man's eye.

SHEET-METAL MAN

Hold up, hold up! Look!

NBC's interior feed suddenly shows Clay and Easton's faces.

PEDRO

That ain't right.

INT. CONTROL ROOM

DYLAN
What the hell!? What the fu--

Dylan steps towards the control board, Nika gets in his way.

NIKA
This needed to be taken up a notch.

DYLAN
Who the hell are you telling me what
needs to be done?!

Nika stays put. Something in her changes. Dylan thought he was the alpha-male in the room. He was very, very wrong.

NIKA
It's done. Relax.

DYLAN
They can find him now, get him to talk!

NIKA
Coffee?

DYLAN
What?

NIKA
Cream, two sugars, right?

She leaves. Dylan watches her go, thinks maybe for the first time: *who the hell is this woman?*

EXT. ROAD OUTSIDE PRESCHOOL

Recess at the Creative Montessori Preschool. Ashley runs around with other kids in the play yard.

The grey Dodge delivery van pulls up near the fence.

INT. DODGE CARGO VAN

The DRIVER looks at the same photograph of Ashley.

INT. OFFICE

Crowd's still around the TV, but Susan's back in her cube. Out of her earshot...

NBC REPORTER

(on TV)

The driver has been identified as Clay Reynolds, a former world rally car champion who disappeared from...

INT. AUDI

Easton notices the news-scroll in his picture-in-picture...

EASTON

Oh hell no! "Driver identified as rally car champion Clay Reynolds."

Easton puts NBC News on full-screen. Bam: their two mugs.

CLAY

Bust the cams!

Easton gives the nearest lipstick camera a whack, but it's behind thick plexiglas.

EASTON

That TV guy set us up.

CLAY

Doesn't make sense. He knows he's going under a microscope 'cause of this. He shouldn't want us ID'd.

Easton flips through TV channels... the pursuit's on every one.

EASTON

You make a damn good story. A good story makes Superbowl ratings.

Clay thinks about this. Then dials 411 on his cell.

CLAY

(into phone)

Los Angeles. Quantel Insurance.

INT. OFFICE

Susan's phone rings.

SUSAN

Hello?

INT. AUDI - INTERCUT

CLAY

It's Clay.

Through the line she hears the bawl of the Audi's engine.

SUSAN
Where're you calling from?

CLAY
The chase.

Susan's eyes go wide and go to the TV.

SUSAN
(dawns on her)
This is where you got that money.

CLAY
I need you to know, this doesn't change anything. Use the money. Take care of yourself, take care of Ashley.

SUSAN
Damn you Clay, I didn't ask for this!

CLAY
You didn't want Ashley to get sick, but she did.

SUSAN
So you're helping your daughter by finding another way to kill yourself?

She hangs up. The channel's changed to NBC... she sees Clay.

INT. AUDI

Clay's driving but seems a million miles away.

Until he spots a COP duck back into a bus stop gazebo. The Audi's brakes clamp down hard, the car decelerates big-time...

INT. BUS STOP

The cop tosses the spike-strip...

EXT. STREET

...the Audi's still slowing down...

...the Stinger's accordion-like frame unfolds and skitters out across the black-top, three-inch spikes glistening...

...and the Audi stops maybe an inch from the strip.

Mason jumps out from a Citibank doorway and charges through moving traffic, his .44 magnum leading the way...

INT. AUDI

Easton takes in a 360 of the scene.

CLAY
Tires handle this?

EASTON
Maybe. Got a better idea.

He points to the Peterson Museum's entrance.

EASTON
They're running a kustoms classic
exhibit. Saw Hirohata's '51 Mercury...
There ain't nothing finer than her.

Clay shifts into reverse just as Mason gets in front of the Audi.

Clay's eyes meet Mason's...

EXT. AUDI

Mason can't see through the window tint, aims for a head-shot...

INT. AUDI

...But he doesn't pull the trigger. Clay whips the car around.

EXT. AUDI

Mason re-aims his gun and unloads the clip on the Audi's tires.
The slugs smack uselessly against the Aramid-jacketed rubber.

INT. AUDI

Clay glances back at Mason... two fingers making a "V," Mason
points to his own eyes, then points at Clay. *I see you and I'm
taking you down.*

Clay speed-dials his cell.

EXT. STREET

Mason runs to his Caprice, gets in and guns it.

As he peels out, the rest of the law enforcement convoy arrives.
The LAPD Captain jumps out of his cruiser.

LAPD CAPTAIN
(to cops re: museum)
Block the exits!

EXT. PETERSON AUTOMOTIVE MUSEUM

At the top of the stairs, Clay slows the Audi and gently nudges open the double-doored entrance... and gets Dylan on the phone.

CLAY
What the hell Dylan?!

INT. CONTROL ROOM - INTERCUT

DYLAN
I didn't do this. Your face on TV does me no good.

Clay drives into the building, stops in the lobby.

CLAY
You burned me! We're done here.

DYLAN
We're long from done. I'm your only way outta this. I'll yank your exit.

CLAY
I can dig my own way out.

DYLAN
You're giving me 'nother couple of hours, or that money's not coming out of escrow.

INT. AUDI - END INTERCUT

Clay's pissed as hell, rips off his headset.

CLAY
Let's keep rolling.

EASTON
(points)
Into exhibits.

EXT. MUSEUM

The LAPD Captain watches Mason's Caprice having a tough time with the stairs, lurching one step at a time with lots of rear-wheel rubber burning.

The Cap's peeved... he reaches for his radio.

EXT. 118 FREEWAY VAN - SAME

The high-security transport rolls west on the 118.

Suddenly a line of CHP cruisers blows past the caravan, flashing lightbars, shrieking sirens... on their way to join the pursuit.

INT. SWAT MOBILE COMMAND CENTER

Pierce and Valez watch Mason's car disappear into the Peterson.

OFFICER VALEZ

Car chase in a car museum. Nice.

Pierce isn't as amused.

INT. MUSEUM, HALLWAY/EXHIBIT HALL 1

The Audi drives under a banner which reads "Kustom with a K"... and rolls into the main exhibit hall.

'45 through '55 custom Fords and Chevys line the walls. In the center of the hall, a full-size old-school Texaco gas station has been re-created with genuine antiques. Parked by one of the pumps is a sexy chopped-top '51 Mercury.

INT. MASON'S LAPD CRUISER

Mason drives into the lobby. His radio crackles.

LAPD CAPTAIN

Dammit Danner, what the hell are you doing? Stand. Down.

INT. MUSEUM, EXHIBIT HALL 1

There are three ways out of the gallery, but Easton's mum on directions. Clay hits the brakes.

CLAY

Hello?

Easton's eyes are glued to the Mercury. He's in love.

EASTON

Bob Hirohata's nineteen-fifty-one Mercury, customized by George Barris in fifty-two. If I were a rich man, I'd make her my wife.

CLAY

Little help?

Easton snaps out of it.

EASTON

Sorry.
 (beat)
 Middle hall.

INT. CONTROL ROOM

Dylan watches the action in the museum. The Sales Guy walks up.

SALES GUY

Just got off the horn with Nielsen.

DYLAN

Yeah?

SALES GUY

Sixty percent of every American television was tuned into the final episode of M*A*S*H.

DYLAN

Skip the trivia.

SALES GUY

We're at thirty percent.

DYLAN

What? Just thirty?

ROB

In JAPAN! Stateside, we're looking at seventy-four points! We were at fifty-two, but then the ex-rally-car-champ-sob-story stuff came out and we jumped to seventy plus in like fifteen minutes. That's like a hundred-and-sixty million TVs!

EXT. SUSAN'S CAR

Susan heads down Pico in her Reagan-era VW Golf, eyes distant.

INT. MUSEUM, HALLWAY 1

The Audi roars down a hallway... followed by Mason's Caprice... past visitors who paste themselves against the walls...

INT. MUSEUM, EXHIBIT HALL 2

The chase lands in the Hollywood Stars Cars gallery. A roped-off walk-way snakes through dozens of priceless Duesenbergs and Packard Phaetons.

Clay guides the Audi down the narrow winding path... Mason follows but is much slower...

INT. CONTROL ROOM

Nika hands Dylan a a coffee...

DYLAN

You knew it'd go down this way.

NIKA

Put a face on the bad guy, takes it to a whole new level.

Dylan looks at all the TVs showing his masterpiece... his anxiety over what Nika's done fades...

INT. MUSEUM, HALLWAY 2

Clay and Easton zip down another hallway, Mason's still making his way through the last gallery...

The Audi slows at another double-door, pushes it open, and drives out onto a loading dock.

The din of overhead 'copters replaces the quiet of the museum.

INT./EXT. LOADING DOCK

Just as the Audi gets there, four COPS finish unhooking the steel ramp that runs from the alley up to the eight-foot-high loading dock. The ramp lands on the pavement with a thud. The Audi screeches to a halt.

INT. AUDI

Clay and Easton digest the situation. No ramp... two LAPD cruisers parked in the alley maybe fifteen feet away... an office building's concrete wall behind the cruisers... and four cops looking up at them with guns drawn...

EASTON

We go slow, the front drops. We go fast, we hit that wall.

CLAY

Back in we go.

Clay shifts into reverse. The cops open fire.

Mason's Caprice rams the Audi from behind!

INT./EXT. LOADING DOCK

Mason's got the pedal to the metal. The Caprice's rear tires smoke as they push forward... the Audi's four tires burn rubber as they push back. No one's going anywhere fast.

INT. AUDI

Clay looks back at Mason and waves.

CLAY

Got an idea.

His left foot goes hard on the brakes, his right foot goes off the gas, he snaps the tranny into neutral...

He releases the brakes, rips the steering wheel hard left.

INT./EXT. LOADING DOCK

Meeting no more resistance, the roaring Chevy lurches forward, shoving the Audi...

But with the Audi's wheels turned hard left, the Audi goes left... and quickly gets pushed completely out of the way...

...and before Mason knows what's happening, his Chevy goes over the edge.

The space between the loading dock and the parked LAPD cruisers is fifteen feet. The overall length of a 2002 Chevrolet Caprice (Police Package) is eighteen feet seven inches.

The front of the Caprice smashes down onto the pavement, slides forward, and comes to a rest against the side of an LAPD car.

Which doesn't give the REAR of the Caprice enough room to fall completely. The car ends up wedged at an angle.

Voilà. A ramp.

INT. AUDI

CLAY

Guy inside will be okay?

EASTON

If he ducks.

Clay drives the Audi off the loading dock...

...onto the Caprice, which is a tad wider than the Audi...

...drives down the Caprice...

INT. CAPRICE

The Chevy's roof starts caving in. Mason does duck.

EXT. ALLEYWAY

...the Audi rolls down onto the hood of the LAPD cruiser...

...then drops down onto the pavement, first onto the front push bars, then onto the undercarriage skid pads, then onto the front tires, then onto the back tires...

...and zooms away.

A ROOKIE COP, skinny with a Southern twang, helps Mason crawl out of his wreck. Mason heads over to the Rookie's cruiser.

MASON

You carrying any autos?

ROOKIE COP

Yeah, I got... somethin'.

MASON

Get it, let's go.

Mason gets behind the wheel of the car and pops the trunk. The Rookie grabs a Heckler & Koch assault rifle and a belt of clips... and jumps into the passenger seat.

Mason screeches off after Clay.

EXT. ALLEYWAY

The Captain and a BEAT COP round the corner on foot just as Mason zips by.

LAPD CAPTAIN

Dammit to hell.

(to Beat Cop)

'Nough of this pussy-footing bullshit.
Where the hell's SWAT?

BEAT COP

They're babysitting some weather
satellite transport out in Van Nuys.

LAPD CAPTAIN
Call San Diego, get their SWAT air unit
up here, now.

INT. MASON'S LAPD CRUISER

Rookie nervously fastens his seat belt, tip-toeing around the MP-5 rifle on his lap.

ROOKIE COP
Uh, sir, I think you oughta know...
this is my first day.

MASON
(re: rifle)
Safety on that thing?

ROOKIE COP
I... think so.

INT. SUSAN'S GOLF

The A.M. preschool session's done, cars pick kiddies up curbside.

Ashley's in the back seat. Susan pulls out onto the street.

The grey Dodge delivery van pulls out of a side-street and merges into traffic in front of the Golf.

Susan forces herself out of her thoughts...

SUSAN
Fun day, Ashley Bashley Bear?

ASHLEY
We did fishing! I put a mag-net on a
string and then I got a stick that was
really straight and--

BAM! The Dodge jams on its brakes, Susan screeches into it.

SUSAN
Ash, you okay?

Through the Ford's windshield, we see two FIGURES climb out of the van and head towards the car.

Susan's eyes go wide.

INT. CONTROL ROOM

Nika's cell chirps. Another text. Good news.

EXT. CITY STREET

Clay turns back onto Wilshire, choppers following him.

INT. SWAT MOBILE COMMAND CENTER

Pierce looks at the screens... police roadblocks are getting thrown up everywhere... bumper-to-bumper jams are building up around the city... spectator crowds swarm bridges, streets, any place where they might catch a glimpse of the action.

CMDR PIERCE

That does it. I'm pulling the plug.

INT. CHRYSLER 300 - INTERCUT

The Fed answers a secure sat-phone.

CMDR PIERCE

We're advising immediate mission termination.

TREASURY AGENT

That's a negative, Commander.

CMDR PIERCE

This pursuit's pushing our visibility's down to zero, we need to end transpo--

TREASURY AGENT

The launch window is narrow. Treasury deems a delay not acceptable.

CMDR PIERCE

Your delay's gonna be permanent if this thing goes south on us.

TREASURY AGENT

There is no threat. Your team is under Federal control. I have my orders, you have yours.

INT. MASON'S LAPD CRUISER

Mason listens to movement reports from the LAPD chopper...

LAPD CHOPPER

(over radio)

Suspect heading east on Wilshire...

ROOKIE COP

He's gettin' on the one-ten at Wilshire. We can grab 'em there.

That's just a little too walk-in-the-park for Mason.

MASON

That's what he wants us to think. He's getting on the freeway all right, but not on Wilshire.

(into radio)

Suspect heading to one-ten at Wilshire. Cordon three-ways at Bixel and Wilshire, lock it down tight.

ROOKIE COP

I thought you said--

MASON

The guy's gotta be listening in on our chatter. Let him think we're falling for it.

Mason pulls out his cell phone and dials.

MASON

(into cell)

Get me fire station seventy-four.

INT. AUDI

Easton scans police frequencies, listening in...

EASTON

They're setting up a roadblock at Bixel and Wilshire. How we doing on go juice?

The needle's saluting the 1/2 mark.

CLAY

Half a tank. She's a thirsty one.

EXT. BIXEL AND WILSHIRE

At the four-way intersection, police set up a three-way building-to-building roadblock, two cruisers deep.

EXT. BIXEL AND 6TH

Here, another three-way roadblock goes up... but instead of cop cars, it's fire trucks.

INT. AUDI

Clay and Easton are a couple blocks from Bixel and Wilshire. They see the Captain's roadblock ahead. As expected.

EASTON
Left here, then onto 6th.

EXT. BIXEL AND 6TH

The Audi roars down 6th Avenue and surges into the intersection with Bixel...

...and half a block ahead, two twenty-two-foot fire trucks roar out of alleys and block the road.

Clay yanks the wheel and the Audi burns a left onto Bixel...

...but half a block ahead there's another wall of fire trucks, including an weird-looking chemical fire unit...

Clay rips a u-turn but Bixel's blocked in the other direction, too. He hits the brakes.

INT. BIXEL AND 6TH

On the chemical-fire engine, a turret swivels, aiming its nozzle at the rear of the Audi.

The Audi stops smack in the middle of the intersection, just as Mason and his crew plug any exit to the south.

INT. MASON'S LAPD CRUISER

MASON
Gotcha.

INT. CHOP SHOP

'Nother edge-of-your-seat moment. The gang watches the ambush.

EXT. TOKYO

SUPER: DOWNTOWN TOKYO

Early morning rush hour, but no one's rushing: a huge crowd's gathered under a giant outdoor Fujitsu jumbo-tron, totally riveted to the stand-off in L.A.

EXT. BIXEL AND 6TH

The officers are out of their cars, pointing a whole lot of weaponry at the Audi.

MASON
 (into bullhorn)
 Driver! Exit the vehicle, slowly!

Just then a group of COMMUTERS pours out of an open-air MTA light rail station, right into the middle of the action.

MASON
 (to some cops)
 Get them out of here!

INT. AUDI

It's not looking good. There's no way out, and Clay knows it.

CLAY
 They knew we were listening, they set us up.

EASTON
 We can try going through the bus--
 Easton's cut short by a hard left jab to his jaw.

EASTON
 What the?!

CLAY
 Just making it look good. Get out.
 They wrestle.

EASTON
 I ain't going nowhere!

CLAY
 I made you do it. Threatened Marcy.

Clay's got a hand around Easton's neck, squeezing just enough to make it look real.

EXT. BIXEL AND 6TH

The fake fight rocks the Audi.

MASON
 What the hell they doing?

The Rookie points to a store window where a TV shows the brawl.

ROOKIE COP
 Dukin' it out.

INT. CONTROL ROOM

Dylan watches Clay and Easton's "fight" on CBS...

DETECTIVE (O.S.)
Dylan Fowles?

An LAPD DETECTIVE (40's) flashes his badge.

Dylan glances at Nika.

DYLAN
What can I do you for?

DETECTIVE
All this is real convenient, guy steals
your camera car, this...
(re: control room)
...materializes in less then a day.
And now this guy happens to be some
world-class driver? That's a lot of
coincidences.

DYLAN
Look, I'm a piece of shit scumbag for
making money off a guy tearing up your
streets, but that's all I am... no way
I could've staged something this good.

EXT. BIXEL AND 6TH

MASON
(on cell)
Hit 'em with the foam.

On the chem-fire truck, the nozzle sends a stream of fire-suppressant foam at the Audi.

EXT. AUDI

The white lather builds up quickly around the car. A stray patch of foam floats near the hood-scoop air-intake and gets sucked in. Not a helpful ingredient for internal combustion.

INT. AUDI

The idling engine coughs, sputters... finds its feet again.

EASTON
You think I'm some stupid dog, chasing
your ball? I knew what I was saying
yes to. Knew it maybe more than you.

Wham! Easton's turn to land a punch on Clay's chin.

EASTON

In this seat, I'm livin'. What do I
got out there?

Outside, the pile of foam's grown past the wheel wells and is
seconds away from covering the hood and choking the engine.

EASTON

'Nough of this. What dragged your
lumberjack ass out of that cabin?

Clay's eyes go to the pics on the dash.

EASTON

So you going to do this or what?

Clay rolls it around in his head. Go or no?

CLAY

Okay.

(beat)

Where?

They look around. Clay spots the cops herding the commuters
away from the rail entrance.

CLAY

There.

Easton eye-balls the entrance. Stairs and escalators go down to
the train platform.

EASTON

Stairs aren't wide enough.

CLAY

The escalator.

We're back in Easton's head, seeing the rail entrance through
his eyes:

*Width and height of escalator. Dimensions of other city street
flora: newspaper box, parking meter, bench.*

EASTON

Yeah. The bench.

CLAY

Sorry 'bout your jaw.

EASTON

Hell, hurt myself more shaving.

EXT. BIXEL AND 6TH

The half-buried Audi's engine roars as its tires struggle to find traction underneath all the fire-suppressing goop. Wheels spinning, the car makes its way out of the mound of foam, its tailpipes blast a cloud of the white stuff into the air.

MASON

(re: Rookie's rifle)

Light him up.

ROOKIE COP

I don't got my assault cert.

MASON

Do it.

The Rookie raises the MP-5. Mason rolls his eyes and reaches over to flick off the safety. Rookie opens up at full auto.

His aim sucks, but even a blind man can do damage at 600 rounds per minute. Slugs slam into the Audi as it whips by the bench and rips a one-eighty.

INT. AUDI

The THUNK PING WHAP of bullets. Clay throttles the Audi into the bench... rips the piece of solid resin off its anchor bolts... then drives across the intersection, pushing the bench.

EXT. BIXEL AND 6TH

The Rookie empties the clip. The Audi's not hurt.

MASON

Nine mil's not enough. We need armor
piercing.

Rookie lowers the rifle, feeling Rambo-ish.

Clay jams the bench up against the escalator. Easton dials max height into the shocks.

Clay punches the gas. All four tires scream, asphalt and rubber burn, smoke pours from the wheel-wells...

ROOKIE COP

Butter my butt and call me a biscuit.

The Audi's front tires claw up the curved surfaces of the bench 'til they find air. The rear tires push the car higher. Extreme four-wheelin', city-slicker style.

EXT. RAIL ENTRANCE

The Audi hits the tipping point and the front drops. The undercarriage lands neatly onto the escalator railing. The wheels spin freely on the railing's outside edges...

...And, quite anti-climatically, the escalator's moving handrail carries the car down to the train platform. Patches of fire suppressant slide off the sheet metal.

EXT. BIXEL AND 6TH

No one's doing nothing but gawking as the Audi's ass disappears. Mason snaps out of it.

MASON

We need to get to the other end of that line!

EXT. RAIL ENTRANCE

The escalator calmly carries the Audi down.

Clay and Easton look around, surprised that this worked.

The Audi glides past astounded COMMUTERS. A CHINESE TOURIST takes a picture for the folks back home.

EXT. BIXEL AND WILSHIRE

At the useless Bixel and Wilshire roadblock, the LAPD Cap and the Beat Cop hear about the Great Escalator Escape...

DISPATCH

(over radio)

...attempt intercept at Burbank MTS station...

LAPD CAPTAIN

Sonofabitch. Let's go.

EXT. VAN NUYS AIRPORT, TARMAC - SAME

The JPL caravan rolls in. A dozen SWAT guys jump out of the transport, secure a perimeter. The Fed gets on his sat phone.

JPL TECHS climb out of the van, including Nika's inside man. He presses a button on his cell, pockets it.

INT. SWAT MOBILE COMMAND CENTER

Pierce and Valez watch the Audi slip into the subway.

OFFICER VALEZ

That line runs to Burbank.

CMDR PIERCE

This pursuit's officially coming to our hood.

(beat)

Who's the lead?

Valez checks the running LAPD sit-rep...

OFFICER VALEZ

Danner. Mason Danner.

CMDR PIERCE

(surprised)

Danner. Good. Patch me through.

INT. CONTROL ROOM, HALLWAY

Dylan and Nika show the detective out...

DETECTIVE

Don't leave town.

DYLAN

What, and miss the show?

The detective leaves. Dylan's façade falls apart.

DYLAN

You screwed us real nice. How's Clay gonna disappear now? They're going to find him, he's gonna talk, you and me, we're doing time.

NIKA

Clay won't be a problem.

Dylan looks at her... realizes...

DYLAN

That wasn't part of the deal. I'm pulling the plug, you psycho bitch.

She puts a finger to his lips.

NIKA

Shhh...

She brings her lips to his. He looks into her eyes... finally sees who she is. Too late.

THWIP!

He looks down. A silenced Glock's jammed into his ribs.

He falls. Nika takes a beat, watches him die.

INT. TRAIN PLATFORM

The escalator drops the Audi off at the bottom. The push bars and skid plates take the brunt of the three-foot fall.

Clay drives onto the platform... so slowly that waiting passengers are mostly just amused.

INT. AUDI

Now what? Through a padlocked gate, Easton spots a maintenance ramp that goes to the tracks below.

EASTON

That ramp.

INT. TRAIN TRACKS

The Audi pushes through the gate, goes down the ramp, onto the tracks...

INT. AUDI

...The car cruises down the tracks, not real fast: speed-bump-like cross-beams make for a rough ride.

Clay's got a tight grip on the wheel, makes lots of corrections as the Audi's bounced around.

EASTON

They get set up on the other end before we get there, it's game over.

CLAY

We're making good time.

That's when something shows up behind them, a creature native to these climes. A train.

INT. MTA TRAIN

The train's OPERATOR is oblivious... too busy reading VARIETY.

On his console, a display reads "AUTO NAV, PROGRAM EXPRESS 2A."

INT. AUDI

Clay speeds up. The car's tremors turn into violent jolts, the steering wheel kicks hard in Clay's hands.

EASTON

A little faster would be good.

The train's still gaining. In the distance, a platform.

EASTON

It ain't slowing. Must be the express!

It's like the car's in an 10.0 quake, lurching fiercely in every direction. Clay's barely in control.

That same maintenance ramp comes into view, but the train's almost on top them...

INT. RAIL STATION

On the platform, a MOM tries to comfort her screaming BABY.

The Audi charges into the station, the train inches from the rear bumper...

And at the very last possible moment, as the train actually connects with the Audi's rear push bar, Clay turns...

...the Audi jumps the tracks, hits the ramp, crashes through the gate...

...and screeches to a halt. A foot from the mom.

The mom's stunned. The baby? Delighted. It reaches out to the car...

BABY

Auu-dii.

INT. AUDI

Clay and Easton grab a couple of deep breaths, look around... this station's at street level, no more acrobatics needed.

INT. MASON'S LAPD CRUISER

Mason winds his way through traffic, Rookie hands him the radio.

MASON

Danner.

INT. SWAT MOBILE COMMAND CENTER - INTERCUT

CMDR PIERCE
Danner, it's Pierce.

MASON
(surprised)
Commander.

CMDR PIERCE
I'm on a high-value transport just arrived at the Van Nuys airport. Your pursuit's now in my neck of the woods. I'm hoping that's just a coincidence.

MASON
I'm gonna try to have a chat with him when he comes up for air.

CMDR PIERCE
You do that, you keep me looped-in.

CMDR MASON
Copy that.

CMDR PIERCE
Danner.

MASON
Yeah?

Beat.

CMDR PIERCE
In my book, it was a clean shot. You made the right call.

INT. CONTROL ROOM

Nika walks back into the control room. On the TVs, the Audi emerges from the station.

INT. AUDI

Clay and Easton hurtle up a freeway ramp onto the 101... right in front of Mason's team. The chase is back on.

INT. CONTROL ROOM

Nika talks to the room.

NIKA
Dylan and I are heading out. Whatever happens, keep the show running.
(MORE)

NIKA (cont'd)
This stuff's gold, but it's the ending
that's going to make us rich.

SALES GUY
Ending?

She's already gone.

EXT. FERRARI

Nika heads towards Dylan's Ferrari, dials her cell.

INT. DODGE CARGO VAN - INTERCUT

The DRIVER answers his cell. He and the PASSENGER are Russian,
40's. Look like guys you hire to run guns out of Kazakhstan.

DRIVER
(yes)
Da.

Nika fires up the Spyder's eight cylinders.

NIKA
You ready?

DRIVER
(it's all good)
Vsë nishtják.

Nika looks at her watch.

NIKA
Send me the pic. I'm making the call.

She hangs up, grabs a disposable cell, dials.

INT. DODGE CARGO VAN

The passenger turns to the van's cargo hold, uses his phone to
snap a pic of...

Ashley and Susan. Hands and feet zip-tied, lying on the floor.
Someone else is back there... several people, sitting in the
shadows.

INT. LAPD CAPTAIN'S CRUISER

The Beat Cop hands the LAPD Captain a two-way.

BEAT COP
A Jane Doe. Asked to talk to the lead
on the pursuit.

INT. FERRARI - INTERCUT

NIKA
(into cell)
They're heading to Van Nuys airport.

LAPD CAPTAIN
Who is this?

NIKA
They're handing the car off to a kid in
Hangar 14, Reynolds is going to
disappear in a donut truck.

LAPD CAPTAIN
Donut? How do you--

She hangs up. The Cap looks at the dead radio. Thinks. Then:

LAPD CAPTAIN
SWAT still at Van Nuys running that sat
transport?

BEAT COP
That's right.

The captain smiles. First pearly whites of the day. He pulls
out his standard-issue push-to-talk cell phone.

LAPD CAPTAIN
Patch me through to Commander Pierce.
Not his radio, his phone.

EXT. FREEWAY

The Audi twists through heavy traffic, trailing an angry parade
of LAPD, CHP, and Sheriff's Department cars and motorcycles.
News and police helis choke the sky above.

INT. LAPD CAPTAIN'S CRUISER

The captain's on his cell...

LAPD CAPTAIN
Check out the hanger, get back to me.

EXT. VAN NUYS AIRPORT, AT SATELLITE TRANSPORT

CMDR PIERCE
(into cell)
Copy that.

One panel on the truck's container has been removed. Inside?
The communication satellite.

INT. MASON'S LAPD CRUISER

Mason's on the police CB...

MASON

Clay, I know you're listening. Let's have a chat, make a deal.

INT. AUDI

Easton picks up Mason's chatter.

EASTON

Call for you, from the guy behind us.

CLAY

Sure, what the hell.

Easton unplugs Clay's headset from his cell phone and plugs it into the police radio...

INT. MASON'S LAPD CRUISER - INTERCUT

MASON

You and I know where this is going. Pull over. Let's do it clean and easy before someone gets killed.

CLAY

Give me some breathing room. I'll be outta your hair real soon.

MASON

You ride off into the sunset, there's LAPD brass that're gonna have severe career advancement issues. These guys are biting down on you like bulldogs.

CLAY

Sorry. I gotta finish this.

MASON

What's this about, some crazy-ass stunt to get you back in the racing game?

CLAY

I'm making things right.

MASON

You got a funny notion of what's right. I AM taking you down. Your choice how.

CLAY

Do what you gotta do.

INT. VAN NUYS AIRPORT, INSIDE ESCAPE HANGAR

A COLLEGE KID waits inside the dark hangar, passes time with FINAL FANTASY IV on his PSP.

Suddenly flashlights stab the darkness, Officer Valez and two other SWAT guys come down hard on the poor kid.

INT. VAN NUYS AIRPORT, AT SATELLITE TRANSPORT - MOMENTS LATER

A crane lowers the satellite onto the tarmac.

CMDR PIERCE

(into cell)

We got the kid. Donut truck's there too, just like you said.

INT. LAPD CAPTAIN'S CRUISER - INTERCUT

LAPD CAPTAIN

(into cell)

Ring the area tight with heavy caliber, everyone stays off-visual, we nail the bastard when he's outta the car.

CMDR PIERCE

Negative, for that kinda coverage I'd need to pull most my guys off the sat.

LAPD CAPTAIN

Hell with the satellite, Pierce! The whole damn planet's watchin' this guy make us look like morons. You take him down or the Chief will kick ya to traffic duty before the day's done.

The Cap hangs up. Pierce looks at his dead phone, pissed.

INT. AUDI

The needle on the gas gauge kisses the 1/4 mark.

Easton spots something on his traffic map.

EASTON

Hold up. We got a *grande* problem.

EXT. FREEWAY

About a mile ahead, an accident between an RV and a Lexus have blocked all lanes. Cars stack up twenty-deep.

Clay and Easton are heading straight towards the traffic jam.

Behind the Audi, a roaring mass of law enforcement bears down.

INT. AUDI

EASTON

No exits between here and there.

How about the median? Five feet of concrete. No go.

CLAY

Hang on.

He hits the brakes. Hard.

EXT. AUDI

Inside the front wheel, six hydraulic calipers bite down hard onto cross-drilled vented discs that spin at five-thousand rotations per minute. The discs glow orange as raging momentum's converted into blistering heat.

EXT. FREEWAY BRIDGE

The Audi decelerates so fast that most of the pursuing law zooms right past before the drivers can react.

Cops smoke their tires, some lose control, crash into others...

INT. AUDI

EASTON

TOP GUN?

CLAY

Rule Number Four: What would Maverick do?

Clay throws the car into reverse and pulls away from the growing mountain of crunched cars, driving backwards through the still forward-moving traffic behind him.

Up ahead, a motorcycle cop locks a tire and goes down. Unconscious, he slides a few feet before coming to a stop. He'll wake up to a road rash and a headache.

INT. DUMP TRUCK

Inside the cockpit of a massive dump truck, the DRIVER spots the pile-up ahead. He slams on the brakes.

EXT. DUMP TRUCK

The Mack truck's pulling two open containers of house demolition debris... its wheels lock, the rig jackknifes at the tow connector, and it goes down onto its side...

INT. AUDI

Clay's still backing up when he sees the truck on its side, skidding towards them. He pulls the wheel, gets out of the way.

EASTON

The cop!

Up ahead, the downed motorcycle cop lies directly in the way of the oncoming thirty tons of out-of-control truck.

Clay shifts into first just as the truck screeches past.

EXT. FREEWAY

Easton rolls down his window and climbs half-way out. Clay cuts across the freeway, behind the path of the truck. Debris spills out of the containers...

...the Audi swerves to avoid a toilet...

...dirt and gravel pelt Easton...

...a section of brick wall narrowly misses the Audi...

...The Audi squeaks by a tumbling water heater. Easton ducks...

Finally, the Audi makes it across the freeway and pulls alongside the still-sliding truck.

EXT. MASON'S LAPD CRUISER

Mason's out of his wrecked car... he and others watch on, helpless.

INT. AUDI

The Audi and the dump truck are neck-and-neck... the cop's moments away from getting smeared across the blacktop.

EASTON

Ain't gonna make it!

Clay hits the NOS button on his steering wheel.

Inside the trunk, a valve clicks open on a Nitrous Oxide bottle.

On the dash, the NOS BOOST gauge jumps from 0 to 20 PSI.
The tach redlines.

EXT. AUDI

The Audi's wheels actually chirp as the huge injection of power causes wheel-spin at speed.

The Audi catapults ahead of the truck... Clay cuts across, straight towards the fallen cop...

...Easton reaches down, stretches as far as he can...

...Clay nails the brakes, slows the Audi to a jog. Easton catches the cop's tactical belt...

...and drags the officer across the blacktop to safety! The truck scraps the Audi's rear bumper as it slides past.

EXT. MASON'S LAPD CRUISER

Mason watches as Clay and Easton drop the cop off...

...as the Mack truck skids to a stop ten feet away.

Mason watches the Audi speed off. The look on his face? Something's not adding up here.

INT. CONTROL ROOM

Sales Guy hangs up the phone.

SALES GUY
We got a million from CNN!

INT. AUDI

Clay exits the freeway, pulls onto Ventura Boulevard.

CLAY
We almost got that guy killed.

He looks at Easton. A beat. The know what they need to do.

EASTON
Was a good run, wasn't it?

CLAY
They'll be teaching it in race school.

He hits redial on his phone.

INT. FERRARI - INTERCUT

Nika answers Dylan's cell.

NIKA
Clay. Was wondering when you'd call.

CLAY
Give me Dylan.

NIKA
Sorry, stuck with me.

CLAY
Saw what's waiting for us at Van Nuys.
We're done. I'm ending this now.

NIKA
You be at the airport in...

She looks at her watch...

NIKA
...forty-five minutes, they'll be
there. Not a minute early, not a
minute late.

Nika hangs up, grabs her own cell phone, hits "SEND."

INT. AUDI

Clay looks at his cell. Call disconnected. What the hell was that? Then: BEEP BEEP BEEP. New text message.

The pic of Ashley and Susan, gagged on the floor of the van. On the pic's edges, we can see the other passengers' boots.

EASTON
(glances over)
Holy God, Clay.

CLAY
What have I done?

He looks at his family, stunned, his world collapsing...

EASTON
Clay!

Clay's a few feet from an Escalade stopped on Ventura waiting to make a left. He yanks the wheel, misses the Caddy by inches.

EASTON
Pull it together. What's our move?

Clay tries to push the picture out of his mind, fights for focus. He plows through heavy traffic, not grabbing enough speed to lose Mason. A long beat. Then:

CLAY

We get my girls. We get payback.

Easton points to the gas gauge.

EASTON

Your payback work on an eighth of a tank?

CLAY

Maybe. There covered parking near the airport?

Easton fires up Google Earth on his computer.

EASTON

Yeah. Old mall waiting for tear-down.
Roscoe Boulevard and Woodley.

Clay dials his cell...

INT. CHOP SHOP

...and Pedro answers his.

EXT. VENTURA BOULEVARD

The flock of helicopters above are joined by a new species: a black SWAT unit. A SNIPER's strapped into the gun seat.

INT. CHOP SHOP - MOMENTS LATER

Pedro pockets his cell, a man on a mission. To one of his crew:

PEDRO

Grab all the tint we got, all the nine-millimeter ammo we got.

(to Sheet-Metal Man)

Where'd you get the grill guards?

SHEET-METAL MAN

Stew's.

Pedro pulls out a wad of cash, hands it over.

PEDRO

Let's make Stew happy.

INT. AUDI

CLAY

We gotta burn thirty off the clock.

Easton looks at the map on his computer.

EASTON

The hills.

EXT. VENTURA BOULEVARD/CANYONS

The Audi pulls off Ventura and hits the Malibu Canyons. The car screeches down skinny two-lanes that twist through desert hills.

The line of law enforcement vehicles struggle to keep up as the hairpins smack down lesser drivers.

INT. MASON'S LAPD CRUISER

Rookie's behind the wheel, Mason's shotgun... they're the lead on the pursuit.

INT. LAPD CAPTAIN'S CRUISER

Couple cars back, the LAPD Captain's joined the hunt.

LAPD CAPTAIN

(into radio)

...Chief's designated me point in this pursuit. You listenin', Danner?

The Captain looks up at the SWAT helicopter.

LAPD CAPTAIN

Airborne SWAT unit, you have authorization to use deadly force, consider suspect target of opportunity.

INT. MASON'S LAPD CRUISER

MASON

The Cap would authorize deadly force on a donut break at Krispy Creme.

(beat)

Why you think Clay risked his ass back there to save a cop?

ROOKIE COP

Tryin' to steer clear of a vehicular homicide charge?

MASON

Maybe...

INT. VAN NUYS AIRPORT, AT SATELLITE TRANSPORT

Officer Valez and a handful of SWAT guys climb into the personnel carrier.

The Fed and Pierce watch on.

CMDR PIERCE

Don't like this.

INT. AUDI

EASTON

They got heavy caliber in the air.

Clay power-drifts the Audi around a corner...

CLAY

Road makes us a tough target.

EXT. SWAT HELICOPTER

The sniper eyes the scope of his .50 cal bolt-action.

The Audi weaves in and out of the cross hairs.

The sniper pulls the trigger. THWOOM!

EXT. AUDI

The bullet drills into the roadway next to the right front tire... there's a loud CRACK. The blacktop craters.

INT. AUDI

EASTON

Hear that? That's an H.E. round.

CLAY

H.E.?

EASTON

High explosive.

CLAY

You got any good news for me?

EASTON

He missed.

BAM. Another round comes up short.

Easton checks the gas gauge: it's flirting with the big "E."

EASTON
More good news. If that sniper don't
stop us, a tank full of air sure will.

EXT. SWAT HELICOPTER

The sniper lines up another shot.

Through the scope, the Audi zigs... zags...

He takes the shot. The bullet exits the barrel at three-thousand feet per second.

Inside the slug, past the armor-piercing steel-jacket and zirconium liner, lies a heart of composition B-4 high-explosive.

Third time's the charm. The bullet finds the right front tire and its forged-steel tip digs into the tire's Aramid blanket. By itself, not a problem, but then the comp-b blows.

INT. AUDI

BLAM! The car jerks violently, starts shaking badly... and heads straight for the edge of a cliff!

Clay wrestles back control, but the car's bucking like a bronco.

EXT. AUDI

The tire's still there, but it's fragmenting fast.

INT. SWAT HELICOPTER

The sniper radios it in...

SNIPER
Impact, front passenger tire.

INT. MASON'S LAPD CRUISER

MASON
He better take the hint before he takes
one of those in his chest.

INT. UCLA, LARGE FRATERNITY HOUSE

SUPER: SIGMA PHI EPSILON, UCLA

About fifty FRAT BROTHERS take in the show on a big screen.
The Audi's tire blows. A hush falls on the group.

WASTED BROTHER

Let us pray.

INT. AUDI

Clay fights to keep the Audi on the road.

CLAY

We gotta change it!

EASTON

What?! How?

It dawns on him...

EASTON

Oh no, no, no, no.

CLAY

We can do this. I can do this.

Easton studies his friend. Okay.

A guardrail's ahead; the rail slopes into its ground anchor.
Just a Clay aims the Audi right at the rail...

FLASHBACK MONTAGE

-- Clay pops the Peugeot onto two wheels.

-- Clay and Bill bump fists.

-- The world goes upside down.

-- The photo of Susan falls off the dash.

INT. AUDI

Clay looks at the pics of Susan and Ashley. He brings two fingers to his lips, touches the photos. Always a kiss before pissing in the face of physics.

EXT. CANYON ROAD

The Audi mounts the rail on the inside of the shredding tire...

...and pops up onto the two driver's side wheels!

INT. MASON'S LAPD CRUISER

ROOKIE COP
No... friggin'... way.

INT. SWAT HELICOPTER

SNIPER
No... friggin'... way.

INT. AUDI

Easton's out of his harness, reaches behind his seat.

Clay, meanwhile, is in The Place, doing the thing that God burned only into his DNA, the thing that he does better than anyone else on the planet.

Drive.

Through the eyes and ears of the world's best rally car driver: no shriek of the engine, no cop cars charging from behind, no howl of split air.

Just the sound of oxygen filling his lungs, just the feel of the steering wheel in his hands, just the road flowing towards him like a gay river of death or salvation.

Easton's retrieved the tire wrench from the back and -- veeery slooowly -- moves to his window. Clay fights to keep the car balanced as Easton's weight shifts around.

Easton looks over at Clay, fused with the car and the road...

EASTON
Welcome back, my friend.

Down goes Easton's window. He wraps part of the race harness around one ankle. Then out into the bad world he goes.

EXT. AUDI

The car twists hard through tight turns on its two wheels.

Easton crawls out the window as far as he can. With a box-ended tire wrench, he reaches for the single quick-release aluminum bolt that holds the disintegrating wheel in place.

It's a helluva reach... almost... there... Got it. The ratcheting box-end slips over the bolt.

Easton torques the wrench... the bolt breaks loose. A few more turns and it falls into the box-end. The freed tire falls away.

INT. LAPD CAPTAIN'S CRUISER

LAPD CAPTAIN
(into radio)
Danner, tap the guy. Take him out.

INT. MASON'S LAPD CRUISER

Rookie's doing a decent job keeping up with Clay.

MASON
Not bad driving.

ROOKIE
If there's one thing us Tennessee boys
can do, it's drivin'.
(beat)
He slows enough on the hairpins... I
could bump 'em like the Captain wants.

Mason considers this, looks down the steep canyon drop.

MASON
You do that, he's going over.
(beat)
Wait.

EXT. AUDI

Easton's pulling himself back into the car...

Clay swerves to avoid an oncoming Jaguar. The jolt knocks the bolt out of the wrench and it goes flying. Easton makes a hail-mary grab... and catches the bolt.

INT. LAPD CAPTAIN'S CRUISER

The Cap looks up at the swarming news helicopters.

LAPD CAPTAIN
(into radio)
Dammit Danner, what're you waiting for?

INT. MASON'S LAPD CRUISER

MASON
(into radio)
He'll go over the cliff.

LAPD CAPTAIN
(over radio)
Deadly force is authorized. Do it.

Mason looks at Rookie... and returns the radio to its cradle.

EXT. AUDI

Easton's back out the window, the spare in one hand. He can't reach the axle, so he swings the tire back and forth, grabs momentum...

INT. SWAT HELICOPTER

LAPD CAPTAIN (V.O.)
(over Sniper's radio)
SWAT unit, fire at will.

The sniper's index finger gives five pounds of trigger pull...

EXT. AUDI

Easton's about to pitch the tire towards the axle, like a "ring a bottle" carnival game... and that's when a fifty-caliber shell clips his forearm. He loses his grip!

In painful slow motion Easton watches the tire's arc as it leaves his hand...

...the tire seems to almost float towards the axle stub...

...it's gotta be perfect...

And it is. The tire drops onto the axle.

Easton pulls out the wrench and starts torquing the bolt onto the axle... BOOM! Another slug takes out the wrench... aluminium shrapnel digs into Easton's hand.

Easton pulls himself back in the car...

INT. AUDI

EASTON
Lost the wrench before I could torque
her tight.

He pulls off a glove. His hand's pretty torn up.

CLAY
Damn East.

EASTON
Get us out of here.

CLAY
Lean on three... two... one.

They throw their weight to the passenger side, Clay flicks the wheel.

EXT. AUDI

The Audi goes back down on all fours.

The bolt on the tire holds. For now.

INT. CONTROL ROOM

High-fives all around.

INT. AUDI

Clay opens the throttle wide and the Audi inhales the road... quickly pulling away from the boys in blue.

As the car goes level, the gas gauge needle falls back into position. Right at empty.

INT. MASON'S LAPD CRUISER

ROOKIE COP
We had our chance.

MASON
We'll get a better chance.

INT. LAPD CAPTAIN'S CRUISER

LAPD CAPTAIN
They should've early-retired that asshole when they had the chance.

INT. AUDI - MOMENTS LATER

Clay's built a nice gap between him and the law. He exits the Canyons, gets back on the San Fernando Valley streets.

Easton wraps his hand with a length of nylon.

INT. AUDI

Clay speeds down Woodley Avenue, blows by the Van Nuys airport.

And that's when the one small downside of 1002 horsepower hits home: 5 miles per gallon.

Inside the kevlar fuel cell, all that's left is a small puddle of gas... and when that's sucked into the fuel pump...

The Audi starts to shake and shudder.

EASTON

We're dry!

CLAY

I'll coast it!

EXT. STREET

With no engine noise, it's like the car's in stealth mode.

An intersection. And Clay's got red.

Clay blasts past a line of waiting cars, blows through the red, carves a hard right... misses cross traffic by inches.

EXT. MALL, PARKING LOT

A screeching left and the Audi pulls into the abandoned mall, busting down a chain-link fence. The car goes down an aisle, flies over speed bumps, loses speed fast.

INT. AUDI

Up ahead, the entrance to the mall's underground parking garage. The speedo's at 20 mp/h and dropping.

Clay and Easton rock back and forth, as if that's gonna help...

CLAY & EASTON

Come on come on come on...

The car's neck-in-neck with a HOMELESS GUY and his shopping cart.

EXT. MALL, UNDERGROUND PARKING GARAGE

The car's now at a crawl... it hits the lip of the garage entrance. Will it make it over the road seam?

Yes.

The Audi rolls down a ramp into the darkness.

Aside from the 'copters, no cops in sight. Yet.

INT. CONTROL ROOM

The lipstick-camera video feed goes off-line.

BROADCAST TECH
Got no signal down there.

MIXER TECH
What the hell's he doing?

INT. PARKING GARAGE

Clay rolls the Audi down a tight circular drive to the very bottom level...

...which is empty. Except for nineteen 2009 Audi Avant Quattro 3.2 four-wheel-drive station wagons.

And a very busy crew of car thieves. Some slap window-tint on glass... others tape non-functional air-scoops onto hoods... others use nine-millis to shoot holes into the cars' skins.

Clay pulls up, he and Easton get out.

TINK. The tire bolt drops to the blacktop.

CRASH. The tire falls off, the car crunches to the ground.

Clay and Easton share a look.

Pedro comes up, he and Clay man-hug.

CLAY
(re: Easton's bloody hand)
You got something for that?

Pedro nods to one of his CREW. Another guy carries Pedro's TiVO. Others fuel the Audi and work to get the tire back on.

Clay looks over the cars... they're pretty much ready to roll.

CLAY
You did it.

PEDRO
When your Chi is in balance, even the impossible is possible.

Clay's phone rings.

INT. FERRARI - INTERCUT

Nika's on her phone. The Van Nuys airport's in the distance.

NIKA
You've got five minutes.

She hangs up, looks out her window... nods to the two guys in the van parked next to her.

EXT. VAN NUYS AIRPORT, AT ESCAPE HANGAR

The SWAT team preps an ambush outside the abandoned hangar. Hidden SNIPERS pepper the landscape.

INT. MASON'S LAPD CRUISER

Mason and his caravan hit the mall parking lot.

ROOKIE COP
There he is!

Up ahead, an Audi speeds out from the underground garage.

Followed by another.

And another.

And... another.

INT. CONTROL ROOM

On all the TV broadcasts, aerial heli cams show lots of Audis spilling out of the garage.

The lipstick-cam video feeds kick back in, showing Clay and Easton in their familiar seats.

BROADCAST TECH
Our guy's still behind the wheel.

The crew watches Easton punch up a road-map on his 'puter and Clay upshift into third.

EXT. MALL, PARKING LOT

The Audis move as a choreographed tidal-wave out of the lot.

INT. MASON'S LAPD CRUISER

Rookie and Mason are in their stopped black-and-white.

DISPATCH
(over radio)
TV broadcast indicates suspect still driving.

ROOKIE COP
Like herding cats.

The dozens of Audis swarm past. Mason instinctively looks at one particular car. He can't see through the tint, but his gut tells him all he needs to know.

INT. AUDI

As he drives by, Clay's eyes meet Mason's...

INT. MASON'S LAPD CRUISER

...Mason's eyes follow Clay's car as it rolls away.

INT. AUDI

Clay moves with the pack of Audis towards the airport.

CLAY
You have access to the traffic cams?

EASTON
Which one you want?

CLAY
Saw one this morning, by the airport.

Easton hits a key with his now-bandaged hand. Video of the freeway pops up on the LCD. Off to the side, the donut truck's right where it's supposed to be.

EASTON
Looks cool.

Then something catches his eye, sunlight glinting off something in the overgrown field...

A SWAT SNIPER hides in the weeds.

EASTON
Cops. There's no exit, never was.
They want this to end bad, real bad.

Easton cycles through other traffic cams... Clay sees something out of the corner of his eye...

CLAY
Hold up, go back.

Easton clicks back. On the edge of the image: Dylan's canary-yellow Ferrari.

CLAY
That's Dylan's ride.

EASTON
He's on the other side of the airport.

Clay downshifts, the Audi's engine roars...

INT. LAPD CAPTAIN'S CRUISER

The Cap follows the mob of Audis, doesn't notice Clay peel away from the group.

LAPD CAPTAIN
(into cell)
They're headin' right towards you.
Lots of decoys, you want the one that
goes for the hanger. Maintain radio
silence, he's got a scanner.

INT. VAN NUYS AIRPORT, AT ESCAPE HANGAR

Valez is the lead on the SWAT away-team. He's on his cell, crouched behind an abandoned jet-fuel delivery pump.

LAPD CAPTAIN
(over cell)
Whatever goes on inside that hangar,
and I mean anything, I got your back.

Valez gets onto his walkie-talkie...

OFFICER VALEZ
Kill your radios, suspect's got us
dialed in. Use Nextels for all commo.

He turns off his radio.

INT. MASON'S LAPD CRUISER

Mason sees Clay drive away from the pack. He follows. Not too close.

INT. CONTROL ROOM

Everyone's glued to the TVs. Ringing phones are ignored.

INT. DODGE CARGO VAN

Nika's guys watch the news on a cell phone. Heli footage shows the Audis swarm onto the abandoned section of the airport.

They nod to Nika, the van starts rolling, Nika follows.

EXT. AT ESCAPE HANGAR

The roaring cloud of Audis descend onto the abandoned hangar area.

INT. AIR CARGO GATE

The guard at the gate? A bullet between his eyes.

EXT. AT SATELLITE TRANSPORT

Cargo HANDLERS roll the satellite up the C-23's ramp.

Nika's lab-coated tech looks at his watch, then to the horizon...

...where the Dodge van comes charging into view.

Pierce spots the van, keys his throat-mic.

CMDR PIERCE

We got wheels at nine o'clock.

Pierce and his crew get on their triggers. There's just four of them, a skeleton crew left behind while the rest of the team's on the other side of the airport... just like Nika had planned.

CMDR PIERCE

(into radio)

Bravo team, we got possible hostiles in-bound, repeat we got hostiles in-bound.

EXT. VAN NUYS AIRPORT, AT ESCAPE HANGAR

Valez's radio is off, Pierce's calls go unheard.

INT. AT SATELLITE TRANSPORT

The Dodge screeches to a halt as the rear doors fly open, and...

...two MERCENARIES jump out. Urban combat gear. Fast, precise. Ex-military. The driver and passenger join them, start laying down cover fire.

CMDR PIERCE

(into radio)

We are engaged, repeat, we are engaged!

He lights up the van with his assault rifle. Two more MERCS jump out... with a tripod-mounted Vulcan mini-gun.

CMDR PIERCE

Holy God.

BRRRUUMMM! The six-barrelled rotary gun spins up at 100 armor-piercing rounds *per second*. The flying cloud of depleted uranium chews through the SWAT crew's steel and concrete cover.

Watching it go down, tied up inside the van: Ashley and Susan.

EXT. VAN NUYS AIRPORT - AERIAL SHOT

Bird's-eye view of the airport. The attention of the whole world's on one end: the swarm of Audis, the news and police helicopters, the police cruisers, the hiding SWAT team.

A half-mile away, at the other end of the airport, no one notices Nika's crew taking out SWAT, in broad daylight.

The perfect diversion. Need we say it? Just like Nika planned.

EXT. AT ESCAPE HANGAR

With all the cars and 'copters here, it's hard to hear the gunfight 800 yards away. Valez thinks he hears something... looks around... gets back behind his scope.

He ignores all the Audis zooming around, concentrates on just one... the one heading for the hangar.

EXT. AT SATELLITE TRANSPORT

The mini-gun keeps all the SWAT guys hunkered down. Pierce returns fire from behind a jet-blast barrier that's being pounded into concrete powder.

Suddenly, one of Nika's gunners drops in a cloud of blood-mist.

EXT. HEAVY OIL TRUCK

There's a fifth SWAT member! A sniper, with an overwatch position on an oil truck. His fifty-caliber Barrett thunders. THWOMM! Another merc drops.

WHAP! The sniper gets pistol-whipped from behind.

Nika.

EXT. AT SATELLITE TRANSPORT

Pierce sees his sniper get taken out. A few more seconds, it'll be all over for his team. He keys his throat-mic.

CMDR PIERCE
Alpha, lay down, repeat, lay down!

A bullet punches into the pulverized jet-blast barrier... it fragments as it digs through the hardened concrete... a shard punches into Pierce's helmet. He goes down.

INT. CONTROL ROOM

The car's camera feeds show Clay and Easton head into the hangar. Once inside, the broadcast goes dark.

BROADCAST TECH
No signal again!

EXT. AT ESCAPE HANGAR

OFFICER VALEZ
(into cell)
Deploy.

Valez and his crew charge the hangar.

EXT. AT SATELLITE TRANSPORT

The SWAT team lay down their weapons, come out from behind cover, hands up.

The mini-gun spins down, keeps SWAT sighted-in. Mercs zip-tie the team.

The tech working with Nika's crew heads for the satellite...

...He joins a merc in setting up an industrial diamond drill.

Nearby, the Fed's on his knees. Mercs hold him down, one pulls a badge out of the agent's jacket, shows it to Nika.

NIKA
Treasury Department doing weather forecasts these days?

The Fed looks away, says nothing.

The drill's ready to rumble. The tech slides open a panel on the satellite. A keypad. Above it, LEDs read: ENGAGED.

NIKA
The fail-safe code, Agent?

Zip from the Fed. Nika gets down on her knees in front of him.

NIKA

Inside this "weather" satellite is an
AES cipher key that will give me access
to half a trillion of the Federal
Reserve's dollars.

The agent tries to man up, gives her a hard look... THWIP. His
eyes go wide.

Nika's put a bullet in his gut. Blood creeps across his shirt.
She leans in, whispers in his ear...

NIKA

You'll be dead in twenty minutes. Give
us the code, we'll be gone in five,
paramedics can be here in ten.

INT. INSIDE ESCAPE HANGAR

Valez's team flows in, weapons up.

Gun-lights find two men on the ground, hands behind their heads.

Pedro and Butt-Ugly Thug.

THONK. One of the car's glued-on fake fenders falls off. It's
not Clay and Easton... and it's not Clay and Easton's car.

How? We go inside the Audi's trunk. There's Pedro's TiVo, on
"playback," jacked into the "Interior Cameras" vid-receptacle.

INT. AUDI

Clay and Easton have made it to the other end of the airport.
Easton scans the area through binocs...

EASTON

Got 'em! They're stealing something...
they've got some cops tied up...

CLAY

This was never about a TV show. We're
a diversion.

EASTON

They got a big-ass gun.
(beat)
Susan and Ashley! They're okay!

Clay closes his eyes, thanks God.

Just then, someone rips open the car doors... the barrels of
.38's go to their heads. Mason and the Rookie!

MASON
Out. Nice 'n slow.

CLAY
They got my wife and kid! They took
down some of your guys!

MASON
I said, out--

Waitamminute. Mason remembers his chat with a certain SWAT
Commander.

MASON
Gimme those.

Clay hands him the binocs, Mason has a look, keeps his revolver
pressed against Clay's neck...

MASON
Pierce. His crew... they're down.

CLAY
You got me. Now get in!

A beat. Mason works his options. He nods at Rookie. They jump
in the back, squeeze in next to the fuel cell.

Pedal to the metal. A thousand-and-two horsepower howls.

EXT. AT SATELLITE TRANSPORT

The Fed lies on the tarmac, dead, a bullet in his brain.

Next to him are the four SWAT guys, zip-tied.

Pierce is still crumpled behind the blast barrier. Blood seeps
from underneath his helmet.

The satellite's LED display reads DISENGAGED. The tech's
drilled through the sat's ceramic-titanium shell. He pulls out
an exotic-looking nanocrystal memory array imprinted with:
"Property of U.S.A. Department of the Treasury."

NIKA
Pack it up.

Mercs drag their buddies' bodies towards the van...

Susan's the first to hear it. Distant thunder. She pivots her
body for a better sight-line... and sees it.

Vengeance on four wheels, coming at 'em at 150 miles per hour.

NIKA
Get on the gun!

Nika grabs the memory array from the tech... she runs towards the van... two of the mercs go for the Vulcan.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

-- The mercs spool up the mini-gun. BRRUUUM!!!

-- Clay swerves the car wildly...

-- Nika reaches into the van for Ashley. Susan's tied legs kick out of the shadows... one heel powers into Nika's face.

NIKA

Bitch!

Nika slams an elbow into Susan's nose and shoves past her to grab Ashley. Susan screams through her gag, watches helplessly as Nika takes off with her daughter.

-- The mercs swing the Vulcan, try to hit their hyperactive target.

-- Clay puts the heavy-oil truck between him and the gun.

-- The 20-millimeter slugs punch holes into the 3,000-gallon aluminum tank... thick grease-like oil pours onto the tarmac.

-- Clay gets to the truck, has to veer around it...

-- And that's when a sweep of slugs finally makes contact. Clay, Easton, Mason, and Rookie duck just as the super-hard depleted uranium blows out the Audi's front and back plexiglass.

PLOCK! PLOCK! A few rounds hit the engine compartment.

CLAY

I'm down on power.

-- One problem with 4,000 rounds-a-minute? You gotta reload often. The mercs take only seconds to slap in an ammo-chain...

-- But that's all Clay needs. Fifty feet away, he slams on the brakes... swings the Audi into a skidding fish-tail...

...the car screeches through a 180-degree arc and its ass swats the mercs like an NHL player launching a puck...

...gun and gunners go flying.

EXT. AT SATELLITE TRANSPORT

The Audi lurches to a stop. The engine's hurtin', its idle shakes the whole car, smoke pours from beneath the hood.

The traitor-tech's the last one standing. He grabs an M4 and lights it up, but he's got the wrong angle... his slugs only hit the Audi's side windows.

Plan B. He turns... grabs Susan out of the back of the van... jams the M4's barrel into her throat.

TECH

Outta the car!

INT. AUDI

The guys know what's waiting for them outside the car. Out of sight, Mason clicks back the hammer on his .38, real quiet...

The tech's eyes go cold: he's going to pull the trigger.

CLAY

No!

Clay throws open his door, the tech's finger pulls back--

BAM! Hot lead slices through the tech's second cervical vertebra. Instant kill.

But Mason's gun is still by his side. Who?

Pierce. Bleeding from the head wound, on his knees, just enough strength to pull the trigger one last time. He drops back against the barrier. Outta the game, but maybe he'll live.

Susan motions frantically with her head towards the west end of the airport.

Clay sees Dylan's Ferrari in the distance. Susan nods "go!"

MASON

(to Rookie re: SWAT)

Do what you can, call it in!

Clay jumps back in the car, Rookie jumps out.

EXT. FERRARI

Nika gets to the Ferrari, its fabric top is down. She tosses Ashley into the passenger seat, gets behind the wheel.

INT. AUDI

Clay's cell rings, Easton digs for the phone among the shattered plexiglass... holds it to Clay's ear.

INT. FERRARI

NIKA
(into cell)
I'm belted in, your girl's not. You
run me down, I'm not the one dying.

She hangs up. Ashley fights her zip-ties.

NIKA
Hope your dad's not stupid.

ASHLEY
My dad?

EXT. AT ESCAPE HANGAR

Pedro's guys have parked the Audis in a neat single file... and they all calmly assume the arrest position on the tarmac.

Valez drags Pedro over to one very pissed LAPD Captain.

LAPD CAPTAIN
Where is he?!

PEDRO
(concerned)
Jefe, have you tried acupuncture?

EXT. AT SATELLITE TRANSPORT

Susan hops over to the satellite. The break-in left behind jagged metal... she uses an edge to slice at the zip-ties.

EXT. TARMAC

Nika guns the Ferrari towards the exit gate... but sees an LAPD cruiser there. The dead guard's been discovered.

She whips the Spyder to the right, opens the throttle wide. 483 Italian stallions charge outta the gate, the Pirelli's sing.

INT. AUDI

Clay, Easton, and Mason see Nika's automotive moves.

EASTON
The girl's got skills.

Clay drops the hammer. Tires screech, the wounded engine howls, the poor busted-up Audi shakes like a moon-capsule on re-entry.

EXT. CARGO STAGING AREA

Nika weaves the Spyder through an air-cargo staging area: a maze of freight-pallets, forklifts, loading ramps.

INT. AUDI

CLAY

(to Mason)

You got to know, this wasn't what we signed up for. It was just a car chase, for TV.

MASON

You just take her down. I'll deal with you later.

Nika intentionally side-swipes a forklift carrying a raised payload: four engine blocks come tumbling down.

Clay swerves the Audi 'round the falling 500-pound pieces of cast-metal... but one lands on the roof. BOOM. A big dent pushes Mason deeper into his seat. The block tumbles off.

The Ferrari heads towards the runway. A line of planes are queued for take-off.

CLAY

Lost the turbo! Engine's going south. We don't have much time.

Nika makes a hard right, heads straight towards the ass of the lead plane: a Learjet that's rolling for take-off.

Clay's almost caught up, he's only fifty yards away.

Nika downshifts, the Spyder's eight cylinders bellow... and the low-slung Ferrari slips right UNDER the Lear.

MASON

What's she doing?

EXT. RUNWAY

The clueless Learjet answers that question as its two engines spool up with 14,000 pounds of thrust.

The massive wind-blast roars through the open windshield of the Audi... the car's roof acts like a wing. The Audi's pushed sideways... comes off two of its wheels... rotates...

...drops back down on all four tires... and spins to a stop.

The Lear takes off, Nika does a back-of-the-hand bye-bye wave.

INT. AUDI

Clay turns the car, gives chase. Nika's grabbed a good lead.

EASTON
What're you gonna do? You can't crash
her!

Nika pulls off the runway, back towards the satellite load site.

Clay reaches for the NOS switch, Easton grabs his hand, points to the engine-temp gauge hovering near the red.

EASTON
You hit the nitrous, the engine's gone
in sixty seconds.

CLAY
No choice. Last chance.

EXT. TARMAC

Clay unleashes the NOS... the Audi rockets forward... flames explode from the tailpipes as leaking engine oil combusts...

INT. FERRARI

Nika closes in on the satellite site, but she's got her eyes on another exit gate a few hundred yards beyond.

Ashley looks at something behind them.

ASHLEY
He's going to get you and he's going to
give you a big time-out.

Nika glances in her rearview mirror. "OBJECTS ARE CLOSER THAN THEY APPEAR." The smoking, shattered, howling Audi looks like some fiendish spawn from Satan's workshop.

INT. AUDI

EASTON
The oil!

The two cars head straight towards a huge slick left behind from the bullet-riddled oil truck.

Clay looks at the engine temp gauge. Redlined. Now or never.

CLAY
You thinkin' what I'm thinkin'?

EASTON

Can't do, my hand's no good!

CLAY

Take the wheel.

Easton and Clay squeeze past each-other, trading places... Clay keeps his foot on the gas 'til Easton takes over. Easton takes the wheel with his good hand.

Mason grabs hold of whatever he can and hangs on tight.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

The Audi catches up with the Ferrari... Easton pulls up along the Spyder's passenger side...

...Nika looks over, wags her finger, gestures towards the seatbelt-less Ashley...

Clay looks past Easton to his daughter. Somehow, Ashley knows what he needs: she gives her dad a determined look.

They're almost on top of the oil slick... the Audi's going faster than the Ferrari... it charges ahead of Nika...

And that's when the Audi's engine explodes! Shattered motor-pistons burst out of the engine block and through the hood.

They hit the oil. Easton throws the car into neutral... Clay reaches over and yanks the wheel just right...

...the Audi rotates on the icy-slick surface... turns... hits 180 degrees just as both cars get back onto dry tarmac...

...and the Audi's now rolling BACKWARDS, next to the Ferrari.

Easton takes the wheel from Clay. Before the Audi loses too much momentum and before Nika knows what the hell's going on, Easton brings his car close to hers...

...and Clay pops out of his window and grabs hold of Ashley!

Easton opens up a gap between him and Nika, Clay pulls Ashley out of the Ferrari's seat, holds her close to the Audi...

The unpowered Audi's losing speed, the Spyder pulls ahead... and just as the Ferrari's rear is in line with the Audi's ass...

...Easton flicks the steering wheel. A classic police pursuit-termination maneuver. The Audi's rear-right corner stabs the Ferrari's rear-right... the Spyder goes into a vicious spin...

...and then flips into a brutal sideways roll. BOOM! CRASH!

Easton hits the brakes, slides to a stop. Clay lowers Ashley onto her feet, jumps out... and hugs his daughter tight.

The Ferrari tumbles to a stop. Upside-down. Nika's still belted in, out cold but the car's roll-cage kept her alive.

EXT. AT ESCAPE HANGAR

Pedro's crew is handcuffed.

The Captain looks like he's gonna pop a vein. He spots REPORTERS descending on the scene... he takes a breath, straightens his shirt... heads over to spin this mess his way.

EXT. AT SATELLITE TRANSPORT

Mason presses trauma gauze against Pierce's scalp.

The Rookie cuts lose the rest of the SWAT crew.

Ashley sits on the tarmac, Clay works on her zip-ties.

ASHLEY

Are you my daddy?

Clay's blindsided. What should he--

Susan runs up to them. Ashley jumps into her mom's arms.

INT. CONTROL ROOM

The crew watches footage of Pedro's gang being driven away.

BROADCAST TECH

What now? Where's Dylan? Nika?

MIXER TECH

Proly Mexico with all the cheddar we just made 'em.

Shoulders slump as their dream pay-day slips away.

The Sales Guy's cell rings. (*Eye of the Tiger* ringtone, natch.)

SALES GUY

Yo. You serious? Hell yeah! Set 'em up. Thanks, dude.

(hangs up; to others)

My agent. Three networks wanna look at me for shows in their pipelines!

Polite smiles, but their eyes say it all: *Good for you, dickhead. Thanks for rubbing it in.*

Tired, they start packing it in. The Mixer Tech's cell chirps.

MIXER TECH

Hello?

Then the Broadcast Tech's cell rings... then everyone's.

By the looks on their faces, makin' rent next month -- or next decade -- is suddenly not gonna be a problem.

EXT. AT SATELLITE TRANSPORT

Medics and cops are inbound, just seconds away. Nika's cuffed. Mason's still with Pierce... Clay comes up to them.

CLAY

You could've taken us out in the canyons.

MASON

You and me, we go around again, you got no more kindness coming.

CLAY

(beat)

Thank you.

EMT's lift Pierce onto a stretcher. The SWAT commander grabs Mason's arm. Thanks.

Mason nods. He watches Pierce get rolled into an ambulance... Then turns back to Clay.

But Clay's gone. *Damn.*

The Rookie comes over.

MASON

(to Rookie)

Helluva first day, huh?

ROOKIE COP

Yes sir. Gooder than grits.

MASON

Don't know if I'd go THAT far.

INT. LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

Night's fallen on one helluva day in the City of Angels and High Speed Vehicular Pursuits.

EXT. STUDIO LOT

A CORONER loads Dylan's body-bag into a van. DETECTIVES question the SPEED ZONE production team.

INT. LAPD STATION, HOLDING CELL

Pedro and his crew play five-card-draw. An OFFICER shows up with an ATTORNEY. They're free to go.

INT. LAPD STATION, ADMIN OFFICE

Mason fills paperwork out at a counter. A framed sign behind glass: "Personnel Division."

The Cap storms up to him.

LAPD CAPTAIN

What the hell you doing?! You had 'em
in the canyons, you let 'em go?

MASON

Knew something wasn't right about this.

LAPD CAPTAIN

What are you, a detective now? This
guy played us like fools for the whole
damn world to see.

COP #1 pops in.

COP #1

Cap, reporter from the Times is here
for you.

LAPD CAPTAIN

(to Mason)
I'm not done with you.

The Cap checks his hair in the sign's glass... leaves.

Mason looks at the paperwork for a long beat. Then slides it
over to a CLERK... heads out.

The form? APPLICATION FOR DETECTIVE, GRADE 1

INT. CHOP SHOP, BACK ROOM

The news is on the tube...

ANCHOR

(on TV)

Two weeks after staging a spectacular car chase, Easton Graves and Clay Reynolds today signed a five-year, one-hundred-million-dollar racing contract with Mitsubishi Motors.

On the screen, video of Clay, Easton, and various Mitsu Motors SUITS at a news conference...

EXT. VILLA

SUPER: OUTSIDE MARSEILLE, SOUTHERN FRANCE

A bitchin' villa overlooking the Mediterranean. But that's not the view the owner's taking in...

ANCHOR (V.O.)

The two drivers have not set foot in America since fleeing, and Mitsubishi announced that there will be no requirement for them to race in the U.S., where the Los Angeles District Attorney has filed nearly two dozen charges related to the pursuit. The State Department has announced no plans to ask for extradition.

...instead, in the circular drive, water hose in one hand and dripping sponge in the other, is Easton, drinking in a sight even more delicious than the sea.

ANCHOR (V.O.)

A developing story is the car chase's connection with the attempted theft of a Federal Reserve Bank encryption key from an unlaunched Treasury Department satellite. Sources suggest that this code-key could theoretically be used to access some portion of the nearly nine-hundred billion dollars of assets in the Federal Reserve system.

Bob Hirohata's 1951 Mercury gleams wet in the European sun.

Easton puts down the sponge, pulls out his cell.

INT. MARSEILLE PROVENCE AIRPORT

Clay waits outside customs, looks deep into the photos of Susan and Ashley. His cell rings.

EXT. VILLA - INTERCUT

EASTON
Bring back some milk, willya?

CLAY
You're washing her again, aren't you?

Busted.

EASTON
No I'm not.
(beat)
I'm gonna bake monkfish. Your girl
like eggplant?

CLAY
I... don't know.
(beat)
Lots of time to find out.

There's Susan and Ashley. The little girl stops short when she sees Clay.

SUSAN
He's a surprise, little elf, for you.

Clay searches her eyes. Something's different. Hope.

Clay holds out his hand to Ashley. She hesitates... then takes his hand.

They head out, Ashley between her mom and her dad...

ASHLEY
I like surprises, surprises are God's
candy.

FADE OUT:

THE END

But wait, what about the star of the show?

INT. MUSEUM

There... in the Peterson's permanent exhibit hall... between Steve McQueen's 1956 Jaguar XKSS and a '39 Bugatti Type 57C once owned by the Prince of Persia...

...is the most famous of them all, the '09 Audi Avant. Restored, resplendent... waiting... for her next pursuit.