

THE SWAN OF BUSHWICK

"Pilot"

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FADE IN

**EXT. NEW YORK - DAY**

Pitch black. Over it, subtitled from Russian:

SARA (PRE-LAP)  
I just don't like the corruption.

Then:

HISTORIC FOOTAGE OF 70s NEW YORK. KIDS PLAYING IN A BURST  
FIRE HYDRANT. THE BIRTH OF PUNK AND HIP-HOP. ED KOTCH GIVING  
A SPEECH.

ILYA (PRE-LAP)  
It is a country run by plutocrats  
and oligarchs; proletarian  
organization becomes criminal by  
its very nature. What's he supposed  
to do?

**INT. NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM, DISPLAY HALL - DAY**

A frail young BOY (10) stares with great interest at a  
display, flanked by TOURISTS on either side.

It's a scene of Ice Age humans: a wax model of a modern man  
stands victorious over an equally waxen Neanderthal, who  
stares terrified at a spear hoisted above him.

Behind the boy, his parents, ILYA and SARA (40s), converse.  
The father reads a newspaper, headlined, "HUNT FOR HOFFA  
CONTINUES".

SUPER: 1975

SARA  
So where is he, Ilya?

ILYA  
Dead. By Nixon, no doubt--He's an  
anti-Semite, you know.

SARA  
Nixon's been out of office a year.

ILYA  
The CIA, then. Or the Mafia. What's  
the difference? They're all  
American institutions.

She frowns, disappointed. Suddenly, the boy begins to cough. His parents look unsurprised, and Ilya rolls up the newspaper and withdraws an inhaler from his coat pocket.

He leans down and sticks it in his son's mouth. The child inhales, relieved, and his father rubs his back.

ILYA (CONT'D)

So, boy, what do you see?

BOY

Cro-Magnon. And down there,  
Neanderthal.

ILYA

Ah. Smart boy. How do you know?

BOY

His eyebrows are bigger than the  
other one. And his nose is flat.

ILYA

Good. But there is a lie, here. Do  
you know what it is?

He looks at Ilya and shakes his head, curious.

ILYA (CONT'D)

The violence. This is a Fascist  
myth: that modern humans overcame  
Neanderthals through Social  
Darwinism. We know, though,  
Neanderthal was simply bred into  
modern European DNA--like most  
hunter-gatherers, they coexisted  
peacefully.

BOY

Why would they show this, then?

ILYA

Because, if violence is unavoidable  
to human society, then the violence  
inherent to capitalism is nothing  
special.

He rustles the boy's hair before standing. Sara watches the scene in quiet sadness. The child suddenly notices something, eyes widening as he approaches the end of the hall.

**INT. NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM, HALL OF DINOSAURS - CONTINUOUS**

The boy walks before the famed T-Rex skeleton in the hall of dinosaurs. He gazes up in awe.

BOY

And here? Is there a lie here?

Ilya comes behind him and stretches his hair.

ILYA

No, child, no lie. This one's story is too old to lie. Do you know his name?

BOY

Yeah. 'Tyrannosaurus Rex'.

ILYA

And what's that mean?

BOY

'Tyrant Lizard King.'

TITLE SEQUENCE ROLLS

**EXT. THE SWAN OF BUSHWICK - DAY**

A run-down four story brownstone in Bushwick. The sign on its facade reads 'The Swan of Bushwick Luxury Suites', a flickering design of a swan above it.

SUPER: PRESENT DAY

KOSSOV (PRE-LAP)

This is bullshit, Herbie.

HERBIE (PRE-LAP)

I know, Mr. Kossov, I'm doing everything I can.

**INT. KOSSOV'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

A small motel room. A single window with plastic office blinds. A cramped bathroom with a mold-ridden shower. A queen bed with an earth-toned comforter. Plasma-screen with cable.

KOSSOV (60s), an old Ukrainian, sits on the bed. Sweat drenches his off-white tank top. He looks contemptuously at the scene in front of him.

**HERBIE URINELLI** (50s) works on the AC unit, hunched over with a toolbox at his side. He's a grimy white dude: Steve Buscemi type. Sweating more than Kossov.

**HERBIE**  
Any chance you were running the shower?

His voice is grating and nasal, with a thick Brooklyn accent. He turns back to Kossov.

**KOSSOV**  
What?

**HERBIE**  
If you're running the hot water same time as the AC, you're gonna run into problems, Mr. Kossov. Why I take 'em cold.

**KOSSOV**  
I'm not gonna take cold fucking showers, Herbie!

**HERBIE**  
Alright, alright! Jeez. Just brainstorming.

He turns his attention back to the unit. He desperately wipes the sweat from his forehead.

**HERBIE (CONT'D)**  
Y'know it's really blistering, Mr. Kossov, you mind if I take my shirt off?

**KOSSOV**  
Are you serious?

**HERBIE**  
C'mon, I'm dying here!

**KOSSOV**  
Ugh!  
(then)  
Okay.

Herbie pulls the shirt over his head to reveal his thin frame. He moves his hands down to his jeans and begins to unzip.

**KOSSOV (CONT'D)**  
What the fuck?!

HERBIE  
Okay, okay!

He zips the jeans and turns back to the unit.

HERBIE (CONT'D)  
Can't take your pants off in your  
own business these days. Well, it's  
not an issue with this machine,  
it's gotta be the central unit.

KOSSOV  
Fine.

**INT. MOTEL HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER**

Herbie walks out from Kossov's room and strips off his pants, leaving them and the shirt there in the hallway. He gasps for air while he shakes off the heat.

HERBIE (V.O.)  
Since I was a kid, I loved that  
story, the Ugly Duckling.

He continues down the hall in his underwear, toolkit in hand. The overhead fluorescents flicker while SEEDY FIGURES loom up and down the hall.

HERBIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
You know how it goes. All the ducks  
are mean to this one little fella.  
Who didn't do nothing to nobody,  
was just kinda different.

DARLA (50s), a housekeeper, pushes her cart out from a room into the hallway. She's a middle-aged Dominican woman with a prosthetic foot.

HERBIE (CONT'D)  
Mornin', Darla!

No response. He reacts subtly and keeps walking.

HERBIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
See, people never really liked me  
much.

**INT. STAIRWELL - MOMENTS LATER**

Herbie hurries down a staircase, still in his underwear.

HERBIE (V.O.)  
Never made sense to me--I was  
always nice. Held the door, said  
'please' and 'thank you'.

**INT. CELLAR - MOMENTS LATER**

He enters a dank, musty cellar and approaches the HVAC system. He sticks a flashlight in his mouth and opens the panel.

HERBIE  
(distraught)  
Ah, bagels and jam!

The refrigerant reservoir's leaking with a big crack.

HERBIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
Either way, I always hoped that one  
day I'd find out I was a beautiful  
swan, all along.

He rips a piece of duct tape and covers up the crack. He looks at his fix with a satisfied smirk.

**INT. MOTEL HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER**

Herbie proudly galivants down the same hallway as before. As he approaches Kossov's door, he grabs his clothes and quickly redresses.

HERBIE (V.O.)  
And, well, I guess I'm still  
hopin'.

He knocks on the door.

KOSSOV (O.S.)  
What?

HERBIE  
Mr. Kossov? It's Herbie.

KOSSOV  
So?

Herbie smiles, but there's sadness in his eyes. That door isn't opening.

HERBIE  
A/C working okay?

KOSSOV  
Yeah.

HERBIE  
Glad to hear it.

He nods and walks off.

**INT. FRONT DESK - LATER**

Herbie's working the front desk with ANTHONY (17), a balding teenager. The former watches the street suspiciously. He's donned an ugly beige duster that's way too big on him.

HERBIE  
Tell you this, though. City's  
changing. Can't help but feel like  
it's trying to squeeze us out.  
Brooklyn's not Brooklyn without the  
Swan.

He stares out the window. Soulless, glass condos. He looks over at Anthony.

HERBIE (CONT'D)  
That's why you gotta protect  
yourself, kid.

He pulls a handgun out of his coat pocket and Anthony's eyes widen. It's a tiny little .22, the kind you can buy on eBay for under a hundred dollars.

HERBIE (CONT'D)  
Keep this baby on me at all times.

Anthony stifles his laughter.

ANTHONY  
Isn't it kinda small?

HERBIE  
Not all about size, Tony. Would you  
care if John Wayne had a little  
piece? Or Charlton Heston? It's  
about how you use it.

He attempts to twirl the gun and promptly drops it. It fires off, and both men drop in a panic. Herbie picks it up, panting.

**EXT. PARK - DAY**

Herbie sits side by side at on a park bench with MARCI ACOSTA (30s) while daughter, ANALEIGH (11), plays with MIKEY (5), Marci's son.

Marci's a tired looking woman wearing the nurse-on-her-day-off trio of sweatshirt, crocks, and yoga pants. She sits with a look of resigned rage.

Analeigh's disdainful eyes dart back repeatedly to Herbie. He responds with a smile and fluttery wave while he eats a bodega sandwich with mustard stains on his lips and cheeks.

HERBIE  
Beautiful day!

He looks over to Marci with a hopeful stare. She doesn't look back.

HERBIE (CONT'D)  
Y'know, you're a lot prettier when  
you smile.  
(re: silence)  
Must be tired...I could take 'em  
off your hands, for a bit. You  
could nap.

He jokingly leans back and mimics a snore.

MARCI  
Fuck you.

HERBIE  
Well, okay, then.

There's silence. Herbie's staring at Marci. Marci looks at him. In his eyes: *I'm going to ask*. In hers: *Don't*.

He shrugs and takes a bite of the sandwich. She rolls her eyes and looks back to her children. While chewing:

HERBIE (CONT'D)  
Say, why didn't we work out?

Without missing a beat:

MARCI  
Because you're gay.

He spits, then wipes his mouth while laughing with concern and shame.

HERBIE  
Wow -- that's not --

He shakes his fist in a poor Jackie Gleason impression.

HERBIE (CONT'D)  
I swear, Alice, straight to the moon!

Suddenly there's ringing and he pulls out his phone: an old flip phone with a screen cracked sometime during Bush's second term.

HERBIE (CONT'D)  
One sec, doll.

MARCI  
Ugh.

He walks away to take the call.

HERBIE  
Hello?

He's answered by a young assistant with a British accent and a professional tone. CLARICE.

CLARICE (O.S.)  
Hi, is this Mr. Urinelli?

HERBIE  
(cheerily)  
Heh. That's what my mother called me. She's dead now.  
(a beat)  
Well, hey, Clarice, good to hear from ya. How's the husband?

CLARICE (O.S.)  
Husband?

HERBIE  
Yeah, you had to pick him up from Newark, remember? Boy, I don't envy that drive. Never got my license, though. You end up goin' to that gyro place?

CLARICE (O.S.)  
Mr. Urinelli, have you given thought to our offer?

He throws the wrapper in the trash and furrows his eyebrows in frustration.

HERBIE  
Clarice, I thought we talked about this! The Swan isn't for sale.

A beat.

CLARICE (O.S.)  
Please hold for Mr. Cohen.

HERBIE  
(confused)  
What?

The call transfers.

**INT. BIG DAVE'S OFFICE - SAME TIME**

**BIG DAVE COHEN** (50s) sits in a large leather chair in his home office. He's a big Ashkenazi Jew simmering in barely contained rage -- think old school John Goodman.

In his hand, a glass jar full of viscous liquid. There's a label on it reading 'THROAT STAYS CLEAR'.

BIG DAVE  
(staring at the jar)  
Am I speaking to the owner of the  
so-called 'Swan of Bushwick'?

HERBIE (O.S.)  
(nervous)  
Yeah, yeah that's me. Glad to meet  
ya.

Dave chuckles and places the jar down on a mahogany desk.

BIG DAVE  
This is David Cohen, 'Big Dave'.  
You might've heard of me.

HERBIE (O.S.)  
Oh, sure, saw that new business  
park in Bed-Stuy on the Today Show.

BIG DAVE  
Good, good. Got big plans for the  
place. Balenciaga's put an offer on  
a unit.

HERBIE (O.S.)  
Well, I love pasta!

BIG DAVE  
'Course you do.  
(clears throat)  
So tell me, Herb--

HERBIE (O.S.)

Herbie.

BIG DAVE

Herb. Why do you keep trying to  
fuck me?

**EXT. PARK - SAME TIME**

Herbie's as we left him.

HERBIE

I'm sorry?

BIG DAVE

You heard me, you inscrutable jizz  
stain. Why do you want to fuck me?  
(to Herbie's silence)  
Well?

HERBIE

Mr. Cohen, I really don't know what  
you're talking about.

**INT. BIG DAVE'S OFFICE - SAME TIME**

Dave rolls his eyes and leans back in his chair.

BIG DAVE

I bought a seven-bedroom home down  
the street from you in nineteen-  
ninety seven for eight hundred  
grand. You know how much that's  
worth today?

HERBIE (O.S.)

I don't know.

BIG DAVE

Four god-damn million.

HERBIE (O.S.)

Well, jeez, congrats!

BIG DAVE

Don't patronize me.

(then)

You know how much more I'd squeeze  
out of it without a roach farm  
masquerading as a hotel polluting  
the neighborhood?

**EXT. PARK - SAME TIME**

Herbie's at a loss for words. Then:

BIG DAVE (O.S.)  
Eight mil. That's the offer. No  
questions asked.

His eyes widen in shock. He stares at Marci, stares back  
confused.

HERBIE  
Jeez, Big Dave!

BIG DAVE (O.S.)  
It's a good deal. Don't play with  
me.

HERBIE  
Peter, Paul, and Mary...

Herbie tries to calm himself. No luck.

BIG DAVE (O.S.)  
Herb. Talk to me. C'mon.

Another long silence. Then:

BIG DAVE (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Fifteen million dollars. That's as  
high as I'll go.

Tears well in Herbie's eyes. He stares at Analeigh, who  
glowers back. He finally swallows and wipes his eyes.

HERBIE  
Can I keep my job?

BIG DAVE (O.S.)  
What?

HERBIE  
If I sell, can I still work at the  
Swan?

BIG DAVE (O.S.)  
You're fucking joking.

HERBIE  
(crying)  
Just promise that nothing'll  
change?

**INT. BIG DAVE'S OFFICE - SAME TIME**

Big Dave leans forward in his seat, a malevolent glow to his face.

BIG DAVE

Listen to me carefully, Herbert.  
When I get my hands on that rinky  
shithole polluting my neighborhood,  
the first thing I do will be  
fucking 'change' it. You think I  
have any interest in taking  
ownership of that fentanyl lottery  
you call a business?

**EXT. PARK - SAME TIME**

Herbie listens in a panic. He continues staring at Analeigh, who mouths, *"what the fuck do you want?"*

BIG DAVE (O.S.)

You make my land worth less. That's  
all that's going on here. A week  
after it's mine, it'll be some  
faggy boutique with a bullshit  
'farm to table' concept in the  
basement.

He takes a moment before replying.

HERBIE

I'm sorry, Big Dave. The Swan is  
special. Maybe you can't see it.  
But it's special. No deal.

Big Dave chuckles.

BIG DAVE

Well, no good deed goes unpunished,  
I guess.

He hangs up, and Herbie's left speechless.

**INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY**

A dank warehouse, somewhere in Williamsburg. The vast space is dark, but at the very center of the interior lies a collection of tables arranged in neat rows with chairs on either side.

Sitting in the chairs are CHASIDIM, dressed in standard yeshiva attire. The tables are littered with an assortment of books and laptops, which they sift through in the midst of heated conversation.

Their studies are illuminated by a line of flood lights standing behind a single table separated from the rest, where a lone figure sits.

**INT. WAREHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER**

Two Chasidim approach the lone figure at the table in front of them, carrying the map. He's an old man, a fluffy white beard stretching down to the table below him, where he stares at a printout of the Hebrew Alphabet. This is **SHIMON GREENBAUM** (late 60s).

The scene is subtitled from Yiddish.

CHASID 1

Reb Shimon!

He stares up from the sheet and gives them a warm smile. The chasidim seem confused.

CHASID 2

You're studying *aleph beis*?

SHIMON

Like the *Besht* in the pirate's lair. How can I help?

They place the map on his table.

CHASID 1

We're looking for the new place to send our *shluchim*. Dov-Melech says Long Island City, I say Crown Heights.

Shimon stares at the map, deep in thought. They list their reasons as he ponders, the sound muffled as he moves his finger across the map. Finally:

SHIMON

So, we've found ourselves with a holy *makhloikus*, yeah? What's this mean?

CHASID 2

Reb Shimon, we know *makhloikus*.

SHIMON

Remind me.

CHASID 1

It's a disagreement.

SHIMON

With?

CHASID 1

Each other.

Shimon chuckles, shaking his head.

SHIMON

If you really disagreed with each other, you wouldn't be wondering who was correct; you come to me because the truth still escapes you. No, your disagreement is with *HaKadosh Bar'chu*. With God.

They wait, confused. Shimon traces the map with his finger up to Long Island City.

SHIMON (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

So, Duvid says we go north, where no *yiddin* will know us there. And he's right.

He brings his finger over to Crown Heights.

SHIMON (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

And Dov-Melech thinks we go East, since we got to go to Queens. And he's right.

He draws his finger north again, but north from Crown Heights.

SHIMON (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

The key to resolving a *makhloikus* is to find the world--

He finally lands on his destination: Bushwick.

SHIMON (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

--in which you're both correct.

#### **INT. BOARDROOM - DAY**

A large TV in a boardroom at the top of a high-rise plays the following series of scenes:

#### **INT. BLACKSMITH SHOP - DAY**

A black BLACKSMITH hammers away at heated metal in a forge.

BLACKSMITH (V.O.)

My name is Sapphire Ugwunagbo --

**INT. BLACKSMITH SHOP - LATER**

They stick what now appears to be a large Ankh into a bucket of water using a pair of tongs.

BLACKSMITH (V.O.)  
-- I own Anvil & Clamor here in  
Williamsburg --

**INT. BLACKSMITH SHOP - LATER**

She's sitting, looking straight into the camera for an interview.

BLACKSMITH  
And I am a Centurion Protege.

SUPER: SAPPHIRE UGWUNAGBO (SHE/THEY), WITH THE CENTURION FOUNDATION LOGO NEXT TO IT.

**INT. BOARDROOM - DAY**

Pull back to reveal **HANNA COHEN-LEE** (30s) standing to the side of the TV. She's a pregnant yuppie dressed in some mongrelized cardigan-blazer.

She smiles wide and proud at the assembled BOARD MEMBERS, who politely smile back while they watch the ad, now humming with standard acoustic fare.

**INT. BLACKSMITH SHOP - DAY**

The Blacksmith looks studiously over a business plan being presented by a MENTOR in a suit.

BLACKSMITH (V.O.)  
Besides the grant, which was,  
y'know, empowering, the  
Foundation's been helping--or,  
sure, mentoring me every step of  
the way. So I guess that's the,  
uh...impact.

SUPER: WORDS APPEAR ON SCREEN AND FADE AWAY AS THEY'RE SAID.  
"EMPOWERMENT", "MENTORSHIP", "IMPACT"

**INT. BLACKSMITH SHOP - DAY**

The Blacksmith poses with a handmade Assegai spear.

BLACKSMITH (V.O.)  
 I love smithing because it really  
 reflects something about humanity--  
 we're all like pieces of metal, and  
 we get forged by our upbringing and  
 environment, but what refines us  
 into something beautiful, our  
 decisions--

SUPER: AS SHE SPEAKS, "ADVOCACY", "TAX-EXEMPT", "COMMUNITY"

**EXT. STOCK FOOTAGE**

Stock footage of migrating geese.

SUPER: "SUSTAINABILITY"

**INT. BLACKSMITH SHOP -DAY**

The Blacksmith's interview.

BLACKSMITH  
 It hasn't always been easy finding  
 a way to express that in my  
 business, but with the  
 Foundation's--  
     (slow, looking offscreen)  
     --non-collateral regenerative  
 microfinancing--  
     (normal speed)  
 I've been able to spend less time  
 in the books and more time--

**INT. BOARDROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Hanna pauses the video and turns to the board members. The boardroom's pristine with tons of natural light. They sit in a variety of comfortable seating; beanbag chairs, Pantons, etc.

The head of the board, CRAIG, does mini-squats on a yoga ball while rapidly clicking a pen.

HANNA  
 So, there's obviously a lot more,  
 but I just wanted to check in, any  
 thoughts so far?

Light, approving murmurs from around the room.

BOARD MEMBER 1  
 Is she really one of our proteges?

HANNA

Yes!

A passive nod from the board member.

BOARD MEMBER 2

So I can get one of those spears?

HANNA

You can buy one, for sure!

A grunt of disappointment.

HANNA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I often have intrusive thoughts.  
Sometimes, I think I hate my job.

BOARD MEMBER 2

I mean, blacksmiths are sick, I  
actually forged my own Katana in  
Kyushu last April.

(re: Hanna's confusion)

In Japan. Really beautiful when the  
Sakuras are in bloom.

BOARD MEMBER 3

Fuck, I've always wanted to go to  
Japan! I just don't wanna be one of  
those white guys who wants to go to  
Japan.

BOARD MEMBER 2

Bro, if you think you've ever rock-  
climbed in the States--

HANNA

--Wow, really insightful feedback,  
everyone! Any questions about  
impact or donor reception?

CRAIG

Hanna, I think we all just kinda  
need a sec to absorb and reflect.  
Kinda like--  
Digest all this info. Okay?

HANNA

Yeah! Yeah, of course. Digestion,  
that's what people do with  
information.

CRAIG

Let's break for lunch, be back in  
forty?

Approving murmurs from around the room, and they clear out. While Hanna packs up, Craig approaches her.

CRAIG (CONT'D)  
Awesome presentation, very  
powerful. Fierce. Devastating.  
(to her shock)  
In a good way.

HANNA  
Oh, yeah, thank you. I live to  
devastate!

She laughs then looks down to the side in barely  
intelligible shame.

CRAIG  
I did just wanna put forward some  
information, see if as Assistant  
Director of Communications you had  
any thoughts.

HANNA  
Sure, yeah.

CRAIG  
So we're having issues with a major  
donor. Threatening to pull funding.  
Asking us to rearrange staff.  
Calling us, um...'insufferable  
butt-chugs'.

HANNA  
Oh no! How major?

She asks the question but knows the answer. Craig knows she  
knows the answer.

CRAIG  
Your dad.

Hanna squeaks with a tight smile.

#### **INT. FRONT DESK - AFTERNOON**

Herbie's manning the front desk, watching a violent and  
manic daytime talkshow show al a 'Maury' on a tiny tv with a  
staticy screen. He sketches on a piece of paper while he  
watches.

One of the guests on the show is confronting another, saying  
something along the lines of 'not coming for my house'. Or  
family, or business, or whatever.

Herbie's into it though, a look of angry concentration while he sketches a particularly vengeful looking swan.

HERBIE

(under his breath)

Not in my house -- not my motel --  
nope, I won't sell. Big Dave? More  
like big jerk!

The show turns violent. After a moment, Herbie's eyes go up, and he's shocked to see a visitor had entered without his detection. He throws down the sketchpad and turns off the tv.

It's Shimon, who's giving off heavy Santa vibes with a warm smile extending down to Herbie. Herbie smiles back.

HERBIE (CONT'D)

Oh, sorry! Didn't see you there!

SHIMON

No worries! No worries.

He steps forward to the desk.

SHIMON (CONT'D)

I need a room.

HERBIE

Of course.

He grabs his ledger.

HERBIE (CONT'D)

How many nights?

SHIMON

Nights? Eh -- don't know. I'll keep  
paying.

HERBIE

Yeah, we've got permanent guests,  
shouldn't be an issue.

SHIMON

And people, they'll go in and out.  
Friends of mine. This won't be a  
problem?

HERBIE

Ah, course not.

(in a stage whisper)

Hardly even know who's here right  
now!

Shimon chuckles heartily.

SHIMON  
That's what I was hoping.

HERBIE  
Can I get a name for the room?

SHIMON  
Last name: Greenbaum. First name:  
Shimon.

HERBIE  
Alright, 'Rabbi Shimon', I like it!

Shimon looks perplexed but says nothing.

HERBIE (CONT'D)  
Y'know my birth mom's a Jew!  
(chuckles)  
I was adopted, though. Catholics.

He mocks being whapped by a ruler and laughs with great pain. Shimon smirks politely.

SHIMON  
You're born to a Jewish mother?  
You're always a Jew. That's the  
rule.

He smiles at Herbie warmly, who receives it gratefully. Shimon's eyes become fixed on a bowl on the counter. From it, he grabs a custom matchbox with a design of a swan on it.

SHIMON (CONT'D)  
You have your own matchboxes?

HERBIE  
Yeah, what can I say? I'm old  
fashioned like that. Kids today buy  
ads on the internet.  
(scoffs)  
Nothing beats human connection.

SHIMON  
No, it doesn't. That's my job,  
after all.

HERBIE  
Rabbi?

A hearty chuckle from Shimon.

SHIMON  
Eh--connector.

He holds the matchbox up and shakes it gratefully before planting it in his coat pocket. He leaves, and Herbie smiles after him.

HERBIE (V.O.)  
Life's funny like that; sometimes  
it's chocolate, sometimes it's mud.  
Either way, you still eat it.

**INT. ANTIQUE SHOP - DAY**

Dave stands with Clarice (late 20s) in the showroom of an upscale antique dealer. She's got jet-black hair pulled into a tight bun. She's leaned against a column, working on her phone.

Dave peruses the shop's selection, hands gliding respectfully over a stack of oriental rugs.

BIG DAVE  
You know, Clarice, I'm thinking of  
replacing the rug in the dining  
hall.

CLARICE  
The Chinese one?

BIG DAVE  
Yeah, that's it. Qing piece, with  
the Azure Dragon. Thinking a *Gabbeh*  
might work better. Darker pallete.

CLARICE  
Something wrong with it, sir?

BIG DAVE  
No, no. It's beautiful. But guests  
keep dropping food on it. Fucking  
chimps.

A door slams, and Dave turns around to see Hanna enter. Immediate disappointment on his face. Hanna's furious.

HANNA  
What the fuck? You're pulling your  
donation?!

BIG DAVE  
Clarice, go ahead and cancel my  
11:30. I'll need a cigar.

Clarice nods before exiting. There's a shift as she does; anger from Dave. From Hanna, submission. Shoulders slouched, eye contact averted.

BIG DAVE (CONT'D)  
Well, well, if it isn't my loving daughter!  
(coldly)  
What a surprise.

HANNA  
Dad, what's going on?! Why are you threatening the Foundation?

BIG DAVE  
Ah. Straight to business.  
(beat)  
I wasn't aware you were so close to my assistant.

He inspects a Bedouin coffee grinder in his hand. She steps forward hesitantly.

HANNA  
What are you talking about?

BIG DAVE  
Clarice. My assistant.

HANNA  
What about her?

He places down the grinder and moves to a window. His eyes narrow at a HOUSELESS PERSON walking by.

BIG DAVE  
Well, a month ago, I ask Clarice to send out the invites for the yearly Seder at the beach house in Tulum.

He turns back to her.

BIG DAVE (CONT'D)  
The same beach house we had your wedding, which, let me remind you, I paid for.

Anger's building.

BIG DAVE (CONT'D)  
Now, I ask her a couple days ago the status on the RSVPs. And I was expecting some nos, of course.  
(MORE)

BIG DAVE (CONT'D)  
Kushners wanna eat some oversalted  
matzo balls in their own tacky  
hovel? Who gives a shit.

She's stressed.

BIG DAVE (CONT'D)  
What I wasn't expecting was two  
'can't make its' from my OWN  
DAUGHTER and her goy husband!

He pants heavy, calming down.

BIG DAVE (CONT'D)  
So, Hanna Sarah, I will repeat  
myself: I wasn't aware you were so  
close with Clarice you'd let her  
know before you STABBED ME IN THE  
BACK.

HANNA  
Tarren and I just thought, um, with  
the pregnancy, it might be easier  
to just see Mom--

BIG DAVE  
--Oh, cut the shit, Hanna Sarah!  
It's a week-long holiday, you have  
more than enough time to see that  
money-grubbing harpy--

HANNA  
--Dad--

BIG DAVE  
--AND come to Tulum!

She's at a loss for words. After a moment:

HANNA  
Dad, I should go.

BIG DAVE  
Fine. Go.  
(then)  
I love you.

HANNA  
I love you too.

She exits. Dave withdraws a cigar from his coat pocket.

**INT. GARAGE - LATER**

Hanna enters her car, a Tesla or something. She starts to sob. Suddenly, she slams down on the accelerator, puts the car into drive, and flies forward into the wall. There's a sudden crash, then--

That never happened. She shakes her head and feels her body after having not died in a horrible, tragic accident.

HANNA (V.O.)  
See? Intrusive thoughts.

**EXT. STREET - DAY**

Herbie's walking down the sidewalk, through the familiar bustle of the Bushwick he knows. He moves unnoticed by a Latin grocer. Picks a quarter off the ground and drops it in a BUCKET DRUMMER's tip jar.

He finds himself in front of a coffee shop. He watches the HIPSTERS inside working on their laptops. There's a small smile on his face.

Then, he turns a corner. A street of empty, modern condos. Hesitantly, he moves closer.

**INT. CONDO - MOMENTS LATER**

Herbie enters a condo building. Its walls are glass. Surfaces clean. There's nobody around. Nobody. There's fear on his oily face. He takes another step inside. Still nobody.

His eyes finally land on a water cooler full of cucumbers. Above it, there's a TV playing an animated logo of Centurion Properties. He approaches, picks up a paper cup next to it. As he's filling it:

MANAGER (O.S.)  
Is there something I can help you with?

He turns around, startled. A PROPERTY MANAGER'S standing there, their white lanyard gleaming below an unfriendly demeanor.

MANAGER (CONT'D)  
Sir. Is there anything you need?  
Someone you're waiting for?

HERBIE  
Oh--no, I was just walking by--

MANAGER

Okay, I'll ask one more time. Is there something I can help you with?

Understanding dawns on Herbie's face; there is no question. Only a demand. He puts down the cup.

**INT. FRONT DESK - DAY**

Herbie's at the front desk with Anthony again. He's sketching again, holding his head in a melancholy pose. He's drawing another swan, this time with a sad face, teardrops dripping from its face.

HERBIE

Do yourself a favor, Tony. Don't get old.

ANTHONY

I'm seventeen.

HERBIE

Yeah? Well, better stay that way. Getting old's like buying a slice of pizza with cat food on it.

ANTHONY

Why would you do that?

Herbie sighs.

HERBIE

I've got it, here. Go on your break, kid.

Anthony nods and walks off. There's a sudden ringing; the front desk's being called. Herbie picks it up.

HERBIE (CONT'D)

Swan of Bushwick, this is Herbie.

BIG DAVE (O.S.)

Putnam Capital, LLC.

His face drops.

HERBIE

Mr. Cohen?

BIG DAVE (O.S.)

(slowly)

Putnam Capital, L. L. C.

HERBIE  
Mr. Cohen, I don't know what you're  
talking about.

**INT. BIG DAVE'S OFFICE - SAME TIME**

Big Dave stares happily at the viscous jar.

BIG DAVE  
What was it? Bet the house on the  
ponies?

HERBIE (O.S.)  
Big Dave, you're scaring me--

BIG DAVE  
--Liquor? Blow? Whores?

HERBIE (O.S.)  
I don't understand--

BIG DAVE  
--I'm asking what put you eight  
hundred thousand dollars in debt,  
Herb.  
(beat)  
I just got off the phone with a  
gentleman over at Putnam Capital.  
Business is booming for them,  
especially for a local bank like  
that. In fact, numbers are so good  
they're looking for a buyer.

**INT. FRONT DESK - SAME TIME**

Recognition suddenly dawns on Herbie's face; he's screwed.

HERBIE  
Big Dave, please...

BIG DAVE (O.S.)  
I bought the bank, you fuck.  
(then)  
I need you and your gaggle of  
degenerates out of my building by  
Monday.

HERBIE  
Please, what about the money? The  
fifteen mil--

BIG DAVE  
--The deal's gone, asshole. You get  
nothing.

(MORE)

BIG DAVE (CONT'D)  
 (then)  
 Some people are just losers,  
 Herbert. And you're one of them.

He hangs up. Herbie dashes up the stairs in a panic.

**INT. MOTEL HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER**

Herbie runs into the hallway, looking like a teddy bear coming apart at the seams.

In the hall, he sees Shimon with another Hasid: a gargantuan, bear-like Sephardi, who pushes a cart carrying large cans labelled "EXODUS OLIVES". This is **YOSSI FLORES** (30s).

Like all Kosher food products, the olives' packaging uses bright colors, outdated graphics, and light Zionist imagery. Shimon smiles and nods to Herbie, who returns the gesture.

HERBIE  
 (re: the Hasid)  
 One of your friends?

SHIMON  
 Yes. Just here for a little.

HERBIE  
 Huh. Didn't know Jews could get so strong. So how you been finding your stay?

Shimon gestures to his associate to keep going.

SHIMON  
 (in Hebrew)  
 I'll catch up.  
 (to Herbie, in English)  
 Perfect. Everything I need.

Yossi heads off.

HERBIE  
 Great to hear it! Ice machine's broken, by the way, but I got an ice try in my freezer you can use.

Herbie trails off, eyes lost in worry. Shimon watches, perplexed.

SHIMON  
 Is something bothering you?

HERBIE

Oh, nothing! Nothing at all.

SHIMON

I know a lot about nothing.

Herbie seems confused. After a moment:

HERBIE

Just some money stuff. Y'know. Put thirty years into a failing business with nothin' to show for it but a family that hates me.

(then)

Staring into the abyss!

He chuckles uncomfortably.

HERBIE (CONT'D)

Silly stuff like that. Money stuff.

Shimon strokes his beard deep in thought.

SHIMON

I think maybe there's no such thing as money problems. Maybe you need more. Sometimes you even need less. But the money's never the *mamish* problem.

(a beat)

So, what's it for you?

HERBIE

I--I guess I need more?

SHIMON

But is that the problem?

HERBIE

Yes?

SHIMON

Then why don't you have it?

Herbie's clueless. The Hasid chuckles.

SHIMON (CONT'D)

The Maggid of Kozhnitz was once approached by a student of his. One of his most pious students, who everyone knew was a *tzaddik*, a great man.

(MORE)

SHIMON (CONT'D)

(a beat)

But he was poor. Very, very poor, and, *Baruch Hashem*, many people relied on him, but he had no way of making money.

Herbie listens, enraptured and confused. Shimon steps closer.

SHIMON (CONT'D)

So he asks the Maggid, "*Rebbe*, I can't stand to see my family starve! What can I do?" And the Maggid asks him, "Have you tried to take a trade?" He says, "I've tried, but when I reach for the tools, my fingers cramp up and become immobile." He asks if he's tried to be a merchant, he says, "When I try to ask for the loan I need, my throat closes and I can't speak".

Even closer.

SHIMON (CONT'D)

So the Maggid thinks and tells him, "Then there is only one profession suitable for you."

HERBIE

(awestruck)

What was it?

SHIMON

"It is revealed to me, through Divine Wisdom, that you must become a thief."

(beat)

I can't remember the rest of the story, but the point is this; we are allowed to break Shabbos to save a life. We're allowed to be violent to save a life.

(then)

Why should stealing be any different?

He gives Herbie a final knowing smile before walking off.

**EXT. MAGAZINE STAND - MOMENTS LATER**

Herbie rushes to a magazine stand on the street and begins to search them rapidly, grabbing anything he can find mentioning Big Dave. Or real estate, or Centurion Properties. Anything tied to him.

HERBIE (V.O.)  
Some things about Brooklyn? Some  
things never change.

He finds a front-page profile on the man in a business magazine: 'THE HIGH PRIEST OF BROOKLYN REAL ESTATE'

HERBIE (CONT'D)  
(muttering psychotically)  
Perfect! Perfect.

HERBIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
Always gonna be the workin' stiff  
stretchin' a dollar from a dime.

He thumbs through it briefly and tucks it under his elbow.

HERBIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
Always gonna be the crooks cheatin'  
'em out of a paycheck.

He runs off with about a dozen newspapers and magazines in tow. A MAGAZINE VENDOR angrily chases after him for a moment before giving up.

VENDOR  
What the hell!

HERBIE (V.O.)  
And there's always gonna be the  
thieves who do what they gotta do  
to survive.

**INT. HERBIE'S OFFICE AND BEDROOM - LATER**

Herbie rushes into his office which is also his bedroom and dumps the pulp on the cot he sleeps on. Grabbing the profile first, he begins to peruse.

HERBIE (V.O.)  
Maybe I've been pretending to be a  
stiff for too long.

He sees Big Dave posing at some gala with Hanna, smiles plastered on both their faces.

HERBIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 Maybe it ain't so bad to be a  
 thief.

He reads through the article, his finger following his eyes,  
 and comes to the following:

HERBIE (CONT'D)  
 (muttering)  
 'Golf's great for that-good for  
 networking too. I spend all day  
 Thursday at the club--"  
 (then)  
 --Thursday. Thursday!

# I/E. HANNA'S CAR - AFTERNOON

Hanna's stuck in bumper-bumper traffic.

HANNA (V.O.)  
 Another intrusive thought: I'm  
 stuck in traffic on Ocean Parkway  
 and a houseless man's walking car  
 to car tapping on the windows,  
 trying to get peoples' attention  
 over something.

Just as she said, a HOUSELESS MAN walks between vehicles  
 tapping on the windows. There's incessant honking.

HANNA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 He has some obvious form of  
 neurodiversity. Likely drugs, too,  
 which isn't surprising; autistic  
 adults are nine times more likely  
 to form some sort of substance  
 dependency than neurotypical  
 people. I'll send you the study.  
 Anyways, eventually, he comes to my  
 car--

Finally, he approaches her car and begins to tap, rambling  
 incoherently about something she can't understand. Her eyes  
 stoically remain glued on the road ahead.

HANNA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 --and I consider slamming him with  
 the door--

She does so, and he falls to the ground with a cry of pain.  
 She rises from the vehicle with a crazed look and a tennis  
 racquet in her hand.

HANNA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 --and beating him with my tennis  
 racquet till he either runs away--

She begins to hit him with the racquet, screaming with rage.

HANNA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 --or his limbs stop moving.

TARREN (PRE-LAP)  
 Hanna, which was your favorite  
 piece?

# **INT. BOUGIE RESTAURANT - EVENING**

Hanna comes to her senses. She's at dinner. TARREN LEE-COHEN (30's), her husband, is there, underdressed for a place like this. He's an affable and attractive guy around her age. With a fit bit, obviously.

A table of their shared FRIENDS watches her expectantly. Right, she was asked a question.

HANNA  
 Sorry, more specifically?

TARREN  
 (chuckles, embarrassed)  
 At the Borghese.  
 (then)  
 In Rome.

She smiles.

HANNA  
 Babe, I remember the Borghese. I  
 mean like, sculptures? Paintings?

FRIEND 1  
 Anything!

HANNA  
 Um--I really loved 'Saint Jerome  
 Writing'.

TARREN  
 Oh, absolutely. Great pick.

HANNA  
 I know! Just so haunting. Stoic.

FRIEND 2  
 Really? You don't think it  
 fetishizes the male intellect?  
 (MORE)

FRIEND 2 (CONT'D)  
Exalts the patriarchal thinker to a  
place of divinity?

Hanna turns to Tarren with wide eyes and a tense smile.

TARREN  
(diplomatically)  
I mean, it's definitely something  
to consider, but the subject is so  
feeble. His hand literally reaches  
out to a skull, his halo fading,  
death imminent--

FRIEND 2  
--And yet, it's still a man.

TARREN  
Sure.

Hanna's face shifts to relaxed annoyance.

FRIEND 2  
His frailty is obviously a virtue.  
He comes off as some titan of  
Logos, too contemplative for his  
mortal coil.

HANNA  
I think he just looks lonely.

An awkward silence, and Hanna reaches over to Tarren's wine  
glass before removing her hand.

HANNA (CONT'D)  
(smiling)  
Whoops! Can't drink!

More awkward silence.

FRIEND 1  
By the way Hanna, so sorry to hear  
about the job, I'm sure you'll find  
a better fit elsewhere.

HANNA  
What?

FRIEND 1  
Well, Sam had lunch with your Dad.  
He says he's gonna replace you. Is  
that not true?

HANNA  
(with pained  
cheerfulness)

Hm.

She smiles to the table and quickly gets up from her seat. The moment she turns from the group, there's panic on her face. Tarren follows after her.

TARREN  
Hanna!

**INT. BOUGIE RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS**

Hanna's leaving the restaurant, briskly. Tarren gives chase.

TARREN  
Hey! Babe!

She stops in her tracks and turns around exasperated.

HANNA  
What, Tarren?

TARREN  
Hanna, you don't have to be at his  
beck and call, don't let him ruin  
your dinner.

HANNA  
Yeah, nothing more sacred than  
dinner.

TARREN  
Don't be like that.

HANNA  
No, you're right. I'll sacrifice my  
job so I can listen to half a dozen  
financiers' mutual-art-history-BA-  
masturbation for the third time  
this month.

Tarren avoids eye contact, arms crossed with embarrassment.

TARREN  
You know what Doctor Salsburg says  
about your sarcasm.

HANNA  
Probably something snappy and  
unattainable.

She storms off.

**EXT. BOUGIE RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER**

Hanna's pacing on the sidewalk as she places a call.

HANNA

Dad?

Big Dave answers. He sounds unsurprised.

BIG DAVE (O.S.)

Yes, my dear?

She strains against the following words:

HANNA

Can we meet? In person?

BIG DAVE (O.S.)

Of course! When's good for you?

HANNA

Um, Thursday, maybe? At three?

BIG DAVE (O.S.)

Well, I'd usually be at the golf course.

HANNA

Oh.

BIG DAVE (O.S.)

But I can always make time for my little girl.

HANNA

Okay. Thanks, Dad.

BIG DAVE (O.S.)

And Hanna.

HANNA

Yeah?

BIG DAVE (O.S.)

I'm assuming this meeting is an apology?

A long, painful silence.

HANNA

Yeah, dad. Of course.

BIG DAVE (O.S.)  
Excellent. I'll see you then. I  
love you.

HANNA  
Love you, too. Bye.

She hangs up.

**EXT. MANSION - AFTERNOON**

While a SECURITY GUARD paces in the background, a pair of gloved hands open a large, rectangular window. A light grunt and those same hands hoist a lithe, slender body through the opening.

SUPER: THURSDAY

**INT. MANSION - MOMENTS LATER**

Herbie stalks silently through the halls of the mansion. Numerous portraits of Big Dave plaster the wall, as well as a series of trophies from exotic animals he's slaughtered.

Herbie wears his same ugly duster, with driving gloves and a bandana to cover his face. On his eyes, a pair of vintage aviator goggles, with a moth-ridden fedora on his head. Heavy hamburglar vibes.

He carries an open backpack as he moves.

HERBIE (V.O.)  
Eight hundred grand...mook like  
this has gotta have enough knick  
knacks to clear eight hundred  
grand.

**INT. MANSION - MOMENTS LATER**

An antique Venetian bust is swept up and tossed into the backpack. A solid gold trophy for 'business man of the year'. An Athenian obol resting in a velvet display case.

**INT. BIG DAVE'S OFFICE - LATER**

Herbie cautiously creaks open the office door and makes his way to the desk. He looks curiously at the assorted items. He grabs a Rolex and stores it in the backpack. A Roman Gladius is too big to carry.

Finally, he grabs the viscous jar and eyes it curiously.

BIG DAVE (O.S.)  
"My throat stays clear."

Herbie freezes, terrified. Big Dave's standing in the doorway behind him. He enters the office.

BIG DAVE (CONT'D)

Two years ago, I was diagnosed with throat cancer. I'm partial to Cuban cigars, though I'm sure you've already rifled through my collection enough to know that. Runs in the family, so I wasn't too surprised.

Herbie turns towards him cautiously.

BIG DAVE (CONT'D)

Crook doctor had the audacity to tell me I could never smoke again. That I'd speak through a fucking box.

(beat)

Six months later, they pulled that miserable pile of cells out of me, and I've been cancer-free since. I keep the tumor in that jar you're holding as a reminder:

(then, malevolently)

My throat. Stays. Clear.

There's silence, and Herbie looks down at the jar, disgusted. He places it back on the desk.

BIG DAVE (CONT'D)

What the fuck are you wearing, Herb?

The thief's panic deepens when his name is said.

HERBIE

How-I'm not--

BIG DAVE

Don't bullshit me, Urinelli. How many of my enemies smell like dry cum and cigarette burns?

He crosses to his mini bar and starts to pour himself a drink.

BIG DAVE (CONT'D)

I'll admit though, I'm impressed. Didn't know you'd have the balls to pull something like this.

Whiskey in hand, he turns back to Herbie, who rips off the bandana, goggles and hat.

HERBIE  
Please, Big Dave--

He drops to his knees.

HERBIE (CONT'D)  
(desperate)  
I'll do anything, just don't take  
the Swan.

Big Dave savors the caramel liquid in his mouth, swishing it slowly back and forth. After a moment, he swallows. Then:

BIG DAVE  
No.

Herbie goes back to his feet and inches closer to the other man. His desperation only intensifies the longer he speaks.

HERBIE  
Is it money? I'll-I'll work off the  
debt. I'll renovate, make it fancy,  
trendy, whatever you want!  
(to Big Dave's silence)  
How about a suck job? Is that what  
you want? I'm real good.  
(a light smile)  
I know you rich jerks are twisted.  
I can push your buttons just right,  
any day, any time.

He reaches for the backpack.

HERBIE (CONT'D)  
Here, I'll put it all back, right  
where I found it. I'm sorry I even-  
-I don't know what got into me.

He watches for a reaction. Anything.

HERBIE (CONT'D)  
(tearing up)  
I need this, Dave. You have no idea  
how much I need this.

A long, long silence. Until the glass is empty. Then:

BIG DAVE  
You disgust me, Herbert. Do you  
know why you disgust me?  
(MORE)

BIG DAVE (CONT'D)

(then)

Because there is a celestial bureaucracy, Herb. People in charge and people who aren't--as above, so below.

(a beat)

And, usually, the plebs respect this. They take the jobs they're given, and even if they're miserable after four decades of hard labor, they don't fucking complain.

He moves to the window and looks to the same houseless person as before.

BIG DAVE (CONT'D)

But now that's changing. You whine and beg like a dog someone's indulgent wife let sit under the dinner table. But puerile ass-licking won't save you for the same reason it couldn't save the dinosaur from the asteroid; it was never up to me.

A sudden *click*. Big Dave turns as Herbie draws the little .22 from the duster pocket. Herbie's breath is ragged while his arm shakes and points the weapon towards the larger man. Big Dave laughs heartily.

BIG DAVE (CONT'D)

What the hell do you think you're gonna do with that little thing?

HERBIE

Say you'll give me back the Swan!

BIG DAVE

Or what, you'll upholster me?

The gun remains aimed.

HERBIE

I'm serious, you, you--

BIG DAVE

Cunt? Fuck? Asshole?

HERBIE

Bully! You greedy, greedy, bully!

Big Dave laughs again, only louder.

BIG DAVE

Look at him! Like an old Scorsese  
flick. You will never shoot me,  
Herb. There is a celestial  
bureaucracy--

BANG!

A bullet lands in the magnate's torso. Both look to the wound in shock, and Big Dave moves his hand over it and inspects the blood. His expression lowers.

BIG DAVE (CONT'D)

YOU LITTLE SHIT!

He advances towards Herbie in a rage. Panicked, Herbie fires again, and the lead lands in Big Dave's shoulder. It doesn't slow him.

The smaller man attempts to take another shot, but the gun jams. Again, under \$100. Big Dave reaches him, and, with a loud yell, slams him into the wall. His hands move around his neck and he squeezes. Hard.

Herbie gasps under the magnate's superior strength. His bloodshot eyes roll back into his head. The lights dim. He screeches out in agony...

...and brings his trigger-hand to Big Dave's neck.

BANG!

Blood spurts from the rich man's throat. Shock overtakes his face as he staggers backwards, gurgling and muttering incoherently.

Finally, he falls with a CRASH and the desk is destroyed underneath him. Herbie gasps for air while rubbing his neck. He looks with eyes wide at Big Dave's body.

HERBIE

(panicked)

Sweet Martha's Vineyard!!!

He redons his disguise.

HERBIE (CONT'D)

Ah jeez, oh god, etc.

He grabs the backpack and rushes out.

**EXT. MANSION (ENTRANCE) - SAME TIME**

Hanna's standing at the front door. She rings the doorbell and waits for a response. Nothing. Confused, she pulls out her key and unlocks it before entering.

**INT. MANSION (FOYER) - CONTINUOUS**

Hanna cautiously enters the foyer. She glares at a large portrait hanging below the stairwell of her as a child, Big Dave, and her mother, whose face has been altered to that of a tape worm.

HANNA  
Dad? Are you here?

**INT. BIG DAVE'S OFFICE**

She pushes open the door.

HANNA  
Dad?  
(then)  
DAD?!

She sees his body above the wreckage of his desk and rushes to him, crying.

HANNA (CONT'D)  
Daddy?! Daddy, no!

She kneels above him and holds his face.

BIG DAVE  
(gurgling blood)  
...fucking--dinosaur...

He dies.

HANNA  
(sobbing)  
No, please, no.

She pulls out her phone and dials 911.

HANNA (CONT'D)  
Hello? There's been a shooting!

She goes to her feet and paces.

HANNA (CONT'D)  
It's my father. He-yes.

Suddenly, she feels something crunch underfoot. She kneels down to find a matchbox with an old design of a Swan.

**EXT. MANSION - DAY**

A big manor in Flatbush, grasping at 'Citizen Kane' but not quite reaching it. A stretcher's wheeled out with a plus-sized body bag. Frenzied JOURNALISTS snap pictures.

Hanna emerges from the building. Mascara runs down her cheeks. As the cameras turn toward her, she wipes away the mess of her face and briefly attempts a smile before thinking better of it.

JOURNALISTS

Hanna! Any comment on how you failed as a daughter? / Hanna! Which is a bigger disappointment? Your father's death or your '3' on the High School APUSH exam? / Hanna! Are you really pregnant or just fat?

HANNA

(panicked)

No comment! Our book didn't cover the Whiskey Rebellion! No comment!

REPORTER (V.O)

Shockwaves throughout Brooklyn as real estate magnate David 'Big Dave' Cohen is found dead in his home.

**EXT. MANSION (FACADE) - CONTINUOUS**

A news report from a few yards away. A REPORTER speaks to the camera while an image of Big Dave is displayed on the screen.

REPORTER

We're reporting live from Flatbush, where it appears that Mr. Cohen's unaccomplished daughter, Hanna Cohen-Lee--

An image of Hanna replaces Big Dave. She's biting into a slice of pizza, taken in secret from around the corner.

REPORTER (CONT'D)

--shown here eating poorly, discovered her father's body at approximately 3:45 today.

(MORE)

REPORTER (CONT'D)  
By her age, Big Dave already  
accomplished so much more--

Suddenly, groaning from inside the bodybag.

BIG DAVE (O.S.)  
Gahh! Argh! etc.

**EXT. MANSION (ENTRANCE) - CONTINUOUS**

The body thrashes, and gasps emit from the crowd. The bag bursts open like in 'Alien', and Big Dave rises up to a seated position.

His eyes are wide and bloodshot, a bullet wound obvious on his neck. He stares at Hanna. She reacts.

HANNA  
Sorry, Dad.

He rolls his eyes in a grand gesture of disapproval.

BIG DAVE  
Coward.

**EXT. MANSION (FRONT LAWN) - SAME TIME**

Hanna watches the paramedics push the stretcher towards a waiting ambulance. Dad's body's on it, of course. He's dead.

HANNA (V.O.)  
The thing is, I don't really have  
intrusive thoughts--

She follows them towards the gate, ignoring the assembled photographers completely.

HANNA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
I only call them 'intrusive' to  
take away their power.

As she walks through the gate, she sees a group of POLICE OFFICERS, and looks down to her hand, where she holds onto the matchbook. She quickly hides it in her jacket.

HANNA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
And when you only give power to the  
thoughts you like--

TARREN (O.S.)  
Hey.

She turns to see Tarren waiting there. She begins to weep, and collapses into his arms. He holds her there, lovingly and silently.

HANNA (V.O.)  
--You lose sight of what's real.

**INT. HANNA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Hanna's sitting legs crossed in bed in a hoodie and sweatpants. She's on a zoom call with her PSYCHIATRIST. She looks tired.

HANNA  
And my whole life, I've been trying to rebel and please him at the same time, but there was always hope that some day, love him or hate him, I'd at least have clarity. That I'd know how I feel so I can move on with my life. And maybe have one real conversation where he wasn't trying to win.

(then)  
And now he's dead. In three months, I'll be a mother, and I have no idea how to stop my child from growing to despise me.

The psychiatrist thinks before answering.

PSYCHIATRIST  
You know, I usually avoid broaching religion with my clients. But our tradition tells us that when we're in mourning, we should avoid work, big gatherings. Cooking, even, if possible.

(a beat)  
What I'm trying to say is it might be a good idea, especially with your pregnancy, to take some time off work. Pull back a little. Give yourself space to mourn your father.

There's a pause.

HANNA  
I think I need an increase in Lexapro.

**INT. FRONT DESK - NIGHT**

Herbie bursts through the front doors of the motel in a panic. Anthony's at the desk, angry.

ANTHONY

Herbie, what the fuck? My shift was over an hour ago!

HERBIE

I'll give you overtime! Time and a half! Just--stay put!

He rushes towards the stairwell.

**INT. STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS**

Herbie rushes up the stairs. Kossov's coming downstairs and stops, angry.

KOSSOV

My AC's broken again, Herbie!

HERBIE

Just a minute, Mr. Kossov!

He hurries past him.

**INT. HERBIE'S OFFICE AND BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

Herbie slams the door behind him and drops the backpack on his cot. He paces around in a panic.

HERBIE

Ah, jeez... Jesus Christ...

He rapidly rips off the gloves and throws them to the floor before he sees something in the hallway and rushes out.

**INT. MOTEL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**

He runs out to greet Shimon, who's about to enter his room.

HERBIE

Rabbi, I need to talk to you!

He grabs the Hasid by the elbow and pulls him into the room.

SHIMON

Okay...

**INT. SHIMON'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Shimon and Herbie enter the former's room. Herbie starts pacing.

SHIMON  
(concerned)  
What's going on?

HERBIE  
I did something BAD, Rabbi.  
Something real bad!

Shimon crosses to sit on his bed, which apparently has never been used.

SHIMON  
Okay?

HERBIE  
But I know how it works with you  
priests: whatever I say, you can't  
spill the beans. Just like  
confession.  
(then)  
And I gotta get this off my chest,  
'cause I got no clue what to do.  
Thought I was a big man. Fix it all  
by stealin' a couple chachkas--  
(a beat)  
--I killed a man, Rabbi. Shot him  
right in his own home! And maybe  
that makes me a monster, but he  
started it! He was comin' for me,  
for the Swan...  
(then)  
YOU said I could steal to save a  
life. So why's killing any  
different?

There's a pause.

SHIMON  
Who did you kill?

HERBIE  
Rich guy, real estate jerk. Big  
Dave Cohen.

Recognition dawns on the older man's face. A look of  
contempt? Herbie sits in a seat across from Shimon.

HERBIE (CONT'D)  
I just wanna know it'll be okay.

A long silence. Shimon appraises the situation. He leans in towards Herbie.

SHIMON  
I'm not a Rabbi.

A look of horror from Herbie. Panic, guilt. Then:

SHIMON (CONT'D)  
Jews today, we live in *galus*. You  
know what this means?

Herbie shakes his head no.

SHIMON (CONT'D)  
It means 'exile'. Even the ones in  
Israel, exile. And when we live  
among the *goyim*, we start to act  
like them.  
(then)  
Sometimes, 'cause we don't know any  
better. And sometimes, 'cause we  
got to.  
(a beat)  
So, you tell me you kill a guy, and  
I know this guy, he's not a good  
man. It's a *shonda* when a Jew's so  
evil like that. So I tell you I  
won't tell nobody, but I don't  
wanna get my hands dirty. So maybe  
after you leave, I go and rat to  
the police.  
(another beat)  
And maybe you know that. So you  
take that gun in your pocket and--

He gestures firing a gun with his hand.

SHIMON (CONT'D)  
--just like that *putz* in Flatbush.  
That's what the *goyim* do. So, we  
can act like the *goyim* if you want.  
Or, we can act like Jews. And Jews  
help each other out.

#### INT. MOTEL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The closet door's swung open and Herbie's staring at about a dozen large cans of Exodus olives stacked in a pile. Shimon still sits on the bed. Herbie reaches for a can, then:

SHIMON  
Not that one.

Herbie looks back to Shimon, perplexed. Eyes still on the older man, he reaches for another can, and he shakes his head. He digs through the cans until finally, Shimon gives him a nod.

**INT. MOTEL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

Herbie looks down confused at a large, open olive can. He looks to Shimon, who gestures for him to continue, and after a moment, Herbie rolls up his sleeve and plunges in his hand. He digs through the can and feels something unusual.

He withdraws a strange object, cylindrical and hard, and looks unsure at Shimon.

SHIMON

Rhinoceros horn. Worth more than its weight in gold. Goyim use it for medicine, think it'll cure anything. Hair loss. Cancer. *Shmeckel* don't work.

(to Herbie's reaction)

I don't gather, of course. That's barbaric. I just move stuff around.

(then)

I told you. I'm a connector.

HERBIE

Why are you showing me this?

SHIMON

So now we both know a secret. So we can help each other.

Herbie places the horn back into the can.

HERBIE

What do you want from me?

SHIMON

A piece of this motel. Not much, maybe twenty percent?

HERBIE

Jeez, Shimon...

SHIMON

I promise, I won't change nothing. It's your place, not mine.

HERBIE

I don't even know if it's mine to give away! I'm in debt--

SHIMON  
--How much?

HERBIE  
Less than a million. But not much less.

Shimon gestures: 'that's nothing'.

SHIMON  
I'll take care of it. You pay me back. No interest.  
(a beat)  
I can keep you out of trouble, Herbie. I know how to get you out of this mess. You got stuff from that house you stole?

Herbie nods.

SHIMON (CONT'D)  
I'll sell it for you. You're a thief. I've got a whole organization of lost yiddin just like you.

He leans in towards Herbie.

SHIMON (CONT'D)  
You just need to give me the gun.

HERBIE  
What?

SHIMON  
I know you kept the gun you shot him with. You don't want that getting tracked down to you. I can make it disappear.  
(then)  
I need the gun, Herbie.

He leans forward, hand open with arm outstretched. He waits expectantly while Herbie thinks. Emotions flash through his face; hesitation, excitement, fear. After a while, he places the gun in Shimon's hand.

#### **EXT. CEMETARY - DAY**

Big Dave's funeral. A procession of PALLBEARERS dressed in Roman military attire lower a pine casket, carefully engraved with a Pharonic crook and flail. A CONSERVATIVE RABBI reads from Pirkei Avot while the MOURNERS watch on.

Hanna tries her best to hold back tears.

RABBI

"Because you drowned others, they  
drowned you, and in the end, they  
that drowned you will be drowned."

He beckons Hanna forward, as well as Dave's other closest  
FRIENDS AND FAMILY. Hanna looks down at a pile of dirt in  
her hands, and she steps forth. While she walks towards the  
grave:

RABBI (CONT'D)

"More flesh, more worms. More  
property, more worry."

Hanna looks at a sea of REPORTERS filming her as she  
continues on.

RABBI (CONT'D)

"More whores, more sin. More  
poverty, more thieves."

She finally reaches the grave and looks down at it with a  
mix of contempt and confusion.

RABBI (CONT'D)

"But when one acquires a name, they  
have acquired something important;  
when one acquires knowledge--

Hanna's eyes light up. She stares up at the rabbi.

RABBI (CONT'D)

--they acquire the World to Come."

She looks back down and tosses the dirt into the awaiting  
grave.

#### **INT. MANSION (BALLROOM) - AFTERNOON**

Big Dave's shiva. Mourners dressed in black. Hors d'oeuvres  
and pastries set out on various serving dishes on a  
collapsible table.

WELL-WISHERS and OPPORTUNISTS circle Hanna and Tarren like  
hawks. She's locked in a conversation with a few ASSOCIATES  
of her dad.

ASSOCIATE 1

Your father was a great man.  
Absolute *mensch*.

HANNA  
Oh, thank you.

ASSOCIATE 2  
Absolutely. A true treasure, I'm so  
sorry for your loss.

ASSOCIATE 1  
Now, is there any chance he  
mentioned something to you about  
the Pendleton account?

HANNA  
What's that?

ASSOCIATE 2  
He had forty mil tied up with  
Pendleton.

HANNA  
We didn't really talk business.

ASSOCIATE 2  
Of course! I didn't mean to imply  
anything.

(a beat)  
I'm just assuming you know a lot  
more about what he'd want than we  
do, and with the board meeting  
coming up--

ASSOCIATE 1  
--We're hoping he'd want to jump  
ship with Pendleton.

Tarren comes up behind her and places a hand on her  
shoulder.

TARREN  
Honey, I need you.

HANNA  
Oh, sure.  
(then)  
I'm sorry, we'll have to talk about  
this another time.

They walk off.

HANNA (CONT'D)  
What's going on?

TARREN

Nothing, I just thought you need a break from that.

A faint smirk.

HANNA

Thank you.

TARREN

Hey, if this is stressing you, we can get out of here.

She looks at him confused.

HANNA

What are you talking about?

TARREN

I don't know, you just--

HANNA

--It's my dad's *shiva*, Tarren. I can't just leave. I'm sorry if you can't understand that.

TARREN

(shocked)

What?! Hanna, I--I'm worried. I've been worried about you!

CRAIG (O.S.)

Hanna!

Craig approaches them, looking grief-stricken. Hanna turns towards him and they embrace deeply.

CRAIG (CONT'D)

Aww, sweetie.

They pull apart and look at each other.

CRAIG (CONT'D)

Baruk die-ann ha-Emmitt.

HANNA

What?

CRAIG

My chiropractor said to say that. Nevermind. I'm so, so sorry for your loss.

HANNA

Thank you. Really, that means a lot.

Tarren watches her, curiously.

CRAIG

How are you holding up?

HANNA

Y'know, it's been--

(sighs)

--It's been rough, but I'm just trying to stay mindful. Keep in mind the things I'm grateful for. The people.

She smiles to Tarren. He smiles back.

CRAIG

Oh, that's so important.

(then)

Well we all miss you back at the office.

HANNA

Aw, I miss you all too. But, hey, I'll be back next week. After shiva.

TARREN

What? Honey, I thought we talked about this. Taking some time off, maybe going on an early maternity--

HANNA

--I know. I changed my mind.

Tarren sighs.

TARREN

Of course.

He nods to Craig and exits.

CRAIG

Well, I am so glad to hear you'll be returning. And, just out of curiosity, your dad's will...

HANNA

Yeah, I'm sure the Foundation will be receiving a sizeable donation.

Craig smiles.

CRAIG

Well we're so excited to hear your input for where it should go.

He turns to exit. Before he leaves:

HANNA

I actually did have an idea. For a new fellowship.

Craig turns to listen.

HANNA (CONT'D)

There's this motel in Bushwick, been there forever. It's fallen on some hard times, but there's a lot of people who rely on it for affordable housing. Sex workers, immigrants...

CRAIG

Yeah, we'll definitely take a look. See about grants, mentors. What's it called?

HANNA

The Swan of Bushwick.

HERBIE (PRE-LAP)

If you're a swan, and you know deep down that you're a swan, but the whole world treats you like a duck, what are you?

#### **INT. SYNAGOGUE - DAY**

Shimon enters a synagogue filled with HASIDIC MEN to say his afternoon prayers. He's met with warmth and admiration as the congregants greet him and shake his hand.

HERBIE (PRE-LAP)

A lonely swan? A crazy duck?

He's approached by Yossi, who greets him discreetly. Shimon covertly whispers something in his ear and slipping a note in his hands., and he nods before walking briskly out the door.

As he leaves, he looks down at the note. It's an index card with Herbie's face on it, Hebrew lettering next to it.

**INT. APARTMENT - DAY**

Hanna enters her apartment and looks immediately worried.  
Two DETECTIVES are waiting with Tarren in her living room.

HERBIE (PRE-LAP)  
What would you do to find out the  
truth?

**INT. KOSSOV'S ROOM - DAY**

Herbie sits next to Kossov on his bed. He's shirtless, and  
Kossov looks uncomfortable.

HERBIE  
And, if you knew, would it really  
make a difference?

There's a pause.

KOSSOV  
What are you talking about, Herbie?

He stares at the Ukranian with a depressed intensity.

HERBIE  
Your AC's fucked, Mr. Kossov.

He rises from the bed, crossing to the door. He stops.

HERBIE (CONT'D)  
Sorry for the foul language.

FADE TO BLACK.

**THE END**