

BRENDA GARRISON works late.

Mid 20's blonde, trim, efficient, pretty in a professional way, she gathers up all she needs for the meeting tomorrow.

BRENDA

(on speaker phone)

I never said that! Wait a minute--
wait a minute--

(now she waits, the
silence to her
advantage)

What I said-- what I told you
plainly was I couldn't go with
those numbers you gave me--

MAN

(on the phone)

Brenda--

BRENDA

(snaps)

Wait!

(silence)

I couldn't go with those numbers
because they were not vetted
through Henderson or Trask in
legal-- is that right?

(silence)

Is that r--

MAN

(on the phone)

Yes.

Stands, gathers her materials-- body language says "this is over".

BRENDA

I'll wing it through the meeting
and promise the figures by close
of business tomorrow-- and I
better have them.

MAN

(on the phone)

Listen, Brenda--

Click-- she cuts him off and heads for the door.

2 EXT. MADISON AVENUE BROKERS OFFICE -- NIGHT

2

Clouds threaten. Brenda hustles out from the brightly lit lobby. Her eyes scan as she clicks her heels quickly to the curb. The street gleams back silent and empty.

BRENDA

Shit...

She digs out her phone. As she does, a yellow cab speeds around a corner and heads her way.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

(waits for)

Lisa-- it's me. I know I'm late.

She watches the cab pull to the curb and stop.

It's older than most-- fifteen years or more, by the look of it. Fades Yellow, peeled decals, a cracked window.

At first repulsed, she checks the street-- nothing else--

BRENDA (CONT'D)

(into phone)

The same old same old-- working late, again!

Screw it-- she opens the door and hustles in, juggling her books and papers.

3 INT. HELL CAB -- NIGHT

3

She's barely in the seat and turns to the door when the cab suddenly lunges from the curb.

The door slams shut for her-- she spills some papers and folders!

BRENDA

JESUS CHRIST!

The DRIVER turns part way back to her. A fogged, scarred and warped piece of plastic separates them-- except for a soda can hole where money passes back and forth:

DRIVER

You looked like you were in a hurry!

BRENDA

I am, but good God, man!

DRIVER

Where to?

BRENDA

(gathers her papers)
Head for the Village--

DRIVER

You got it!

Brenda settles in, back on her phone--

BRENDA

Lisa? It's this fucking cab
dir--
(then)
Lisa-- hello? Hello?
(checks her phone)
God damn it, great! Great!

She tries again. Moves her phone around as if searching for a signal.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

I hate this shit--

DRIVER

Where in the village?

BRENDA

God damn--
(looks out the window)
Forget that-- I can't get through
to my friend--
(closes the phone,
gathers her stuff)
-- I've got work to do anyway--

DRIVER

Where to, then?

BRENDA

I guess I'll go home--

And before she can utter a word, the Driver slams the cab into a hard LEFT, cutting into a quiet street.

Brenda crashes against the door-- spilling her paperwork a second time--

BRENDA (CONT'D)

JESUS GOD! WHAT THE HELL'S
WRONG WITH YOU?

DRIVER

You said you wanted to go home!

Brenda shuffles her stuff again--

BRENDA
 Look, just stop and let me--
 (she looks out the
 window)
 I didn't tell you where I--

DRIVER
 I know where you live.

It sinks in slowly--

BRENDA
 You what-- ?

DRIVER
 East Seventy-third and Second,
 across from Central Park--

Brenda chokes back her fear--

BRENDA
 Pull over--

The Driver laughs. Speeds up--

BRENDA (CONT'D)
 PULL THIS CAB OVER!

4 EXT. HELL CAB ON THE STREET -- NIGHT

4

And HELL CAB wheels right through a stop sign-- speeding up as it goes!

Intercut between:

Brenda-- she tries the doors-- locked! She slides over and tries the other one! SAME!

The Driver-- wheels down an alley, sliding the car--

HELL CAB-- slams into a dumpster-- crashing its contents out into the alley!

Brenda-- near hysterical in a blender mix of anger and terror slams numbers on her cell phone.

BRENDA
 You crazy son of a bitch!

Brenda makes a connection 9-1-1!

The Driver punches a crude button on the dash board. Hell Cab fills with a high pitched screeching--

Brenda reacts-- the piercing noise painful and abhorrent. She falls back into the seat-- her phone-- "No Service" on the LED screen--

The Driver wheels out of an alley. Barrels across to the other side. Trash cans scatter like bowling pins!

Brenda covers her ears-- wailing in pain!

BRENDA (CONT'D)

Stop! STOP THIS!

He snatches up an old style hand microphone with thumb switch-- bellows into it:

DRIVER

You thought you could run away!
You thought you could hide!

Brenda shies back from the voice blasting from the heavy speakers--

DRIVER (CONT'D)

I told you I'd find you! No
matter where you went!

BRENDA

STOP THIS!

The Driver checks her in the mirror-- suddenly something catches his eye--

He SLAMS ON THE BRAKES!

A DERELICT-- pushing a wobbly shopping cart swollen with detritus, shouts and leaps back!

Brenda is thrown into the glass shield-- blood spurts from her nose and lips!

HELL CAB scores a strike-- batters into the cart-- kicking in back twenty feet-- throwing off its burden!

DERELICT

Hey, asshole!

Brenda SCREAMS!

The Derelict gets a good hard look at the woman as the Driver accelerates forward, crushing and mashing the scattered treasures.

DERELICT (CONT'D)

WHY DON'T YOU WATCH WHERE YER
GOING?

Hell Cab speeds off, laying down a black fog of exhaust!

Brenda screams now, her hysteria complete! She pounds her fists on the glass-- tries the doors again-- tries to break the glass with her shoe!

The Driver-- another button-- gas HISSES from under the back seat-- a smoky haze fills the cab beyond the glass shield.

He watches as Brenda coughs-- realizes what is happening-- terror spreading through her-- powerless to stop it-- she screams-- wavers-- collapses quickly to the seat.

And like that, the Driver slows down, eases back to legal speed and skill-- settles in for the drive.

DRIVER

(mutters)

Told you when you left, baby--
you'll never get away from me.

5 EXT. THE HELLO CAB COMPANY -- NIGHT

5

Abandoned twenty years back. Signs faded and peels and scarred with gang signs. A dozen stripped wrecks of 60's and 70 model cabs line a parking area.

A massive chain link fence stretches across the original drive. Big NO TRESPASSING signs hang bent and ignored.

Hell Cab approaches down the dark street, sullen and covert. Lights out. Noise down.

The Driver wheels the cab slowly against the gate-- it springs open on its own and he drives in.

As he passes, he runs over a ground lever-- and the gate closes and locks by itself.

Hell Cab wheels slow toward the main maintenance building.

6 INT. HELLO CAB MAINTENANCE BUILDING -- NIGHT

6

The Driver eases between wasted hulks of dead cabs. Maintenance racks and stacks of parts. Desks and file cabinets. A dispatch office, gloomy and depressing.

The back wall-- an open roll up door with slack chain--

The Driver steers through toward--

7 INT. UNDERGROUND RAMPS DOWN -- NIGHT

7

The headlights flare up-- dank walls, grungy concrete ramps leading down-- claustrophobic-- seedy-- water pressing through ancient cracks streaked with green and black mold.

The Driver takes it slow in the tight, squeaky turns.

Down into the subterranean depths-- four levels to--

8 INT. HELL CAB HABITAT -- NIGHT

8

Somewhere, a generator rattles in the distance. Strings of colored Christmas lights flicker and twitch on frayed strings of black electrical wire.

Four other HELL CABS are parked here-- different makes and models dating back to the 60's and 70's.

The Driver slots into the one open space near these four. He stops. He kills the engine. Turns out the lights.

At one time, this might have been a maintenance facility. Along one wall, faded yellow and black trefoil signs-- three inverted triangles-- FALLOUT SHELTER.

The Christmas lights string back through dark hallways. Soft classical music drifts from distant speakers.

The Driver steps out-- looks back at Brenda. Satisfied, he moves into the complex.

Past adjoining doors and other passageways. Back to a lit area. He knocks soft on a door and pushes it open.

DRIVER

Honey, I'm home--

He steps in and closes the door.

9 EXT. BACK ALLEY BROOKLYN -- DAY

9

A place where bad things happen, even in daylight. A car sweeps in off the street and makes its way to the back of an old bakery.

It stops. ISABELLA ROSE gets out of the car. Trim and efficient, street tough with a tangle of blonde hair, she clocks the alley for trouble. She'd be pretty if she wasn't so "street".

She keys her cell phone. It rings and--

ISABELLA

I'm here.

She clicks off. The door to the bakery opens. Three THUGS exit-- LUCAS, the leader, hangs back as his two "boys" move forward.

LUCAS

Bella-- good to see you again.

ISABELLA

Can we skip the bullshit this time around, Lucas?

LUCAS

You need to learn to enjoy life, take some time to smell the flowers.

ISABELLA

The only thing I wanna put up my nose is a sample of the weight you got for me.

One of the thugs, PRETTY BOY, eases in, makes with the hands--

ISABELLA (CONT'D)

(pushes back)

What's with the hands, Pretty Boy?

LUCAS

Gotta make sure you're clean, baby.

ISABELLA

Fuck that! What is this? A scam? You cops or something?

They get a laugh outta that. What'a joke!

LUCAS

Just making sure everything's on the up and up is all, you can see how that works, can't you?

Isabella hesitates-- Pretty Boy steps in closer-- and she stiff arms him in the chest.

ISABELLA

Twenty bucks.

PRETTY BOY

What?

ISABELLA

You gonna put hands on me,
motherfucker, twenty bucks.

Lucas and the other thug break out laughing.

PRETTY BOY

Fuck that!

LUCAS

Pay her.

PRETTY BOY

Do what?

Lucas peels a twenty, hands it to Isabella.

She steps into Pretty Boy. He does his worst. Feels
up the tits, palms the ass, snakes a hand into her
crotch.

PRETTY BOY (CONT'D)

Anytime you feel like returning
the favor, let me know.

ISABELLA

Gonna cost you more than twenty
bucks.

Pretty Boy pushes her toward Lucas.

PRETTY BOY

She's clean.

Lucas nods, they all go inside.

10 INT. BAKERY -- DAY

10

Lucas leads Isabella across to the prep area. Among the
cases of flour and everything else-- a different box.

He peels it open. Six keys of cocaine.

LUCAS

As requested.

Isabella moves forward with a knife-- about to cut the
bag and taste the swag:

LUCAS (CONT'D)

(stops her)
Twenty bucks.

She looks at him-- shakes her head, digs out the twenty.
Hands it over.

Slice-- dip-- taste to the tip of the tongue.

ISABELLA
Premium. You gotta deal.

LUCAS
Sixty g's.

ISABELLA
Out in the car.

Lucas nods-- Pretty Boy and Lucas tag behind Isabella as the second thug grabs up the box and follows.

11 EXT. BACK ALLEY BROOKLYN -- DAY

11

Isabella walks them to the trunk. Uses the remote. Beeps it open. As she reaches in--

PRETTY BOY
I'll do that--

She steps aside--

ISABELLA
In the bag, good looking.

He grins-- zips it open-- and:

Officer Isabella Rose in dress blues during graduation, framed photo, collectors item.

Pretty Boy tenses-- Lucas catches the vibe.

Isabella Rose snags her .32 snubby from the MAGNET on the lid of the trunk-- no one ever looks up---

ISABELLA (CONT'D)
N.Y.P.D.-- don't even exhale!

Lucas bolts-- the second thug tries to run with the box of coke.

A second car wheels into the lot-- another one from the far end. Lucas ducks back into the bakery. The running thug drops the box and hitches hands above his head.

Pretty Boy tries a rope a dope-- Isabella smacks him a good one and lays him out, eyes rattling.

Lucas is pushed out by two cops who moved in through the front.

LUCAS
 You got nothing on me!
 (spots Isabella)
 It's entrapment!

Isabella pulls the listening device from the tangle of her blonde hair.

ISABELLA
 It's on tape, Lucas--
 (looks down at Pretty
 Boy--)
 You guys always go for the tits.

She steps back as two cops drag Pretty Boy to his feet. More cops pour through the doors.

12 INT. NYPD COP SHOP -- NIGHT

12

Isabella at her desk, changed clothes some, hair still a tangle. Detectives move past, congratulating her.

She's on the computer, typing away. Finishing her paperwork. Her cell rings. She snags it, pinches it to her shoulder as she finishes.

ISABELLA
 Detective Rose.

Excited jabber on the other end.

ISABELLA (CONT'D)
 Missy! Slow down, slow down--
 what are you--
 (she listens)
 I'll be right there.
 (gathers her stuff)
 Missy-- listen to me-- I'll be
 right there!

She goes.

13 EXT. THE VILLAGE SOMEWHERE -- NIGHT

13

A moving van double parked. An altercation on the front stoop. Two dudes are trying to move a GIANT SCREEN TV from the front door to the truck.

Isabella arrives and bails from her unmarked unit. She moves fast--

Missy's boyfriend, DAVID, sees her, and throws up his arms.

DAVID
Great, you called the cops!
That's so typically you!

Missy, a beset and bothered twenty-something, turns to her best friend, Isabella, for support--

ISABELLA
What's the deal here?

MISSY
He's taking the TV!

DAVID
This is *my* TV!

ISABELLA
You two are breaking up?

DAVID
No duh!

MISSY
He gave me that TV!

DAVID
I did not give you the TV!

ISABELLA
(to Missy)
When did this happen?

MISSY
Six months ago, when he moved into my place and GAVE me the TV!

DAVID
I moved MY TV into YOUR PLACE-- big difference!

ISABELLA
No, when did you break up?

MISSY
Couple weeks ago-- I told you.

ISABELLA
No you didn't.

David and his PAL heft up the screen-- Missy tries to stop them--

MISSY
DAVID-- THIS IS MY TV!

Isabella pulls her back, out of the way.

ISABELLA

Missy--

David and his Pal move down the steps. David sweeps past Missy--

DAVID

Crazy bitch...

MISSY

Yeah--

Isabella holds her back.

ISABELLA

Just go, will ya?

David and Pal get half way down when Pal trips-- the TV shifts-- BANG! It bounces twice and plops FACE DOWN on the sidewalk with a CRUNCH!

DAVID

Shit!

MISSY

You were right-- it's your TV!

14 INT. MISSY'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

14

A wreck-- stuff packed and boxes strewn. Missy and Isabella sit with peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and beer between them.

The TV is a tiny 13" portable with off colors.

MISSY

He wasn't bad, as boyfriends go. He was pretty good, actually.

ISABELLA

Except he found someone else.

MISSY

So he says. I think he's gay.
(Isabella lets that
one slide)

And he was loud. He liked to talk-- during-- you know?

(acts it out)

Go baby, give it to me-- yeah-- right there, bitch-- suck it like you love it!

They drink beer.

MISSY (CONT'D)

Too many porno movies, my guess.
All and all, he was an asshole.

ISABELLA

Do me a favor, will ya? You
ever see me getting serious
about a man, slap the shit outta
me.

MISSY

Like hell? Do you even remember
the last time you got laid?

ISABELLA

It's not important to me.
(more)

I'm the youngest detective in
the division, a woman to boot,
and I have no desire to
complicate any of it--

MISSY

See-- right there-- did you
hear yourself? No desire to--
that's sex talk, girl.

ISABELLA

Please!

MISSY

You're horny and you know it.
You need a man.

ISABELLA

Spare me.

They eat and drink beer. Suddenly the color TV fizzles
and smoke drifts out. Missy sighs.

MISSY

Go to Jonesies with me Saturday.

ISABELLA

Not a chance in hell.

MISSY

We can cruise and maybe get
lucky.

ISABELLA

Forget it.

They drink beer. They watch the smoke from the TV.

MISSY

Pawn shop won't give us our
money back, will it?

ISABELLA

You think all this beer will go
right to my ass?

Yeah. They drink beer.

15 INT. NYPD COP SHOP; LIEUTENANT'S OFFICE -- DAY

15

The Lieutenant, a career cop named KELLER hands a picture of BRENDA GARRISON to Detective Isabella Rose. She has untangled her blonde hair, has pulled it back and away from her face.

KELLER

Familiar with this?

ISABELLA

Brenda Garrison, went missing
about a week ago, right?

KELLER

Nine days-- worked at Lehman
and Shipley on Madison Avenue--
what else?

ISABELLA

She looks like me.

Keller moves around his desk, spreads out a file folder.

KELLER

The past nine months, four others
have disappeared, all mid to
late 20's, all blonde, all--
frankly-- who look like you.

Isabella checks out the four others, drops the picture of Brenda next to them.

ISABELLA

Is that all?

From the doorway, she can't see--

SPENCER (O.S.)

No, that's not all.

She turns-- PETER SPENCER is tall, tanned and casual, and Isabella has to control herself from gulping out loud.