

## "Counterfeit Reality"

## TEASER

```

1      BLACK BOX OPENING:
2.61 x 6.14.... Dimensions of US currency, in inches
696,000,000.... Value, US currency printed daily
810..... Distance from L.A. to Albuquerque, in miles
3:30..... Time

```

2 EXT. COMMERCIAL STREET - DAY 2 \*

A village shopping area - Larchmont or Ventura Boulevard - in the aftermath of a crime spree. LAPD cruisers everywhere, parked helter-skelter. Yellow crime tape cordons off the front of a Footlocker shoe store...

DON and TERRY appear, flash badges as they duck the crime tape and find their way to LAPD DETECTIVE RAY REYNOLDS.

DON

Hey, Ray. What can we do for you?

DETECTIVE REYNOLDS

Tell me why I came into work today. \*

We're looking for two perps with \*

machine guns for a triple homicide. \*

Went on a shopping spree-- six \*

stores, in less than a half-hour.

TERRY

Sounds like they knew what were they after.

DETECTIVE REYNOLDS

You'd think so. But the targets didn't pay for the violence -- shoe store, electronics store, jewelry store, CD store, coffee shop. Blew right past a bank and a check cashing store.

TERRY

At mid-week, when the cash drawers  
are at their lowest.

DETECTIVE REYNOLDS

I figure a couple of over-armed bozos  
on an adrenaline rush. Pick a  
malaise; gang bangers, meth'd up  
survivalists --

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED:

2

DON  
We're happy to help, Ray. But this  
isn't exactly a Federal case.

\*  
\*

DETECTIVE REYNOLDS  
Actually, we've got videos from three  
of the stores. But the picture's  
pretty close to useless; we need it  
bumped up.

DON  
LAPD's got a great crime lab.

\*

DETECTIVE REYNOLDS  
And the FBI's got your brother.

DON  
My brother.

Don is a little annoyed. Reynolds sees that, his tone is  
slightly apologetic.

DETECTIVE REYNOLDS  
One of our techs read about some  
video enhancement program he's  
involved with. We were kind of  
hoping to reach out...

3 INT. COMPUTER LAB - DAY

3 \*

Several in-store surveillance videos play on monitors - two  
MASKED MEN with guns in all six stores -- as the tapes are  
digitized into COMPUTERS.

CHARLIE and AMITA work on the computers -- Charlie on  
algorithms, Amita on the corresponding computer code.

\*

Don, with Terry, Reynolds, and DAVID, watch the footage whip  
past at 4x speed.

CHARLIE  
Actually, it's Amita's program.

DON  
Is this part of your doctoral thesis?

AMITA  
No, this is a side project designed  
to make me rich and famous.  
(beat)  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

AMITA (cont'd)  
You see, commercial videos don't  
retain enough visual information to  
blow up clearly. For instance --

Amita FREEZES one of the monitors - on a grainy image of one  
of the Gunmen...

AMITA (cont'd)  
-- here's a still from the camera in  
the shoe store - lo-rez, digital.  
Watch when we try to zoom in...

The image goes in tight. The image becomes a hazy dithering  
of dots, tiny islands of information separated by gaps.

AMITA (cont'd)  
We can't. Information's just not  
there. But Charlie provided me with  
a predictive algorithm --

CHARLIE  
-- basically a way to help the  
computer "guess" at what's between  
the dots based on the surrounded  
pixels, as well as extrapolations of  
past information.

He goes to a dry-erase board, starts to write --

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
Using probability theory, and an  
equation that looks something like  
this...

-- as Amita hits a button. The picture suddenly sharpens,  
yielding incredible detail of the Masked Gunman.

DAVID  
Whoa.

Charlie turns from the blackboard to see the image Amita has  
put up.

CHARLIE  
Oh. Right. You probably don't really  
care about the equation.

TERRY  
(politely)  
Let's just say we can't fully  
appreciate it.  
(to Amita)  
(MORE)

\*  
\*  
\*

3

CONTINUED: (2)

3

TERRY (cont'd)

How long to enhance all of the  
footage?

\*  
\*

AMITA

We're already halfway through. We  
should have full-play versions in an  
hour or two.

\*

Don moves in closer, eyeing the bad guy's gun.

DON

A Gretz-Guzzi automatic. Not exactly  
a Saturday Night Special.

TERRY

Watch looks expensive too.

DAVID

Patek Phillipe Nautilus.  
(off their looks)  
Dad got one for Christmas.

DON

The guy's worth fifteen, twenty grand  
standing there. Why the hell's he  
killing people for a folding money?

\*

DETECTIVE REYNOLDS

Helps out my thrill-kill theory --  
(his phone rings)  
-- excuse me.

\*

As Reynolds answers his phone, Terry turns her attention to  
the tape of the JEWELRY STORE ROBBERY...

DAVID

He could be right. There's easily  
half-a-million in jewelry in those  
cases. They walk right past and  
grab... what... eleven hundred out of  
the till?

TERRY

Thrill killers tend to draw  
emotional, even sexual gratification  
from power, fear and chaos.

\*

(beat)

These two move with too much  
organization and purpose; there's  
minimal interaction with the  
bystanders. People were only shot  
when it helped expedite the robbery.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED: (3)

3

TERRY (cont'd)  
(concludes)  
We're looking at a coordinated,  
objective-oriented event.

\*  
\*

DON  
Okay, it wasn't for money and it  
wasn't for kicks --

\*

DETECTIVE REYNOLDS  
(into phone)  
Don't touch anything. I'll be right  
there...  
(hangs up)  
We've got another crime scene. Shell  
casings match a Gretz-Guzzi. You  
guys want to roll with me?

\*

David and Don grab their jackets.

DON  
Terry?

TERRY  
Go ahead.

Terry remains rapt on the monitors as the information scrolls  
by.

4 **EXT. VAN NUYS HOUSE - DAY**

4

\*

A nondescript house in the Valley, made singular today by the  
COP CARS and police tape out front.

5 **INT. VAN NUYS HOUSE - DAY**

5

\*

Don and David enter with DETECTIVE REYNOLDS, flashing their  
badges to a YOUNG OFFICER stationed just inside the door...

YOUNG OFFICER  
Crime Scene's in back...

\*

They start for the hall. Don sees something, stops.

DON  
Look at this...

He veers into the living room. Reynolds and David follow.  
There are several SHOPPING BAGS, some newly-opened  
merchandise...

REYNOLDS  
Someone went on a ...

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

5

DON  
... shopping spree. I-Pods, new  
tennis shoes, a watch...  
(checks some receipts)  
Exact same stores that were robbed  
this morning. All cash transactions.

\*  
\*

They share a look. Don's cell phone rings. He answers,  
talks as they head for the back room --

DON (cont'd)  
Eppes...

\*

6 INT. COMPUTER LAB - DAY - INTERCUT

6

\*

Terry, on the other end of the call, stands in front of the  
video monitors.

TERRY  
We've got a common denominator, Don.  
Two teenagers appear in every tape,  
several hours before the robberies.

As Terry speaks, WE SEE the video she's describing -- TWO  
TEENAGERS, freeze-framed on several monitors...

Don and David reach the FAMILY ROOM. Don stops short.

DON  
Male whites, one with long blonde  
hair, one with a buzz cut and goatee?

TERRY  
Tell me you already have them.

DON  
Kind of.

REVEAL BODIES -- Two teenage boys, 16 and 19 - the same two  
from Charlie's freeze-frames. Lying in a scatter of empty  
machine gun cartridges...

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

7                   **INT. VAN NUYS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY**                   7                   \*

Bustling crime scene. A photo flash strobes, CSI guys work. Don stands among the shopping bags and merchandise as David reports in --

                  DAVID  
Chris and Jason Miller. Brothers,  
sixteen and nineteen. Pool cleaner  
happened to look through the window,  
see the bodies.

                  DON  
M.E. puts death right around noon.

                  DAVID  
Half hour before the robberies.

                  DON  
According to the receipts, the  
Millers were shopping in all of the  
same stores that got robbed, between  
nine-thirty and eleven AM --

\*  
\*

                  DAVID  
-- and by 12 they're dead. Sounds  
like they cased the robberies, then  
their partners turned on them.

\*  
\*

Don shuffles through the receipts in his hand...

                  DON  
Three hundred fifty dollars. Six  
eighty. Two hundred twenty...  
(beat)  
Still doesn't track. Kids spent  
almost as much as the robbers took.

\*

8                   **INT. VAN NUYS HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY - MOMENTS LATER**                   8                   \*

Detective Reynolds stands with KAREN MILLER, mother of the dead boys. Don hands Karen a cup of tea. She barely notices, stunned, still in shock.

                  DON  
Mrs. Miller... Did your sons  
normally have a lot of money?

8 CONTINUED:

8

KAREN

Normally? No... I don't know...  
Chris paid me back some --

\*

DETECTIVE REYNOLDS

Paid you back?

KAREN

He borrowed three hundred dollars  
last month for his car.  
(absently)  
Here.

She grabs a nearby cookie jar, pulls a wad of money from it.

DON

All ten dollar bills...?

\*

Karen shrugs. Don makes a note - strange.

DETECTIVE REYNOLDS

Where'd he get it?

\*

KAREN

(shrugs, helpless)  
They're teenagers. They don't tell  
me anything. Poker maybe...

DON

What about a job? Was Chris working?

KAREN

No. Jason... my younger... he's been  
working at a movie studio in North  
Hollywood for a few months...

\*

\*

\*

9 INT. INDUSTRIAL WAREHOUSES - DAY

9

\*

VINCENT BELMEYER (50) leads Don, David, and DETECTIVE  
REYNOLDS along a row of crappy warehouses clustered alongside  
the Burbank Airport.

VINCENT

I don't know if I'd call us a movie  
studio. We've had a couple  
productions shoot here, lower budget  
stuff. Mostly we've got small  
manufacturing; wrought iron, a box  
company...

\*

(CONTINUED)



DON

Mrs. Miller said Jason'd been working  
here about four months?

\*

VINCENT

Pretty good worker, too.  
(shakes his head, pissed)  
Now I gotta drive all the way in from  
Duarte.

\*

DETECTIVE REYNOLDS

(dryly)

Yeah, this has got to be tough on  
you...

\*

\*

VINCENT

(defensively)

Hey, I'm sorry about the kid, but my  
problems go on. Just last night a  
tenant bailed. No notice, no  
nothing...

\*

\*

Reynolds and Don and David exchange a look.

DAVID

Does that happen a lot?

VINCENT

Usually when the tenant is behind on  
rent. These guys were paid up... but  
they just left.

10

**INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY - CONTINUOUS**

10

\*

Don, David, and Reynolds enter, followed by Vincent. The  
place has been cleaned out. Just a dusty cement floor, a  
couple plastic trash drums in the corner.

DON

What kind of operation went on in  
here?

VINCENT

They put out a newsletter, I think.

\*

DAVID

What kind of newsletter?

VINCENT

I never actually read it. I saw the  
printing equipment.

\*

(CONTINUED)

10

CONTINUED:

10

Don, David, and Reynolds fan out. Something on the ground draws Don's attention. He stoops to examine a large GREEN STAIN.

VINCENT (cont'd)  
What's that, ink?

Don pulls a key from his pocket, scrapes at the ink, collects a pile of the shavings in an envelope. \*

VINCENT (cont'd) \*  
Weird. Kinda shiny... \*

David comes over carrying some crumpled paper.

DAVID  
From behind the trash bins.  
(feeling it)  
Pretty high cotton content, linen  
too...

Don looks at the paper, the green ink. Don looks at David.

DON  
Put in a call to Secret Service.  
These guys weren't printing a  
newsletter.  
(to Ray)  
Hey, Ray, remember when I said this  
wasn't a federal case?

11

**INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - SMALL LAB ROOM - DAY**

11

\*

TIGHT on several TEN DOLLAR BILLS laid out on a table top.

KIM (O.S.)  
Lights, please.

Sudden darkness, then an ultraviolet light clicks on, bathing the bills in a purple-blue glow... Terry, Don, Charlie and David look on as KIM GOTHARD (30's, attractive, ultra-capable) tests the bills.

KIM (cont'd)  
See the watermark?

DAVID  
Sure.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

KIM  
You shouldn't under ultraviolet  
light. Paper's another giveaway.  
Someone give me a genuine bill...

Charlie digs a twenty from his pocket. Kim puts it next to  
the counterfeits. Unlike the counterfeit, it doesn't glow.

A beat. Then she clicks off the ultraviolet. The room  
lights come back up. Kim picks up a counterfeit ten.

KIM (cont'd)  
Pretty good work though. Mostly we  
see "P-notes" nowadays... printed on  
home computers.

\*  
\*

DAVID  
That really works?

\*

KIM  
Dark restaurant, busy grocery store.  
You'd be surprised...  
(re: the ten in her hand)  
This is a different game, though.  
High-end scanning and printing,  
paper's got a good feel, magnetic ink  
--

\*  
\*  
\*

CHARLIE  
Magnetic?

KIM  
Real bills employ different magnetic  
inks -- that's how a bank's sorters  
distinguish different denominations.  
(beat)  
Our guys are old school philosophy,  
state of the art technology.

\*

TERRY  
"Our guys?"

12 INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - WAR ROOM - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

12

\*

Kim projects several counterfeit bills onto the boards, Tens  
and Twenties...

(CONTINUED)

TERRY

This particular crew has been resurfacing periodically over the last five years. The tipoff is the denomination.

DAVID

Tens and twenties. Most counterfeiters print fifties or hundreds -- higher return.

KIM

And higher risk. Big bills get more scrutiny; these boys are conservative and patient. They print small bills and never spend them.

CHARLIE

Wait a minute. How do they benefit if they don't spend the bills?

DON

They sell them in bulk. You could lay off a million dollars of these for three, four hundred thousand.

\*  
\*  
\*

KIM

Typically to gangs or organized criminal enterprises. Who, in turn, use them to finance more crime...

Charlie nods - "I see." Then he moves in close to the images, examining them, taking special interest --

CHARLIE

These aren't "copies" in the traditional sense of the word, then.

KIM

No, they're hand rendered by an artist... then the "genesis bill" is scanned, a plate made, and the printing process begins...

\*  
\*

CHARLIE

Someone actually draws these...

\*

Terry turns to Kim.

\*

12 CONTINUED: (2)

12

TERRY

The Secret Service doesn't have any  
active suspects?

KIM

We'll run a search, put the alert out  
for banks to watch for bills in a  
similar serial number range... That  
might give us something to work with.

DAVID

"Might?"

KIM

These guys have been beating our  
playbook since before I inherited  
this case. We'll work the money, but  
I think you should work the homicides  
separately.

CHARLIE

That's Grounded Theory, though, and  
this problem screams for a case-  
oriented approach.

KIM

Excuse me?

CHARLIE

In Grounded Theory, each problem is  
considered its own universe; the  
counterfeiting has one solution, the  
homicides another.

(beat)

In a case-oriented approach, the  
homicides become a variable set,  
interacting in some complex manner  
with the counterfeiting variable set.

Kim gives Charlie a hard, dirty look. Then looks at Don.

KIM

Can I have a word with you?

They lock eyes, and it's clear to Terry and David that  
something's going on here. Don nods, and they walk off.

13

**INT. FBI OFFICES, ANOTHER ROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

13

Don and Kim. The sparks fly almost immediately.

(CONTINUED)

KIM

What the hell is your brother doing  
in a Federal Office, wandering into  
the middle of an investigation --

\*  
\*  
\*

DON

He's a Bureau-approved consultant who  
happens to be right... regardless of  
how eager you may be to get out of  
the building, we've got one case  
here, not two.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

Kim stops herself.

\*

KIM

You're right. I guess it rattled me a  
little, seeing you.

\*  
\*

DON

Me too, Kim. I didn't even know you'd  
left the Bureau.

\*  
\*  
\*

KIM

About six months after you came to  
L.A. New Mexico started feeling a  
little... landlocked.

\*  
\*

DON'S POV -- WINDOW --

-- and TERRY and DAVID, in the other room, making a point of  
not watching. CHARLIE is lost in the images of the bills.

DON

Can we put that stuff away? Focus on  
the job?

\*  
\*

KIM

That was never a problem, was it?

\*  
\*

Kim leaves Don wondering how to take that.

\*

Don joins up with Terry and David, moving through the halls.  
Regaining his composure.

DON

Jason Miller's working around the  
warehouse.

(MORE)

DON (cont'd)

He discovers some tenants printing counterfeit money and decides to help himself to a few grand.

\*

DAVID

He and his brother start spending it...

TERRY

... but the bad guys find out, kill the Miller brothers, and rob back their cash to cover their tracks.

DON

Making them ruthless and thorough.

\*

TERRY

Counterfeiting small bills, restraining themselves from spending them... suggests maturity, someone over forty, likely to live a simple lifestyle, resorting to violence only for self-preservation...

\*

\*

DAVID

... which doesn't match our gunmen at all. Designer watches, expensive weapons...

\*

TERRY

The men on the robbery tapes are volatile personalities. Still fairly disciplined but younger, twenties to early-thirties.

\*

\*

DON

Brain, technicians, muscle. A multi-person crew.

\*

TERRY

More significantly, a multi-personality crew. Typically, a group like that doesn't survive for long. Too much internal friction...

\*

DAVID

But Gothard said these guys've been operating for at least five years...

\*

TERRY

Explaining that might define our counterfeiters.

(MORE)

14 CONTINUED: (2) 14

TERRY (cont'd)

(beat)

Speaking of Gothard, is everything  
all right? We couldn't help but  
notice --

DON

Usual interagency pissing contest. We  
worked it out. \*

Don moves off, down the hall. Terry looks at David, neither  
one convinced.

15 INT. EPPES HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - EVENING 15 \*

Charlie stands in the darkened living room. The shades have  
been drawn, the furniture pushed to the walls, the carpet  
rolled up, and \*

PROJECTIONS OF SMALL SECTIONS OF TEN DOLLAR BILLS -- \*

Have been projected to enormous size across the floor;  
breaking down from smooth lines into fine, imperfect, broken  
shapes. \*

Charlie walks across the bills; with a PIECE OF CHALK he  
circles spots on the two images -- spots that should be  
identical -- \*

-- then GRAPHS the points in a notebook....

... so completely engrossed that he doesn't notice DON enter. \*

CHARLIE

Oh... hey Don.

DON

You could've used a room at the  
office to do this -- \*

CHARLIE

I thought I'd make myself scarce for  
a while... I could tell I caused some  
tension with that Secret Service  
agent. You and Terry and David are so  
easy to talk to... I guess I forget  
to edit myself. \*

(absently)

If you want me to apologize-- \*

DON

You've got nothing to apologize for.  
Agent Gothard and I -- \*

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)



15

CONTINUED:

15

DON (cont'd)  
(edits himself)  
Anyhow, that's been worked out.  
(looking around)  
Do you know if I left a box of stuff  
here?

CHARLIE  
What kind of stuff?

DON  
(vaguely)  
Just some junk I shipped back from  
Albuquerque. It's not in my  
apartment --

CHARLIE  
You check the garage?

DON  
Yeah...

ALAN enters, with armloads of groceries.

ALAN  
It's a sixth sense with you, Donnie.  
I buy rib-eye, you just...  
materialize.

DON  
Actually, Dad, I --  
(slyly)  
Rib-eye, huh?

And then Alan sees the disarray of the living room.

ALAN  
Charlie, I realize this is your house  
now --

CHARLIE  
Sorry, Dad. It's just for a few days.

ALAN  
The school doesn't have an auditorium  
for this sort of thing?

CHARLIE  
I have to project too large a  
surface. I'd need a ladder to plot  
points on a wall; the floor is much  
easier to work with--

(CONTINUED)

And then Charlie is off into --

\*

*CHARLIE VISION - As the broken green and black lines beneath his feet reform themselves along the GRAPH POINTS in his notes, replete with notations...*

\*

\*

*... reforming as undulating SINE WAVES, running parallel with each other; at first identical...*

*... then SHIFTING; variations in frequency and amplitude rolling beneath him like earthquake tremors...*

\*

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
They've got a new artist.

\*

DON  
What?

CHARLIE  
I've been running a wavelet analysis--  
comparing one of the new Tens with  
the older bills Agent Gothard gave  
us. Mathematicians at Dartmouth use a  
similar process to test the  
authenticity of masterpiece  
paintings.

Charlie digs into his pocket and takes out a TEN DOLLAR BILL.

\*

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
Here's a ten dollar bill. We don't  
think about it, but someone actually  
drew it at some point --

\*

\*

\*

\*

CHARLIE VISION --

*A RUNNER sprints across the beach, leaving FOOTPRINTS in the sand.*

CHARLIE (V.O.) (cont'd)  
*Think of that artist as a runner on  
the beach. He leaves footprints,  
which record every decision he makes;  
faster, slower, closer to the water,  
farther away...*

\*

\*

BACK ON SCENE --

\*

As Charlie indicates one of the two projected images.

\*

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
This is a counterfeit bill. A second  
artist, trying to copy the original.  
A second runner.

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

BACK TO CHARLIE VISION

\*

*A SECOND RUNNER sprints after him, trying to follow the  
footprints --*

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
*When the second runner tries to  
follow the exact same path as the  
first it's impossible.*

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

*(beat)  
He can't match the footprints without  
leaving evidence of himself.  
Different shoe size, different stride  
length... even if he's careful for a  
little while, he's going to make  
mistakes over time.*

*ON THE FOOTPRINTS -- where the second runners feet land in  
the previous prints, they are blurred and distorted. Some  
places he misses the footprint entirely.*

BACK ON SCENE --

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
That's how you spot a forgery.  
And when a third runner tries to  
match the footprints --

BACK IN CHARLIE VISION --

*And the Second Runner falling away as a THIRD RUNNER picks up  
from where he leaves off, following the footprints.*

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
*-- he'll leave evidence as well --  
but in a different way than the  
second runner. Different stride  
length, et cetera.*

BACK ON SCENE --

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
(re: projection)  
These two counterfeit bills have two  
different footprints.  
(holds up the real ten)  
(MORE)

\*  
\*

15

CONTINUED: (4)

15

CHARLIE (cont'd)

Both deviate from the original, but  
in different, internally consistent  
ways. Like when we'd both try to copy  
Mom's signature on excusal slips--

\*

ALAN

Donny!

DON

(sarcastic)

Never, Dad, I promise.

CHARLIE

If you find the forger, I can  
mathematically prove that two samples  
were drawn by the same hand.

DON

Problem is, Secret Service has  
cleared their list of usual suspects.  
Our artist has to be someone new,  
someone they haven't identified yet.

ALAN

You keep on calling this person an  
"artist." But he's not really an  
artist, is he? He's a copier.

\*

DON

It's not like tracing Snoopy out of  
the funny pages. It's more like being  
able to copy the Mona Lisa freehand --  
(realizes)  
Huh.

\*

\*

Don takes out his cell phone and makes a call.

\*

DON (cont'd)

David? It's Don. I want to expand our  
search from counterfeiters to art  
forgers.

\*

\*

\*

\*

CUT TO:

\*

**INT. FIELD OFFICE - NIGHT**

\*

And David printing out a list of names.

\*

DAVID

Eight art forgers match our profile.

\*

\*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DON \*  
Great. Four and four -- \*

DAVID \*  
-- then I ran a Missing Persons \*  
check; just to make sure no one \*  
slipped through the cracks. \*

DON \*  
And? \*

DAVID \*  
No missing forgers -- but an artist \*  
was abducted off the Venice Boardwalk \*  
a little while back. I tell you this \*  
because the LAPD report has describes \*  
the guns used as "exotic machine \*  
pistols." \*

DON \*  
Which could be our Gretz-Guzzis. Nice \*  
one... \*

16      **EXT. VENICE BUNGALOW - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT**      16      \*

Don and Charlie knock on the door of a small house. NATHAN  
HUGHES (29) answers. He looks beat, weary.

DON  
Mr. Hughes? Agent Eppes, FBI. Think  
I could talk to you a moment?

17      **INT. VENICE BUNGALOW - NIGHT**      17      \*

As they enter -- \*

NATHAN \*  
Have you -- ? \*

DON \*  
No, not yet. \*

NATHAN \*  
(defeated) \*  
I didn't think so. \*

The room is cluttered, full of missing person FLIERS. \*

(CONTINUED)

NATHAN (cont'd)

Megan's family was helping out but...  
they've started their own effort  
now... I think they started blaming  
me for her disappearance...

\*

Charlie picks up a Flier - a photo of Megan Hughes, late  
twenties, vibrant, beautiful. **"HAVE YOU SEEN THIS WOMAN?"**

CHARLIE

We wanted to borrow some samples of  
your wife's art.

\*

NATHAN

My wife was grabbed off the boardwalk  
-- in the middle of the day. You  
think it was because of her art?

DON

It's an angle we're investigating.

A beat. Nathan points to a table by the window.

NATHAN

Those are some of her pieces there.

On the table, at least a dozen small, framed drawings - all  
familiar Masterpieces, but tiny, some the size of a postage  
stamp. Charlie picks one up, examines it.

CHARLIE

Your wife did reproductions.

NATHAN

She calls it her "Miniaturist Phase."  
Reducing classics to see if their  
power survives.

\*

CHARLIE

Incredible detail...

NATHAN

Done free hand. Megan's amazing like  
that. Just one of those people with  
a special talent... can you tell me  
what's going on?

\*

CHARLIE

Well, what we're hoping to do is  
compare --

\*

17 CONTINUED: (2)

17

DON  
(interrupts)  
Can we take a few of Meghan's works  
with us? I promise you'll get them  
back.

18 **EXT. VENICE BUNGALOW - MOMENTS LATER**

18 \*

As Don and Charlie walk back to the car.

DON  
Charlie, you're just along to pick  
out samples. You can't discuss an  
active investigation like that.

CHARLIE  
The guy was clearly in a lot of pain.  
I didn't think a little hope would--

DON  
A little hope can be the worst thing  
you can give him. Not to mention the  
fact that he's still a potential  
suspect. Next stop, let me do the  
talking, okay?

\*

\*

Charlie absorbs Don's edginess.

\*

CHARLIE  
Is something else bothering you, Don?

\*

DON  
No. I -- no.

\*

CHARLIE  
Because it seems like something's  
bothering you--

\*

\*

\*

But Don is already in the car. Charlie looks down at one of  
the art pieces - da Vinci's "*The Last Supper*" - no more than  
two inches across. We PUSH IN TIGHT, and suddenly --

\*

*VISUAL EFFECT - Reprise Charlie Vision. The layers of ink  
rise in three dimensions, a topographical map. And like  
before, patterns appear...*

*... and the topography becomes the BEACH, where the SECOND  
RUNNER is falling perfectly into the first runner's  
footprints.*

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED:

18

CHARLIE (V.O.) (cont'd)  
They're the same.

\*

Reveal we're now --

19 INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - NIGHT

19

\*

Charlie has Meghan's art blown up alongside an enlarged Ten-Dollar Bill. POINTS on the blowups have been circled and connected to two GRAPHS, which map the exact same arcs.

Don, Terry and Kim Gothard look on.

DON  
Before you were comparing money to money...

CHARLIE  
I'm not matching the pieces  
themselves; these graphs track the  
deviation of copies from the original  
work. Meghan Hughes drew this bill.

\*  
\*  
\*

A beat. Then --

DON  
She's been missing for almost nine weeks.

KIM  
As far as we know, they've only  
introduced their Ten. If they follow  
pattern, the Twenty should come soon.  
Alternating bills and limiting  
production is how they've stayed  
active for five years.

\*

DON  
(to Kim)  
How long would it take her to draw  
the twenty?

KIM  
No way to know. But if I were Megan  
Hughes, I'd be taking my time. Once  
they're done with her...

Kim lets the sentiment trail off. The others exchange dire looks.



20

**INT. DARKENED SPACE - NIGHT**

20 \*

A room somewhere, undefined. Dark, except for a single light shining down on a drafting table... An artist is at work. We see only her hands, holding a delicate ink pen, copying the incredibly intricate detail of a Twenty-Dollar Bill.

The drawing is about three-quarters done.

Off this ominous image...

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

21      **INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - DAY**

21      \*

Terry and David are here. Kim talks on the phone, making notes on a map. She hangs up as Don and Charlie enter.

KIM  
Someone's spending your money.

DON  
The alert you put out yesterday?

KIM  
We told banks to watch for bogus tens. They're showing up.

Kim projects the map. It shows three distinct blooms in Southern California.

TERRY  
Bakersfield, San Bernardino, Palm Springs.

KIM  
Probably one or two steps removed from the counterfeiters by now.

DAVID  
So we back-trace the bills. Same way we work drugs back to the supplier.

KIM  
Difference is, these bills are in general circulation. The banks can't link them to specific depositors.

Charlie has something to say, but is leery of speaking up. Don sees this and prompts him.

DON  
You have a thought?

CHARLIE  
(reticently)  
Well... people shop in patterns, spend in patterns. Banks move money in patterns... Patterns can be quantified into equations...

(CONTINUED)

KIM

The Secret Service and Treasury have  
been working on this problem for  
decades. Money flow is  
unpredictable; too many variables.

\*

\*

CHARLIE

That makes it challenging, not  
impossible.

(eyeing the map)

Right now, the dispersal looks fairly  
contained. That works in our favor.

*VISUAL EFFECT - A bucket of bright-green dye is dumped into  
the ocean, begins to spread out...*

CHARLIE (cont'd)

Imagine a bucket of brightly-colored  
dye, dumped in the ocean. For a  
while, you could detect it, follow  
its flow back to the source. But  
wait too long, it'll dissipate to the  
point of being undetectable...

*VISUAL EFFECT - The dye rapidly spreads out, disappears.*

DON

What do you need?

CHARLIE

Data. Lots of it. Everything on  
where the bills are turning up-- not  
just from the banks, but from stores,  
restaurants, movie theaters...

Don looks at Kim.

DON

I think the Assistant Director will  
approve a short-term Joint Task  
Force. If you want our help.

\*

KIM

It's the FBI's break. You can take  
the lead off the kidnapping.

\*

\*

\*

Terry looks from Don to Kim, noting the undercurrent.

\*

TERRY

I'd like to follow the evidence from  
the warehouse.

(MORE)

21 CONTINUED: (2) 21

TERRY (cont'd)

The lab was able to reconstitute an  
ink sample from the scrapings you  
took off the floor.

22 INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - DAY - LATER 22 \*

Don and Kim lead a briefing of a dozen FBI and Secret Service  
Agents.

DON

We're looking for counterfeit ten  
dollar bills. So far, they've turned  
up in sixteen banks within a hundred  
miles of L.A. You'll divide up the  
areas and work out from the banks,  
checking grocery stores, gas  
stations, restaurants. \*

Kim starts handing out sheets to the agents.

KIM

The bills you're after are good, but  
they're not perfect. This sheet  
details some of the flaws, as well as  
listing the probable serial number  
range. \*

DON

You find a bill, call it in  
immediately. The more we find and the  
faster we find them, the better we'll  
be able to predict where the next  
bills will come from. \*

A beat as the agents study the sheets.

KIM

One more thing... We believe the  
counterfeiters are holding a twenty-  
four year old artist against her  
will. Her name's Meghan Hughes...

Don holds up a picture.

DON

This crew has already killed five  
people. What we're doing could be  
what keep this woman from becoming  
number six...

23

**MONTAGE - SHOPS, STORES, BUSINESSES**

23 \*

- A stack of Tens shoots through a bank sorting machine. An agent on hand begins examining the bills one-by-one, comparing them to the cheat sheet Charlie handed out.
- A diner waitress pulls a wad of bills from her apron, hands a couple tens over to an FBI agent.
- Back in the office, Charlie begins an equation on the white boards.
- Don checks the cash drawer at a gas station, while a second agent opens a zippered money pouch to sort through the Tens. He flags one as suspect.
- Charlie expands his equations onto a second board.
- A grocery store clerk stands aside as a Secret Service agent quickly goes through the ten-dollar bills in her drawer. She finds a counterfeit, pulls her cell phone.
- Don, in the field, map spread across a car hood, making careful notations, tracking where the bills are turning up. We PUSH IN on the map, and MATCH CUT TO...

24

**INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - DAY**

24 \*

An identical MAP in the office. Kim tends to it, marking the bills' locations as Charlie works his equation on the boards, factoring in each of the discovered counterfeits. He's in full stride, lost in it.

When he finishes the equation, he goes to the phone, dials, moving to the map.

CHARLIE

Don? You can move your San Bernardino search grid south of Foothill and west of Mount Vernon.

He hangs up and sees KIM watching him.

KIM

Wish I understood what we're doing here...

CHARLIE

It's a probability algorithm.

\*

(CONTINUED)

Charlie walks over to a desk and grabs a fistful of PAPER CLIPS --

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
The bills all start from zero-zero...  
the counterfeiters...

-- and TOSSES them across the room. The he walks to the other side of the room --

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
... and we start from here; point  
x,y.

Charlie walks across the room, picking up one paper clip, then another...

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
As we locate each bill, we get a  
better idea of the dispersion. Giving  
us a better idea of where to look for  
more bills.

\*

Getting the idea, Kim picks up paper clips as well.

KIM  
Right. You're not going to look in  
the other room --

CHARLIE  
Or on the ceiling, or in the parking  
lot.

KIM  
So the more bills we find in a given  
area, the closer we are to the  
counterfeiters.

CHARLIE  
No, it's not just the number of  
bills. I assign values based on the  
purchases -- for instance, five or  
ten bills turning up in a tire shop  
holds less significance than a single  
bill in a corner market...

\*

... Charlie walks to the far end of the room, picking up a  
LONE PAPERCLIP.

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
... someone might travel across town  
for tires.

Kim picks up several paperclips by the desk Charlie grabbed  
the them from in the first place.

KIM  
But for a pack of cigarettes or  
milk... That's something they'd buy  
right around the corner...

CHARLIE  
That's it exactly...

They smile at each other, enjoying a moment of connection.

KIM  
You and your brother are a lot alike.

CHARLIE  
You think so? Most people can't get  
over how different we are.

KIM  
The interests may be different, but  
that approach -- one part exuberance,  
two parts obsession -- pretty much  
identical.

(beat)  
I remember when we moved in together,  
he had to have a separate CD rack.  
Because I never put mine back in the  
same place, and he had to know where  
every song was at all times --

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

Charlie's not sure how to react to that...

CHARLIE  
You and Don lived together?

\*

KIM  
In Albuquerque?  
(realizing)  
You didn't know? He never --

CHARLIE  
(uncomfortable)  
We kind of lost touch for a while.  
(then, covering)  
(MORE)

\*  
\*  
\*

24 CONTINUED: (3) 24

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
And you know, I think maybe he did \*  
tell me, but I didn't put that Kim \*  
together with you... \*

Kim sees Charlie wrestling with the awkwardness of the moment \*  
and tries to alleviate it. \*

KIM \*  
It's okay. I know how Don is. \*

Charlie doesn't answer, but clearly wonders: how is Don? \*  
\*

25 **EXT. LOS ANGELES SKYLINE / PRINT SHOP - DAY** 25 \*

A stunning downtown glamour shot... TILT DOWN to discover  
we're in a sad neighborhood along Union. Terry and David  
approach a PRINT SHOP, paint peeling, broken windows...

26 **INT. PRINT SHOP / SILK-SCREENING SHOP - DAY** 26 \*

Mexican music blares as a dozen workers stand around two  
large silk-screening wheels, cranking out t-shirts... David  
and Terry ask around, and get pointed toward EDDIE ZAKARIAN  
(65, thinning dyed-black hair, weathered) mixing inks.

TERRY  
Eddie Zakarian?

EDDIE  
(eyes their badges)  
Lemme guess, counterfeiting, right?  
(off their reactions)  
Anytime I see a Fed badge, I know  
it's not about undercollecting sales  
tax.

DAVID  
You see a lot of Federal badges, Mr.  
Zakarian?

EDDIE  
The price I pay for my legendary  
talent and your lack of imagination.  
(beat)  
That game passed me by twenty-five \*  
years ago; you people need to put it \*  
in a newsletter or something.

TERRY \*  
What do we have to thank for this \*  
inspirational rehabilitation? \*

(CONTINUED)



EDDIE

Fatherhood. It'll keep you out of  
prison.

David's been nosing around, points to a couple old photos -  
two young boys, eight and ten-ish, fishing from a dock.

DAVID

These two guys yours?

Eddie eyes the picture fondly.

EDDIE

We have a place up at Big Bear. The  
shop used to be good money -- until  
everybody in the world got a computer  
and became a printer...

\*

Terry pulls out a vile of ink, hands it to Eddie.

TERRY

What does your "legendary talent"  
make of this?

Eddie glances at it, cursory at first... then with real  
interest. Suddenly he's an ink connoisseur, smelling it,  
feeling it...

EDDIE

Nice. Near perfect O.V.I.

DAVID

O.V.I.?

EDDIE

(sighs, amateurs!)  
Optically variable ink. Takes three  
different inks to print money, right?  
Black for the front, green for the  
back and then this -- O.V.I. --  
changes color from green to black,  
depending on how you look at it.

DAVID

Who could've mixed it?

EDDIE

Other than me? Try Marty Blanchard.  
It'd explain why his print shop isn't  
cranking out T-shirts.

(MORE)

26 CONTINUED: (2) 26

EDDIE (cont'd)  
(off Terry's look)  
What.

TERRY  
His name came out pretty quickly. \*

EDDIE  
Oh, I'm sorry -- honor among thieves,  
right? Where do you think you people  
got my name from in the first place?

Off Terry and David...

27 INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - DAY 27 \*

Charlie paces, studying his equations, anxious. For a moment  
he pauses to look at the photo of Meghan Hughes. Don enters.

CHARLIE  
I'm starting to wonder if I properly  
weighted the exchange velocity...

DON  
Every time you tighten the search  
grids, more bills turn up. This is  
where you just have to sit tight and  
let us work. \*

Charlie mellows, sets down his pens. He trails Don over to --

28 INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - COFFEE AREA - DAY 28 \*

As Don fills a cup of coffee --

CHARLIE  
So you and Kim.

Don pauses for a beat. Then, off-handed: \*

DON  
Yeah...

Nothing else. \*

CHARLIE  
So... was it serious? \*

DON  
Wasn't not serious, I guess. For a  
while, maybe. \*

(CONTINUED)

And that's all Don seems willing to volunteer. Charlie lets  
it go for a beat, then can't:

\*  
\*

CHARLIE  
Seems weird that I didn't know...

\*  
\*

DON  
Not really; I don't know who you  
dated three years ago. We didn't talk  
a lot then.

\*  
\*  
\*

CHARLIE  
We do now, though.  
(testing)  
Don't we?

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

DON  
(vaguely)  
Sure.

\*  
\*  
\*

Kim appears--

\*

KIM  
We've got a hit. Dive bar in our  
Santa Barbara grid; cash register had  
seven of our counterfeits.

\*

CHARLIE  
Seven? Statistically, one or two  
bills fall in the pattern spread.  
But someone having seven, spending  
them all in one place...? That's  
huge!

\*  
\*  
\*

DON  
To blow seventy dollars in a gin  
mill, he's either buying rounds or  
hammered off his ass --

\*  
\*  
\*

KIM  
-- or both. Bartender remembered a  
regular in last night, throwing it  
away.

\*  
\*  
\*

Don throws on his coat.

DON  
Great. Rush hour up to Santa Barbara--

\*

KIM  
I'll take the ride with you.

\*



30

CONTINUED:

30

DON

My dad had an old one around for a  
while when I was a kid...

(peers under the hood)

Same engine, four-barrel carb...  
Wish he'd kept it.

CUMMINGS

D'you want something?

Don reacts, pulling his badge as if he'd almost forgot.

DON

Sorry. FBI. I'm Agent Eppes, this  
is Agent Gothard.

KIM

You were around Wiley's last night?

CUMMINGS

Mighta been...

KIM

Some counterfeit money turned up in  
the register. Ten dollar bills...

DON

Bartender seemed to remember you were  
spending ten-dollar bills...

CUMMINGS

Bartender was drunker than I was. I  
had nothing but twenties. I remember  
'cause I just hit the ATM...

\*

Cummings tries not to react under Don and Kim's stare.

31

**INT. SURVEILLANCE VAN - NIGHT**

31

\*

Parked a block away from the garage. Don and Kim climb  
inside, where Agent RINALDI is at a table with some high-tech  
monitoring/recording equipment.

RINALDI

Got on the phone thirty seconds after  
you left...

Rinaldi punches a "play" button. We hear the touch-tones of  
a phone being dialed. It rings twice. Then --

(CONTINUED)

MAN'S VOICE

Yeah...

CUMMINGS

What the hell are you doing?

MAN'S VOICE

What're you talking about?

CUMMINGS

You paid me with counterfeit! The  
FBI was just here --

MAN'S VOICE

What'd you tell 'em?

CUMMINGS

I didn't tell em' anything. But if I  
don't get my money plus fifty  
grand...

MAN'S VOICE

Don't get stupid.

CUMMINGS

You're calling me stupid, you  
sonofabitch? I'll--

\*

Agent Rinaldi stops the playback.

RINALDI

In the interest of sparing your  
sensibilities two minutes and forty-  
eight seconds of profanity, the  
upshot is that Cummings-plus-two  
hijacked a truckfull of something --  
I'm pretty sure electronics...

\*

\*

KIM

... got paid in counterfeit...

DON

The other voice on the call,  
"Brian"...

Rinaldi's already on it, hands Don a slip of paper.

RINALDI

Brian Merriman. A two-one-three  
number.

31 CONTINUED: (2)

31

DON  
And we're back to Los Angeles...

32 **EXT. LOS ANGELES - BLANCHARD PRINTING - NIGHT**

32 \*

Terry and David approach the front of another small PRINT SHOP. David tries the door. Locked. A hand-written sign in the window reads "Back in five minutes."

DAVID  
Think he means it?

Terry peers in the windows, starts to have a look around the side.

TERRY  
I wonder if every print shop in L.A.  
is run by a former counterfeiter.

They are quiet for a beat; waiting.

TERRY (cont'd)  
So is it just me, or is there  
something going on with Don and Kim  
Gothard?

\*

David shrugs. Terry looks at him cannily.

TERRY (cont'd)  
Did you know that you always evade a  
question with a silent shrug?

David shrugs again.

TERRY (cont'd)  
There it is again...

\*

DAVID  
I hate it when you profile me.

\*

TERRY  
Well, I'm not going to stop...

\*

DAVID  
(reluctantly)  
Okay, Redgrave told me that Kim  
Gothard was Bureau until about three  
years ago. Albuquerque office.

\*

\*

TERRY  
Oh, so she worked for Don.

\*

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED:

32

DAVID  
Worked for him and... you know.

TERRY  
Yeah?

\*

DAVID  
Can I be out of this now?  
Terry's cell phone RINGS. She pulls it out, answers...

TERRY  
Lake...

33 INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - NIGHT - INTERCUT

33 \*

Don with Charlie and the others, on his phone.

DON  
Where're you at?

TERRY  
(snapping back to work)  
Working a lead on the ink; old timer  
named Martin Blanchard.

DON  
Here's a name you might want to drop--  
Brian Merriman. Long rap sheet as a  
fence... and he's been promoting  
criminal enterprise with our bills.

TERRY  
Great...  
(then)  
Hold on, this may be him...

As they speak, an older four-door pulls to the curb. MARTIN  
BLANCHARD (60s) gets out, heads toward the print shop's front  
door... where David is waiting, confronts him --

DAVID  
Mr. Blanchard --

BLANCHARD  
Yeah. Something I can help you with?

As David shows his badge, ANOTHER CAR cruises past, slowing -  
driver in front, a single passenger in the rear. Terry sees  
it, instinctively doesn't like it --

(CONTINUED)





34 CONTINUED: 34

Leaving Don a little flustered as Terry hops off the \*  
stretcher. \*

35 INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - INTERROGATION - MORNING 35 \*

BRIAN MERRIMAN (37, tough, ex-con) sits in the hot seat as  
Terry and David lay out the facts for him --

TERRY

We own you for the truck hijackings,  
Brian. Lance Cummings is under  
arrest in Santa Barbara and very  
annoyed with you --

DAVID

-- his testimony, plus the stolen  
goods in your house? I'm guessing  
your attorney will want to be paid in  
advance.

Merriman's silent, unimpressed.

TERRY

But here's the funny part: this is \*  
going to turn out to be a pretty good \*  
day for you, anyway. Because we want  
the counterfeiters more than we want  
you.

MERRIMAN

(dismissively)

Thanks but no thanks. \*

DAVID

You're a predicate felon and these  
are not light charges. You might want  
to take a step back and look at the  
big picture.

MERRIMAN

I am looking at the big picture. A  
live prisoner versus a dead rat.

36 INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - OBSERVATION AREA - CONTINUOUS 36 \*

Kim Gothard watches the interrogation through the glass. Don  
arrives, steps up at her side...

DON

How long've they been at it?

(CONTINUED)

36

CONTINUED:

36

KIM  
Couple hours.

Terry comes out into the observation area, not happy.

TERRY  
He's given us the truck heists, the  
bogus bills... everything but the  
counterfeiters. He's convinced that  
they'll find him and kill him.

KIM  
He's probably right.

DON  
We'll hold him, try again later.

TERRY  
I don't know how much more time we  
have.

A beat passes. Don and Terry and Kim; pure awkwardness until  
an ASSISTANT comes up, breaks the spell -

ASSISTANT  
Agent Eppes, there's someone waiting  
to see you... Nathan Hughes...?

Don leaves -- relieved. Kim and Terry look at each other for  
another beat, then:

TERRY  
So...

KIM  
(reading it;  
uncomfortable)  
So...

TERRY  
Which of us is Betty and which is  
Veronica?

Which breaks the tension. They both laugh lightly.

37

**INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - WAITING AREA - DAY**

37

\*

Don comes out, carrying a small box with Meghan's art. He  
glances around. Nathan Hughes jumps up from a chair...

(CONTINUED)

37

CONTINUED:

37

NATHAN

Agent Eppes. What's going on? I've been calling, nobody'd talk to me.

DON

We're not really at a point where I can share the details of the investigation. We're doing everything --

\*

NATHAN

-- "humanly possible." I've been hearing that for sixty four days. The police haven't called in thirty two. My wife's family doesn't talk to me... I can't go to work any more. I sit home everyday just... just wondering what's going on.

DON

All I can tell you is we're working very hard on this.

(beat, re: the box)

Here. I brought you her art...

Nathan takes the box, looks at the pieces inside. It's a feeble gesture, and Don knows it.

38

**EXT. FEDERAL BUILDING - FBI FIELD OFFICE - DAY**

38

\*

Charlie's approaching the building when he spots Nathan Hughes sitting on a bench out front, holding Meghan's art pieces. Charlie hesitates, unsure, then goes over --

CHARLIE

Mr. Hughes...

Nathan glances up, sees Charlie, looks back to the art. Charlie looks for a way to comfort him, then --

\*

\*

CHARLIE (cont'd)

I liked the way she wrote "Nate" in all her pieces.

\*

\*

\*

NATHAN

I'm surprised you saw it. No one else ever has.

CHARLIE

Well, I was probably looking a little closer than most people...

(CONTINUED)

38

CONTINUED:

38

NATHAN

All that time she spent alone in her  
studio -- it was her way of talking  
to me...

Charlie considers this -- a thought coming to him.

CHARLIE

Right... talking to you...

\*

Charlie's mind is working, gears turning. Without another  
word to Nathan, he heads off the way he came...

39

**INT. EPPES HOUSE - DAY**

39

\*

Meghan's ten-dollar bill projected on the floor. Alan is  
trying to clean up around it, while Charlie rummages through  
the closet.

\*

\*

\*

CHARLIE

Megan Hughes hid her husband's name  
in her artwork. I think she might've  
hidden messages in the money...

ALAN

Wouldn't that be dangerous? If they  
found out --

CHARLIE

Don thinks they're going to kill her  
anyway -- maybe she suspects as much.  
It explains why a number of the flaws  
seemed... intentional.

ALAN

And the closet fits in how--?

\*

\*

CHARLIE

No, Don was looking for a box  
yesterday, and I thought I remembered  
seeing it...

\*

\*

\*

\*

Charlie finds a BOX in the bottom of the closet, behind some  
junk. Address to Don from himself, return address New Mexico.

\*

\*

He pauses, knowing he shouldn't, then looks inside. Inside  
are some books, baseball trophies... a packet of photos.

\*

\*

Charlie opens the packet -- inside are pictures of DON AND  
KIM. Camping, in front of a house, etc.

\*

\*

(CONTINUED)

ALAN \*  
Did he ask you to look through it? \*

CHARLIE \*  
(shows Alan a picture) \*  
Do you recognize her? \*

ALAN \*  
I'm not looking -- \*  
(but does) \*  
No. \*

Charlie flips through the pictures. \*

CHARLIE \*  
Her name's Kim Gothard. She's a \*  
Secret Service Agent. They lived \*  
together in New Mexico. \*

ALAN \*  
Really. \*

CHARLIE \*  
He never said anything about her? \*

ALAN \*  
Don's always been a private person. \*  
Even in high school, I only remember \*  
him bringing a girl home once... \*

Alan stops, putting his finger on one of the pictures. \*

CHARLIE \*  
What. \*

ALAN \*  
Does that look like -- \*

Charlie flips through the photos again. The ring appears in a \*  
few of them. \*

Charlie digs deeper into the box... \*

... finding an ENVELOPE at the bottom. Addressed to Don, from \*  
"K. GOTHARD." It has been opened... and a RING sits alone \*  
inside. \*

CHARLIE \*  
Don was engaged? \*

40

INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - DAY

40

\*

Don, Terry, David and Kim. They've got next to nothing and they know time is running out...

DON

We're running out of road. Maybe we should take another pass at Merriman.

TERRY

I don't think he's going to turn, no matter how we go at him.

\*

KIM

I'm inclined to agree with Terry. Merriman's no stranger to prison time. It scares him a lot less than these people do.

(beat)

How about Meghan Hughes? Have we exhausted our leads that way?

TERRY

Right -- her work's only in a few galleries. How did the counterfeiters select her?

Don looks from Kim to Terry, mildly discomfited by their rapport.

\*

\*

DAVID

California Magazine did a profile on her six months back. They've got a circulation of over five-hundred thousand, and more than half of that is newsstand sales.

DON

(grimly doing inventory)

And the paper took us nowhere. And the warehouse lease fired blanks.

KIM

Maybe when the counterfeit Twenty surfaces, we'll get another shot at these guys...

DON

That won't help Meghan Hughes.

Off Don...

41        **INT. CALSCI - CLASSROOM - DAY**

41        \*

TIGHT on the enlarged ten-dollar bill, pinned to a board, magnified in ridiculous detail, the way Charlie's viewing it. The tip of a red pen appears, marking a spot.

As Charlie makes notations against his NOTEBOOK FULL OF GRAPHS, and studies the bill, LARRY enters.

LARRY

I'm sure there's an appropriate joke to be had, something about teachers' salaries...

CHARLIE

Hello, Larry.

Larry looks through the magnifying glass.

LARRY

What are we looking for?

CHARLIE

A hidden message.

LARRY

And these points you've marked --

CHARLIE

Intentional flaws. Clues of some kind...

LARRY

Only...

CHARLIE

I've found twenty-seven flaws on this bill, all along the watermark. But they don't seem to mean anything...

LARRY

You're aware that the dust of the spiral arm of the Milky Way obstructs our view of the planar universe.

CHARLIE

I am now...

(CONTINUED)



41

CONTINUED:

41

LARRY

And yet we have a clear line of sight  
in cones of direction on each side of  
the plane. From which we extrapolate  
much of what we know about what we  
can't see.

CHARLIE

(still not getting it)  
Okay...

LARRY

The pins and the magnifying glass  
suggest to me that you've only  
traveled across two dimensions of  
possibility.

CHARLIE

I've checked the bill front and back.

LARRY

But the bill has six sides -- four of  
which are exceedingly thin.

Realizing this, Charlie unpins the bills and turns it --  
rocketing us into

*CHARLIE VISION --*

*As the angling of the bill causes the THIN SIDES OF THE BILL  
to grow taller... giving the bill a hyper-stylized impression  
of being a brick, or distended cube...*

*... and, from this new angle, the SURFACE OF THE BILL takes  
on topography again... with the RED MARKED DOTS falling into  
patterns and shapes...*

42

**INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - DAY**

42

\*

Charlie comes bursting in, startling Don, Terry, Kim and  
David. He's panting, out of breath...

CHARLIE

I found it! I found Meghan's  
message.

Off the moment --

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

43

**INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - DAY**

43 \*

Resume Charlie and the agents -- as the lights are turned out, and Charlie PROJECTS the Ten, huge, against a wall.

CHARLIE

Meghan Hughes hid her husband's name  
in her artwork... a way of talking to  
him. Now she's talking to us...  
through the money.

Charlie flips a switch -- and ULTRAVIOLET LIGHT illuminates the watermark --- just as Kim showed us in Act One. The watermark begins to break up in subtle, still-inscrutable patterns.

CHARLIE (CONT'D) (cont'd)

She placed flaws in the watermark,  
where they'd be hard to find but easy  
to isolate. Maybe even knowing that  
they would show up under ultraviolet  
light -- unlike a real Ten.

\*  
\*

The agents study it. The spots are clear, but just that... spots.

DON

I see the breaks, but what do they  
mean?

CHARLIE

Megan had to be careful, Don. The  
counterfeiters might see the flaws...

Charlie turns the bill, angling it under the projector.

ON THE WALL --

The bill turns and the spots and lines of the watermark begin to resolve themselves... like the puzzle with the elongated letters that need to be read from a 180-degree angle, the watermark becomes a series of numbers:

03 08 1738 52.

CHARLIE (cont'd)

... but she had to be sure they  
didn't know how to look at them. I  
haven't cracked the code yet --

(CONTINUED)

43

CONTINUED:

43

DAVID

It's not a code... it's the date and  
time.

David walks over to the wall and traces over the numbers,  
embellishing on them: 03-08, 1738 hrs.

TERRY

March 8th -- seven weeks ago --

KIM

-- she would have been working on the  
ten still.

CHARLIE

I'm not sure what the "52" means.  
Maybe it factors down to coordinates,  
or --

\*  
\*

DON

She's not a mathematician, Charlie.  
She's an artist. Locked in a room,  
drawing, maybe listening to the  
radio...

(knows)

The temperature. 52 degrees.

CUT TO:

44

**INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - SAME SCENE -- LATER**

44

\*

As David gets off the phone.

DAVID

Seven regional radio stations  
announce "Weather on the 8's." KBHR  
gave a reading of 52 degrees on March  
8th at 5:38 PM.

(to Terry)

KBHR broadcasts out of Big Bear.

Terry gets it --

TERRY

Eddie Zakarian.

CHARLIE

Who's Eddie Zakarian?

(CONTINUED)

44

CONTINUED:

44

TERRY

Allegedly retired counterfeiter. Who  
has a place in Big Bear.

DON

David --

DAVID

(hustling off)

-- I'm pulling the Zakarian file.

TERRY

Remember what I said about the  
counterfeiters' profile? A mature  
influence, contending with younger,  
more volatile members...

\*

DON

Zakarian's sons --

TERRY

The family bond would explain what's  
held them together.

\*

She turns to Charlie, practically grabbing him in a hug.

TERRY (cont'd)

Great work, Charlie.

45

**EXT. PRINT SHOP - EVENING**

45

\*

End of the day. Eddie Zakarian is locking up his silk-  
screening operation --

-- when he is YANKED from behind and thrown up against the  
wall. Terry cuffs him and starts frisking him.

EDDIE

Aw, c'mon, what is this?

David steps up in front of him.

DAVID

This is your sons holding a woman  
hostage in Big Bear. This is six  
homicides --

(CONTINUED)

TERRY

(angry)

This is me almost getting killed when you had Martin Blanchard hit -- just to throw suspicion away from you.

EDDIE

(bluffing)

I'm totally lost here. You've seen my record; even back in the day, I was strictly non-violent --

Terry's done with the frisk, spins Eddie around.

TERRY

Not your sons, though. They're greedy and violent; classic second generation criminal syndrome.

Eddie considers this for a beat.

EDDIE

It's been a while, but I seem to remember this is where I stop talking to you guys.

DAVID

We don't need you to talk, Eddie. An FBI SWAT Team is getting ready to hit your cabin as we speak.

TERRY

Given your boys' exhibited temperament, I think we both know what's going to happen. The question you should be asking yourself is: "Do I know a way to keep my sons from getting themselves killed?"

Eddie finally drops the facade.

EDDIE

They're good kids -- not at all like that. It's those other two; pilled up... mean.

\*

DAVID

Other two?

45 CONTINUED: (2)

45

EDDIE

Surfing buddies -- bad kids since  
middle school.

(beat)

I was trying to give them a stake for  
the future... slow and patient, small  
bills. Staying under the radar. But  
the other two --

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

TERRY

-- wanted a faster payoff. So they  
dumped a load with Brian Merriman.

\*  
\*

EDDIE

Everyone's in such a hurry now. It's  
not like it used to be. Nothing is.

46 **EXT. BIG BEAR CABIN - NIGHT - LATER**

46 \*

BINOCULAR P.O.V. - A two-level cabin secluded in the woods.  
Lights are on. Smoke rises from the chimney...

Reveal Don and several members of the FBI SWAT team nestled  
in the brush fifty yards from the cabin. Everyone's in body-  
armor and black camos, laying low. Surveillance mode.

Don's phone vibrates. He answers the call.

DON

Eppes...

47 **INT. PRINT SHOP - NIGHT - INTERCUT**

47 \*

Terry and David sit with Eddie Zakarian in the empty silk-  
screening shop. Terry's on the phone.

TERRY

Zakarian's cooperating.

DON

Is Meghan still alive?

TERRY

Last time he was up to the cabin, she  
was. But that was three days ago.

A beat. Then --

DON

What are we looking at?

(CONTINUED)

47

CONTINUED:

47

TERRY

Four men... Zakarian's sons and two more. All armed, automatic weapons. He's given us a floor plan.

Don grabs a clipboard and a pen, ready to sketch it...

DON

Go...

TERRY

Cabin's a basic square, oriented to the north. Starting on the ground level, the entire front half is a living room...

As Don draws the MAP, we go into a STYLIZED MONTAGE of pen strokes and MACRO SHOTS of lines across paper --

TERRY (V.O.) (cont'd)

...back half is divided between a kitchen and a bedroom, kitchen in the southwest corner...

The MAP gets more and more detailed, Don's drawings and annotations beginning to evoke Charlie's chalkboard diagrams...

DON (V.O.)

... three bedrooms upstairs. If Meghan's alive, she's in the southeast corner...

... and now we're on DON WITH THE SWAT TEAM, looking over the drawing that Terry has dictated to him.

DON (cont'd)

TV's in the living room. That's where our bad guys spend most their time. There and in the kitchen.

(beat)

Let's be smart and be safe.

48

**EXT. BIG BEAR CABIN - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER**

48

\*

Two Swat Guys silently approach the back of the house with a ladder. They lean it up to the bedroom window... A beat later, Don appears, quietly mounts the ladder, begins climbing...

(CONTINUED)

48

CONTINUED:

48

Swat SNIPERS keep constant watch, ready to provide cover, while the rest of the team members move into position at the corners of the cabin...

Don reaches the window. Condensation on the inside makes it hard to see. The room is dark except for a single desk light... Don tries the window, locked... He pulls a Slim-Jim type device from his pants, works the lock. No good.

DON  
(hushed, into radio)  
I need a small pry bar...

A team member moves under the ladder, gently tosses a pry bar into the air. Don catches it... With the pry bar and the Slim-Jim, the latch finally goes... with a loud CLICK.

Don freezes a beat, waits to see if the noise has given him away... then he slides the window open, ducks inside...

49

**INT. BIG BEAR CABIN - BEDROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS**

49

\*

It's the same darkened space we saw earlier (act one out). There's evidence of Meghan's work - the drawing table, pens and inks - but no Meghan.

DON  
(hushed into radio)  
Hostage is not in the bedroom. I'm  
moving to the upstairs hall...

Don tip-toes to the door, peeks out. Clear. So he goes...

50

**INT. BIG BEAR CABIN - UPSTAIRS HALL/BALCONY - NIGHT**

50

\*

Don creeps along the hallway, which gives him a view to the living room below. Two BAD GUYS sit on couches, feet up, watching TV. Their weapons lean against a wall nearby...

Don stalks forward, silently. Suddenly --

MEGHAN (O.S.)  
Let go of me! No!

Screams from inside one of the other upstairs bedrooms. Don ducks back as one of the couch Bad Guys glances up, chuckles.

More SOUNDS of a struggle from behind the bedroom door. Don can't see in, but it's clear Meghan's being forced to do something she doesn't want. As Don weighs what to do...

(CONTINUED)



50

CONTINUED:

50

MEGHAN (cont'd)

No!

Shit. Don makes the decision.

DON

(urgent, into radio)

Three in the living room! Hit it now!

\*

51

**EXT. BIG BEAR CABIN - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS**

51

\*

A HUGE FLASH and BANG as two stun grenades detonate just outside the cabin's front door.

52

**INT. BIG BEAR CABIN - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS**

52

\*

The concussion breaks windows, billows the curtains in the front room. The two couch Bad Guys jump up and rush to the windows. A third Bad Guy, JEFF ZAKARIAN, races in from the kitchen, carrying his Gretz-Guzzi automatic.

Before they have time to react... CRASH! The SWAT Team bashes through the back door and windows, swarming in --

SWAT GUYS

FBI! ON THE GROUND! FBI!

UPSTAIRS WITH DON -- The closed bedroom door flies open, and CHRIS ZAKARIAN rushes out, gun raised. He sees Don, goes to fire... Don fires first, drops him as --

DOWNSTAIRS -

The Bad Guys toss their weapons, drop to the floor...

SWAT GUYS (cont'd)

Clear. Clear.

SWAT Guys swarm up the stairs, meet up with Don. He points out the other bedrooms --

DON

Check those.

Gun raised, Don cautiously enters the room where he heard the struggle... Finds Meghan in the corner on the floor...

DON (cont'd)

Meghan, it's okay. You're safe.

You're all right now...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED: 52

DON (cont'd)  
(extending his hand)  
C'mon...

He helps her to her feet as --

SWAT GUYS (O.S.)  
All clear!

53 INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE - NIGHT 53 \*

As MEGHAN and NATHAN HUGHES enjoy a tearful reunion --

-- watched at a polite distance by DON, taking a private  
pleasure in the moment.

KIM  
The good part. Forgot how much I  
missed that.

He turns to see Kim behind him, putting on her coat.

KIM (cont'd)  
Everyone's already at Kinsella's.  
Secret Service owes the FBI a few  
rounds. Coming? \*

DON  
I don't know... I still have a lot of  
work to do... \*

KIM  
We're going to trip over each other  
again, Don. If you and Terry can be  
partners, we can at least -- \*

DON  
I told you I was going to come back,  
Kim. My mom was dying-- \*

And then Don seems surprised by the fact that this has come  
out of his mouth. Kim looks at him sympathetically. \*

KIM  
And you didn't want me there. You  
didn't want my support. That's why I  
gave the ring back. \*

DON  
I just didn't want to disrupt your  
life -- \*

(CONTINUED)

KIM

Come on, Don. You sucked all that  
pain into yourself rather than share  
it with anyone. I loved you, but I  
knew I couldn't spend my life  
watching that.

DON

Is that fair --

KIM

You're an incredibly strong man, but  
not strong enough to let anyone be  
there for you.

(beat)

I have to think that's why you left  
your family and friends in the dark  
about us.

Kim smiles sadly and leaves.

**INT. DON'S APARTMENT - NIGHT**

A small apartment, spare, lots of boxes still unopened. Don  
sits on the couch, watching "Pride of the Yankees" and  
drinking a beer.

There is a KNOCK on the door.

CHARLIE (O.S.)

Hey, Don?

DON

It's open...

Charlie enters with the BOX OF DON'S STUFF.

CHARLIE

I found that box you were looking  
for. Figured I'd --

DON

Bring it over at 2 in the morning?  
You opened it, didn't you.

Charlie sets the box down. Bracing for ugliness --

-- but Don just smiles.

CONTINUED:

DON (cont'd)  
My fault. You were always going  
through my stuff. When we were kids --

CHARLIE  
Not when we were kids; later, when I  
was in all those accelerated classes.  
It seemed like you had high school  
all figured out; I was looking for  
clues.

(beat)  
We've been working together for six  
months, Don. I thought we were  
getting to know each other.

Don is quiet for a beat.

DON  
Charlie, I really don't feel like  
talking about it.

Charlie feels his brother's pain, but also his mood. He  
starts for the door --

DON (cont'd)  
But I will. And you're the first guy  
I call, okay?

Charlie smiles; Don forces a smile back. And Charlie leaves.

THE END