

ASSATA

Written by

Jackson Kosmacki

Sep. 2nd, 2020

Fifth Draft

jd.kosmacki@gmail.com

FADE IN:

EXT. BLEECKER ST. - BUSHWICK, BROOKLYN - DAY

The year is 1971. THREE BLACK MEN (middle-aged) stand before a shuttered shop, sweating in the summer sun of noon. A bedraggled older HOMELESS MAN ambles up to them.

HOMELESS MAN
Y'all got anything to help out?

TWO of the MEN pull their pockets out to show they're empty.

THE THIRD BROOKLYNITE
Man, take that shit down to the 90s
or somethin'. I got nothin'!

The homeless man turns and continues down the walk. The Third Brooklynite watches him, shakes his head, then wipes the sweat off his face with a rag. A BLACK SEDAN pulls up.

The door to the apartment building opens and a Black WOMAN with a large afro comes out. This is ASSATA SHAKUR (27).

ASSATA
Hey, Willy.

WILLY
Hey, girl, where y'all heading?

ASSATA
Harlem, you need a ride?

WILLY
Yes ma'am! Just goin' to Greenpoint.

Assata strolls up to the car, where a tall, broad-shouldered Black man with a goatee named SUNDIATA ACOLI (33), is giving a DOLLAR to the Homeless Man.

ASSATA
We gotta swing by Greenpoint.

SUNDIATA
What for?

She gestures back to Willy and opens the passenger door.

EXT. UNEMPLOYMENT OFFICE - GREENPOINT - DAY

A LINE of PEOPLE stretches out of the building. WILLY walks up and stands at the back of the line.

INT. SUNDIATA'S CAR - SAME

SUNDIATA puts the car in gear and peels off from the curb as ASSATA looks out the window at the line of PEOPLE.

ASSATA
Jobs dryin' up everyday and we get
new recruits.

SUNDIATA
More than we can handle.

ASSATA
Just gotta' give 'em somethin' to do.

EXT. 3RD AVE - EAST HARLEM - AFTERNOON

The open FIRE HYDRANT SPRAYS water everywhere. A POLICE CAR sits next to it. A TALL COP is struggling with a young BLACK MAN (20). BLACK CHILDREN and TEENS stand around the street.

INT. SUNDIATA'S CAR - SAME PLACE AND TIME

SUNDIATA drives, ASSATA rides passenger, smokes a cigarette.

SUNDIATA
You know Emmet?

ASSATA
Yeah, lil' man. Just joined the
party.

SUNDIATA
Yeah well... Buncha pigs broke his
neck yesterday. He's dead.

ASSATA
Seventeen fuckin' years old.

SUNDIATA
Yeah. Up in Queens. Kid was hangin'
out with some brothers by the drug
store down on Merrick and the cops
pull up. I mean they were just
mindin' their own business...

ASSATA

Well we oughta' do something. Every day, somewhere in this city...

SUNDIATA

Hey I know. But what--

ASSATA

I remember back in Oakland seeing what Huey and 'em are doing. They got folks following the cops around, making sure they don't do shit, and if they do...

SUNDIATA

Yeah that's Oakland, though. This is New York. We can't get the numbers for that kinda' shit. Too many cops.

ASSATA

We'll follow that car. Those guys specifically.

SUNDIATA

Who's got a car? We gonna find a young guy whose got one? In the city?

ASSATA

We'll buy one.

SUNDIATA

Oh right, of course, with all our extra cash just lyin' around.

ASSATA

I think it's time to collect some taxes.

SUNDIATA

I'll call Dhoruba. Sure he knows some H dealers in Manhattan walkin' around with full duffels just sittin' on 'em.

ASSATA

Call me the motherfuckin' IRS.

Assata notices the spraying HYDRANT and COP CAR.

ASSATA (cont'd)

What's goin' on here?

EXT. 3RD AVE - EAST HARLEM - CONTINUOUS

The BLACK SEDAN stops before the scene. ASSATA hops out.

ASSATA
Leave him alone!

NYPD COP
Get back in your car, lady!

ASSATA
What's he being arrested for?

NYPD COP
None of your business!

ASSATA
You got no right.

NYPD COP
I got every right, actually, you
wanna join him?

ASSATA
So what if somebody opens the fire
hydrant? It's hot!

NYPD COP
Public property, ma'am.

ASSATA
Are they not members of the public?

INT. BOOKSTORE - HARLEM - LATER

ASSATA buys a copy of Lenin's "What Is To Be Done?" from the
spectacled Black WOMAN (50s) behind the register.

BOOKSTORE CASHIER
Four fifty.

ASSATA
Here you go.

She hands the woman a FIVE dollar bill and turns to leave.

ASSATA (cont'd)
Thanks!

EXT. BOOKSTORE - HARLEM - CONTINUOUS

ASSATA steps out into the afternoon summer heat. The BLACK SEDAN sits at the curb, SUNDIATA sits on the hood sipping a Coke. She looks up the street at the PEOPLE standing in front of apartment buildings and storefronts in tee shirts and shorts, sweltering in the heat. She looks down at the cover of the book: what is to be done?

EXT. STATLER HILTON HOTEL - MANHATTAN - DAY

The streets are lined with long, clunky CARS passed by PEDESTRIANS in brightly colored bell bottoms, mini-skirts, wide lapels, and paisley shirts. Here in MIDTOWN, the EMPIRE STATE BUILDING looms overhead two blocks away.

Across the street from the HOTEL: MADISON SQUARE GARDEN and a street entrance to PENN STATION.

A RED COUPE pulls up by the hotel and double parks. ASSATA, in a black leather jacket, hops out of the car's passenger side, slinging her purse over her shoulder and saying something we can't hear to the DRIVER. She POINTS around the corner to 33rd Street.

INT. STATLER HILTON ROOM 714 - THAT MOMENT

FOUR MEN occupy the room with two queen beds. TWO of the men sit at the desk by the window cutting up a MOUND of COCAINE. The THIRD MAN has a deep SCAR on his left cheek, and he paces around the room. The FOURTH MAN goes into the bathroom. A DUFFEL BAG sits on one of the beds.

INT. STATLER HILTON LOBBY

ASSATA enters the building, heading straight past the DOORMAN and the CONCIERGE as she strides across the ornate carpets and passes under the chandelier. Her eyes flick back and forth, anxiously surveying the lobby. A SECURITY GUARD stands by the bar talking to the BARTENDER. Assata boards the elevator and the doors close.

INT. STATLER HILTON 7TH FLOOR

Assata walks down the hallway scanning the room numbers as she passes them: 708, 710, 712, and finally 714.

She looks to her left and right, checking the hall. Then she unclasps the top of her purse and pulls out a .38 REVOLVER. Sticks it in her front jacket pocket and KNOCKS on the door.

It swings open. The SCARRED MAN stands before her.

ASSATA
Is there a party going on in here?

She WHIPS the gun out and points it straight at him.

ASSATA (cont'd)
Gimme the money!

INT. STATLER HILTON ROOM 714 - CONTINUOUS

ASSATA charges in and SCAR backpedals into the room as the OTHER MEN leap from their chairs and scramble for guns.

ASSATA
Don't none of y'all move!

She shifts aim between the men as she moves towards a bed.

ASSATA (cont'd)
(to SCAR)
Get over by them.

He glares at her and reluctantly moves over to the window with the others. Assata glances to the duffel on the bed and slowly starts towards it, keeping her gun trained on the men. She reaches the far bed, switches the gun from her right hand to her left, and unzips the duffel just a bit.

Sees STACKS of money. Looks back to the men. Zips it closed and takes it. Starts backing away towards the door.

The bathroom door opens and the FOURTH MAN raises his pistol right as she turns to look. He FIRES and hits her in the stomach as she FIRES BACK and catches him in the shoulder.

The other men spring into action and Assata RUNS towards the door. They grab their pistols and raise to fire just as she pulls the door open and FIRES blindly back at them, shattering the window. She FLIES out through the door as bullets pepper the wall behind her.

INT. STATLER HILTON 7TH FLOOR

ASSATA stumbles down the hall as fast as she can, clutching her bleeding stomach.

She glances back when she reaches the elevator as the MEN emerge from their room. The indicator above the elevator shows it slowly ticking up from the ground floor. No time.

She ducks into the STAIRWELL.

EXT. STATLER HILTON - DAY

ASSATA bursts from the side exit onto 33rd Street, looking around frantically until she sees the RED COUPE parked across the street. She RUSHES into the street, narrowly avoids a passing car, and gets in the car.

INT. DHORUBA'S RED COUPE - CONTINUOUS

The DRIVER, a bearded BLACK MAN with thick glasses named DHORUBA BIN WAHAD (27), takes the duffel from ASSATA as she pulls the side door closed. He throws it in the back and looks at her with wide eyes.

DHORUBA
Damn, girl! What happened in there?

ASSATA
(wincing)
Drive!

Her hands press hard to stop the blood seeping from her gut. Dhoruba jerks the wheel and the car PEELS out into traffic. They take off down the street.

In the rearview: THE FOUR MEN burst from the Hotel and look around in a frenzy, pistols still in hand. Dhoruba grins.

ASSATA (cont'd)
I gotta' get to a hospital.

DHORUBA
Nah! We'll get a doctor for you. Just hang in--

ASSATA
TAKE ME TO A HOSPITAL!!

DHORUBA
Shit, okay, damn. I'mma drop you off.

EXT. BELLEVUE HOSPITAL - DAY

DHORUBA's COUPE screeches to a halt in front of the E.R. entrance. He gets out, runs around the car, and opens the passenger door. ASSATA gets up and he helps her towards the door before a NURSE rushes over to take Assata's other arm.

DHORUBA

You got her?

Dhoruba lets go and heads back over to the car. The Nurse helps Assata into the building as Dhoruba drives off.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - LATER

ASSATA wakes up in a daze. She looks around. TWO MEN IN SUITS watch her. Assata eyes them as she gingerly feels her stomach. One of them comes over.

DET. THOMPSON

Hi, Miss Chesimard. I'm Detective Thompson. We have some questions for you.

ASSATA

It's Shakur.

DET. THOMPSON

Not legally, ma'am. Let's cut the shit.

Assata ignores him and looks out the window.

DET. THOMPSON (cont'd)

This afternoon there was a shooting at the Statler Hotel in Midtown. Many shots fired. And here you are with a bullet in your gut that I'd bet would match the 9mil slugs we pulled from the wall at the hotel. So what happened?

Her mouth is shut, gaze distant.

DET. THOMPSON (cont'd)

We got witnesses to place you. Security guard, concierge, porter. You just got dropped off at the E.R. Lying's only gonna' make it worse for you. What happened this afternoon?

Still nothing. The detective starts getting antsy.

DET. THOMPSON (cont'd)
 You don't wanna answer, we can take
 this downtown. I can arrest you right
 now.

ASSATA
 For what.

DET. THOMPSON
 Obstruction of justice.

ASSATA
 You don't got shit.

Thompson turns to his PARTNER. She's right. He turns back.
 She still looks out the window.

DET. THOMPSON
 This ain't over. We're gonna be onto
 you, Miss Chesimard. And when--

ASSATA
 It's Shakur! Assata Shakur, how--

DET. THOMPSON
 When you think you got away with it,
 we'll be there and we'll crack the
 fuckin' whip!

She looks over with a stern expression regarding this
 slavery-referencing turn of phrase. Thompson stands up,
 glaring back, and points down at her.

DET. THOMPSON (cont'd)
 This is just the beginning.

They leave.

EXT. BELLEVUE HOSPITAL - TWO DAYS LATER - MORNING

ASSATA slowly walks out to the street, where a BLACK SEDAN
 waits parked for her. SUNDIATA leans on the hood. He goes to
 help Assata into the car, but she shakes him off to walk on
 her own. He opens her door instead. She gets in.

INT. SUNDIATA'S CAR - DAY

SUNDIATA drives the car north along the East River, windows
 down, with the summer air flowing in. Assata soaks it up.

SUNDIATA

Damn, see ya gotta' always check them
bathrooms.

ASSATA

Truth. You got a cigarette?

SUNDIATA

Yeah you left some...

He hands her the half-empty pack. She takes a cigarette and
pulls the cigarette lighter from the center console.

ASSATA

Thank God.

She lights it, savoring the first draw.

SUNDIATA

So look... That duffel was a good
rip. Had about 15K in there. That's
enough for a car, a couple dudes,
gas, whatever to tail that cop. But
the rest can go to the group.
Everybody out here struggling. You
did what had to be done.

ASSATA

Shit, I know.

SUNDIATA

But them boys hit us back. Didn't
kill nobody. Tried to. We traded
shots. Andrew got hit in the arm.
He's alright though.

ASSATA

Anybody on those cops who killed
Emmet?

SUNDIATA

Nah, not yet, but we've got plenty of
recruits.

ASSATA

Well let's get after 'em!

Assata takes another drag. Sundiata chuckles.

SUNDIATA

You just took a bullet in the gut,
girl. And already you wanna get out
there and start fightin' cops.

ASSATA

Hey now that I been shot, I'm not
scared of it no more.

Assata looks at him and grins. He shakes his head with a
smile. She rips the cigarette. They take an exit to HARLEM.

INT. 131ST ST. CAFETERIA - HARLEM

A large dining room with tile floors and white walls full of
Black children and homeless eating at tables. There is a
serving line where VOLUNTEERS dish out food on the far side
of the room under a banner that reads: "SURVIVAL PENDING
REVOLUTION". There's a door to the right of the line where
an OLDER WOMAN, BERNICE (51) argues with TWO BLACK PANTHERS.

BERNICE

Don't tell me you ain't getting
enough now. We didn't start this
place just to close it six months
later. What'd y'all think, all we
needed was seed money?

ASSATA walks in, SUNDIATA close behind. Some of the patrons
look up and give her a recognizing smile. She smiles back,
waves to some onlookers, never breaking stride.

Assata comes up to the PREGNANT WOMAN, who sits at a table
with a LITTLE GIRL (<4), eating cereal. Assata pulls out a
BROWN PAPER BAG and offers it to the mom.

PREGNANT WOMAN

Thank you!

ASSATA

No problem. Tell him to contact us
when he's out.

Assata waves at the little girl.

ASSATA (cont'd)

Enjoy your breakfast.

She and Sundiata continue to reach Bernice and the Panthers.

BERNICE

I don't wanna hear it! We gonna' be
gone this time next month if--

(seeing Assata)

Assata! Oh, how you doin' girl?

They embrace.

ASSATA
 Good, Bernice. These guys givin' you trouble?

BERNICE
 No more than usual.

ASSATA
 Mm-hmm.

The Panthers walk away. Bernice shakes her head as they go.

BERNICE
 Sayin' they gotta cut us off.

ASSATA
 Since when?

BERNICE
 Since a couple weeks ago. They say they don't got the money to support us anymore. I say well who can? We don't get enough donations, that's for sure.

Assata glances to Sundiata.

ASSATA
 How much y'all need?

BERNICE
 How much ya got?

INT. SUNDIATA'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

ASSATA and SUNDIATA enter holding Styrofoam cups of coffee.

SUNDIATA
 Come on, Assata, that money's for us, not the Panthers.

ASSATA
I took the bullet. I took the money. It's my call. And I'm not gonna' give all of it away. Just enough to keep 'em going. You wanna' see those people starve? They're the ones we fight for.

(beat)
 Take me to 3rd Ave in East Harlem.

SUNDIATA
Like I'm a chauffeur now.

They drive off.

INT. SICKLE CELL CLINIC - EAST HARLEM

ASSATA walks in and takes a look around the place:

A long, thin room that stretches back towards a sign reading "**PEOPLE'S FREE HEALTH CENTER**". BLACK MEN and WOMEN sit in chairs along the wood-paneled walls. CLINICIANS walk up and down the corridor giving finger-prick tests. In the back, a BLACK MAN (50) with a CLIPBOARD talks to a CLINICIAN.

Assata crosses the room and goes up to him.

ASSATA
You run this place?

CLINIC MANAGER
Me and two others, yeah.

ASSATA
My name's Assata Shakur, I'm a community activist. How you guys doing?

CLINIC MANAGER
Alright, I guess.

ASSATA
The Panthers set this up, right?

CLINIC MANAGER
That's right.

ASSATA
They helping you enough?

He chuckles and glances around.

CLINIC MANAGER
Not particularly. We gonna' run out of tests this time next month.

ASSATA
That's why I'm here. How much you need to get you through next month?

INT. SUNDIATA'S CAR - DAY

ASSATA hops back in the car with a smile. SUNDIATA sips his coffee and watches her, displeased.

SUNDIATA
The free breakfast place, the sickle
cell clinic, who's next?

Assata laughs as she buckles her seatbelt and Sundiata starts the car. The car peels out hard away from the curb.

SUNDIATA (cont'd)
Why don't you let the Panthers handle
their shit?

ASSATA
Cuz they're not handling it.

SUNDIATA
Yeah well where you plan on getting
the money for 'em next time they need
it? I mean, you feed one man, you get
ten others in line behind him.

ASSATA
That's right, and they all gonna eat.

EXT. SANDWICH SHOP - BUSHWICK, BROOKLYN - DAY

Elevated subway tracks overhead and four small tables out in front of the deli. ASSATA stands before the plate-glass window at the center of a GROUP of BLACK REVOLUTIONARIES, mainly young men. SUNDIATA is at her right shoulder.

A skinny young man at her left shoulder named TWYMON MEYERS (21) talks to a slightly older man in a Yankees hat, KAMAU SADIKI (25) to his left.

TWYMON
I mean if you ain't willing to die
for freedom, you must not really want
it.

KAMAU
Man, I agree, but how you gonna bomb
the police station? You can't just
walk in there, say I'mma leave this
package, ignore the ticking,' and
walk out! We need money, Twymon.
Can't do much without it.

TWYMON

Alright we'll find another dealer,
collect some more taxes, that worked
out last time.

ASSATA

(looking over)

Yeah with me in the hospital and two
detectives hovering over my ass.

KAMAU

It's good money, though.

ASSATA

It is. Don't get me wrong. But after
this last one, you know the word is
out. Next time we try they'll have
shotguns and no survivors.

Twymon and Kamau share a look. Silence. They need to think.

ASSATA (cont'd)

Look, we can always use the money,
but it's about more than that. We
need real change. Sure, we all talk
about revolution. But it starts in
the community, people need our help!

KAMAU

So how we gon' do that, Assata?

ASSATA

Money. Defense from the police. The
services our folks need that they
don't get. We want them to be
healthy, safe.

TWYMON

In America? Ha.

ASSATA

Well we gotta strive for better.

SUNDIATA

God knows the white folks don't. They
don't give a damn.

TWYMON

Let's just rob *them*.

Kamau and Assata laugh.

TWYMON (cont'd)
Take down the white establishment,
y'know?

KAMAU
I got dibs on Nixon.

SUNDIATA
Y'all just want the heat.

ASSATA
I do!

Sundiata shakes his head and pulls out his car keys.

SUNDIATA
I'm taking off. Anybody want a ride?

INT. ASSATA'S APARTMENT - BROOKLYN - MORNING

ASSATA stands in the kitchen of the cramped walk-up with exposed brick, sipping a cup of coffee. A CAR HORN honks outside. She goes to the window, and looks down to the street. Then she grabs her purse and heads out the door.

INT. ASSATA'S HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

ASSATA closes her door and sees her neighbor CARL (60s) in the hall with a full manila FOLDER tucked under one arm.

ASSATA
Mornin', Carl.

CARL
Morning, dear.

ASSATA
Where you off to?

CARL
The bank! Applying for a loan.

ASSATA
Whatchu need a loan for?

CARL
A bookstore. Me and my son gonna run it. He just come back from Detroit.

ASSATA

I thought you were working at the post office.

CARL

I was! Got fired. Don't know why. 26 years...

ASSATA

Damn. You need a ride?

CARL

Darling... I'd love one.

INT. SUNDIATA'S CAR - MORNING

CARL gets in the back as ASSATA sits with SUNDIATA up front.

SUNDIATA

Who's this?

ASSATA

That's Carl. We gotta' go to Queens.

SUNDIATA

Y'know they got taxis here in New York?

INT. BANKERS TRUST CO. - QUEENS - DAY

A poorly-lit room with wooden floors and orange furniture. TELLERS across from the front doors and three rows of desks to the right behind which BANKERS sit, talking on telephones or conferring with CLIENTS. The Bankers are all white, as are many of the clients.

ASSATA and SUNDIATA stand by the big curved window near the door and watch as CARL sits at a desk with a stern-looking BANKER (40s). Carl points to the papers from his folder and says something we can't hear in the din of all the chatter.

SUNDIATA

(impatient)

Why we gotta' wait for this guy? Or help him at all? He can get around on his own. Little old but--

ASSATA

He's my neighbor. Gotta be nice to him.

SUNDIATA

I don't even know my neighbors.

ASSATA

And look at him! He gonna walk all the way here from Brooklyn?

Assata watches the Banker across from Carl. The man looks at Carl blankly, vacantly surveying the pages before him.

Assata looks to another BANKER, a toupéed man sitting with a WHITE COUPLE. The Banker smiles and adjusts his glasses as he inspects the paper in his hand. He nods and flips a page.

Assata looks to a THIRD BANKER with a young RED-HEADED Kennedy type man. They shake hands amicably and stand.

Assata looks back at Carl, whose knee is bouncing.

QUEENS BANKER

Look, Mr. Franklin, I don't have much confidence in your ability to run a business. I mean you have no managerial experience to speak of. Have you really thought about this? The commitment you'd be making? The risks? I mean you can't possibly know the taxes you'll have to deal with or the permits you need.

CARL

But I know what it takes. I can learn the rest. All I need is a chance.

QUEENS BANKER

Well we don't like taking chances here at Bankers Trust. We like sure bets. And a bookstore, I don't see that making enough to pay back the loan.

CARL

There's only one in Bushwick already and it's on the Ridgewood side. Mine would be on the Bed-Stuy side and--

QUEENS BANKER

Mr. Franklin. I frankly don't see the residents of Bed-Stuy being avid readers.

Carl's jaw drops.

A thought strikes Assata. Her eyes dart around looking for something and settle on: a SECURITY GUARD (30s), standing by the manager's office. Assata turns to look at the teller stand and spots TWO OLD CAMERAS, browning with age, in the corners of the ceiling. One has exposed wires on the bottom.

Assata leans close to Sundiata.

ASSATA

(in a low voice)

What if somebody robbed this place?

SUNDIATA

Probably wouldn't be too hard.

ASSATA

What if we were those somebodies?

SUNDIATA

Since when were you a bank robber?

Assata shrugs and watches Carl stand up. The Banker shakes his head and extends his hand. Carl ignores the hand and takes his folder as he walks away.

INT. KAMAU'S APARTMENT - HARLEM - AFTERNOON

An open room with a counter by the kitchen and lots of sunshine spilling in. ASSATA stands before the three paneled windows. SUNDIATA lays back on the couch with THREE YOUNG BLACK MEN (20s) squeezed in beside him. TWYMON occupies a thin raffia chair by the T.V. and KAMAU sits at the dinner table eating a deli sandwich, the three other seats all occupied by YOUNG BLACK MEN (teens).

A DOZEN more BLA MEMBERS occupy the room, standing around the kitchen, sitting in folding chairs by the hallway.

ASSATA

Think about it. It's about hitting the white establishment where it hurts! Their wallets. But it's not just about that. It's what we can do for our people, the ones living right around us in squalor, in struggle. We try all these ways of making money, but it's never enough! And it'll never be enough 'til the inequities of wealth are righted and the share distributed among the people.

(MORE)

ASSATA (cont'd)

The Black brothers and sisters who
have been subjugated and yet who
built this country.

THREE YOUNG PANTHERS (late teens) shuffle in wearing dirty
pants and weathered shirts, carrying bundles of newspapers.

SUNDIATA

Just put 'em down by the counter.

ASSATA

We built these communities, we built
this city! But do they support us? Do
these businesses benefit our Black
brothers and sisters? No! They're
against us. The rich hold the money
and decide who to give it to, and
time and again it ain't us. It's up
to us to see that hoarded wealth
distributed to the people who
desperately need it. This money can
fund the sickle cell clinics, the
free breakfast programs, the homeless
shelters, instead of just lining the
pockets of wealthy white folks in
penthouses.

TWYMON

Alright, big plans, how big is this
bank? We talkin' Manhattan?

ASSATA

Queens. But no this bank is not a
fancy place, there's just two guards,
old-ass cameras, parking right
outside.

Twymon considers this. Two of the Panthers sit at the table
with Kamau, the other one, BOBBY, chimes in.

BOBBY

Talkin' bout sickle cell clinics and
shit... I got enough problems. I
gotta eat!

ASSATA

Who the fuck are you?

SUNDIATA

That's Bobby, that's Sam, that's A.J.

SAM and A.J. are sitting at the table. Bobby, an antsy type,
paces over to the window opposite the door and looks out.

ASSATA

Everybody's gotta eat. You'll get your money, kid, don't worry. But what're we doing here? If all we wanted was money, we coulda' picked something a whole hell of a lot easier than this. And much less dangerous. No, you wanna be a freedom fighter, and that's good. But you gotta' internalize the fact that we don't do this to serve ourselves. It ain't about just us, here, but Black people everywhere.

Bobby folds his arms and leans against the window.

TWYMON

How many you need?

ASSATA

Six and a driver.

SUNDIATA

Seven people? Whatchu think the take's gonna be?

ASSATA

I'd guess 25, 30 K.

TWYMON

Each?

ASSATA

No, man, total.

TWYMON

That's still a lot, though.

ASSATA

We'll all split half, the rest goes to the cafeteria, the clinic, the clothing banks, and--

BOBBY

Yeah yeah we got it.

Assata clasps her hands and shoots a glare at Bobby.

ASSATA

Who wants in?

Sundiata raises his hand, as does Twymon. Sam puts his hand up, A.J. sees this and follows suit.

ASSATA (cont'd)

Kamau?

KAMAU

Nah. I'm not... I don't know.

Bobby raises his hand.

ASSATA

Alright, big mouth, that makes six.
Any of y'all got a van?

Glances go around the room. Silence.

SUNDIATA

Andrew's got one.

ASSATA

Why the hell isn't he here? I call a meeting, everybody's supposed to show up.

SUNDIATA

He got shot in the arm!

ASSATA

He's still got one good one! Can't he drive?

SUNDIATA

I'll get him on the phone.

Sundiata gets up and heads over to the phone. Bobby turns away from the window and folds his arms.

BOBBY

(to Assata)

So you callin' the shots?

ASSATA

Yes I am. You got a problem?

BOBBY

Never taken orders from a bitch before is all.

ASSATA

(standing)

Well this bitch gonna give you orders. This bitch brings in money. You don't like this bitch, get the fuck outta here and go sell some papers.

Bobby looks back out the window, swallowing his tongue.
Assata takes a hard drag and glares at him.

ASSATA (cont'd)

Anybody else got a problem, you can swallow that shit. We all want the same thing here. Let's make it happen. Y'all be gettin' a call from me soon with the plan. We're gonna bring good things to the brothers and sisters of this city. We deserve vengeance, but we will strive for justice.

She stubs out her cigarette.

INT. SUNDIATA'S CAR - QUEENS - MORNING

SUNDIATA behind the wheel. ASSATA riding shotgun, wearing a black beret. TWYMON in the back. The car is parked across the street from the BANKERS TRUST building.

ASSATA

You said Andrew's in?

SUNDIATA

Yeah, but only as the driver. He don't wanna go in.

TWYMON

Scared-ass bitch.

ASSATA

Relax, that's fine, that's all we need him for. I'm thinking he'll park *there*, out front in one of those spots, if they're free.

SUNDIATA

And if they're not?

ASSATA

On the driveway to the lot.

TWYMON

That's the sidewalk!

ASSATA

Yeah so nobody's gonna park there.

SUNDIATA

Who's going in first?

ASSATA

You.

SUNDIATA

Damn, but--

ASSATA

Then Twymon, then me.

SUNDIATA

So I gotta risk gettin' shot.

ASSATA

No, you're gonna get that guard on the ground and take his gun.

Sundiata GROANS.

TWYMON

What about me?

ASSATA

You make sure nobody tries anything, say 'This is a robbery'... and get the other guard. Then I'll come in and go to the teller. Bobby and Sam on crowd control. A.J. watches the door, makes sure nobody comes in.

SUNDIATA

Why can't I be on crowd control?

ASSATA

Cuz you're the biggest in the group, you gotta take on the first guard. Be the imposing figure right out the gate.

SUNDIATA

Shit.

TWYMON

We need machine guns.

ASSATA

No we don't.

TWYMON

Yeah we do! Otherwise they gonna try something. We need like tommy guns or some shit.

SUNDIATA

Fuckin' Dillinger over here.

ASSATA

No tommy guns. Look that's the best way to do it - as I see it. And no casualties. Can't have anybody gettin' shot. We just want the money.

TWYMON

What if we took 'em hostage?

ASSATA

No. Twymon. No kidnapping either, man chill out!

TWYMON

I was just sayin'...

SUNDIATA

I bet there's only twenty K in there.

ASSATA

It is kinda small. But we'll take what we can get.

They all look to the bank.

INT. BEDROOM - ASSATA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A tiny room with red shag carpet and a Lenin poster on the wall over the twin bed in the corner, where ASSATA lies, a burning cigarette in one hand and a telephone in the other.

ASSATA

Yeah but the doctors took care of me, everything was fine...

(listening)

Yeah they were standing there when I woke up...

(listening)

C'mon, we don't talk to no law.

(listening)

That sounds like you speakin' as my lawyer, not as my aunt.

(listening, smiles)

Well I love you for both, Evelyn, talk to you later.

She hangs up. Takes a long drag from her cigarette, looking up at the ceiling. Her brow knits and she chews her lip. Glances over at the clock: **12:14.**

She sits up and swings her legs over the edge of the bed.

INT. LIVING/DINING ROOM - ASSATA'S APARTMENT

ASSATA puts her purse on the dinner table. She opens it, reaches in, pulls out her .38. She flips out the cylinder. TWO SHELLS are still loaded.

She loads FOUR MORE from a shell-pack. Closes the cylinder.

ASSATA

That's all you bringin' cuz that's all you need. No shots fired. No one gets hurt.

She checks the safety before returning the gun to the purse.

Puts her hands on her hips and looks around. She's wired. She walks over to the window as she lights a cigarette. Looks out at the street:

PERSPECTIVE: Bleecker St. from the window. Nobody is out there. Bushwick is still. A SIREN in the distance.

Assata sits on the windowsill and smokes.

INT. LIVING/DINING ROOM - ASSATA'S APT. - LATER

ASSATA sits on the couch reading a book by Fanon and smoking. The ashtray is littered with butts. She sets the book down to rub her forehead. Looks at the clock: **3:43**.

INT. KITCHEN - ASSATA'S APT. - LATER

ASSATA pours herself a glass of cheap red wine. Slugs half of it. The time on the clock by the oven reads **4:30**. She downs the rest of the glass and heads to her room.

INT. KITCHEN - ASSATA'S APT. - MORNING

The time reads **7:15**.

ASSATA's bedroom door opens and she trudges out, squinting, hair a mess. Straight to the cupboard, pulls out coffee grounds and a filter.

INT. ANDREW'S VAN - MORNING

ASSATA sits in the back next to SUNDIATA and TWYMON as the car chugs along. BOBBY and SAM sit behind the front seats. A.J. rides shotgun. ANDREW JACKSON (24), a long-faced BLACK MAN with a modest afro and an anxious look in the eye, drives the van.

Assata wears a wig. Sundiata, Twymon, and Sam all wear hats.

TWYMON
Should we have masks?

SUNDIATA
Hats should be fine.

Assata looks out the back window to see CAVALRY CEMETERY receding from view.

ASSATA
Almost there.

EXT. BANKER'S TRUST - QUEENS - LATE MORNING

SEVERAL CARS parked in the small lot. ONE CAR parked on the street out front. A LATINO MAN (30s) walks out of the bank and heads down the sidewalk.

The VAN pulls up behind the car out front on the street.

INT. ANDREW'S VAN - THAT MOMENT

ASSATA grabs the back door handle. SUNDIATA stands up behind her, and BOBBY, SAM, and TWYMON follow suit.

Assata takes a deep breath. OPENS the back door.

EXT. BANKER'S TRUST - QUEENS - CONTINUOUS

ASSATA steps out and onto the sidewalk, then SUNDIATA, who quickly moves towards the building. The REST jump out of the back, and BOBBY shuts the back door. TWYMON hurries to flank Sundiata, Assata falls in behind him. A.J. gets out of the front passenger side and brings up the rear.

INT. BANKER'S TRUST

The front door FLIES open, bell RATTLING, and SUNDIATA bursts in with his PISTOL trained straight on the GUARD.

SUNDIATA

Get down now! Everybody!

TWYMON rushes in and aims around the room. The BANKERS all push away from their desks and get out of their chairs, stunned. The FOUR PATRONS around the room hit the deck.

ASSATA comes in, purse in one hand and the DUFFEL bag in the other. She strides towards the desk with the TELLERS.

The office door opens and a SECOND GUARD walks out from the slim hallway, hand on his holstered gun. Twymon advances.

TWYMON

Get on the ground! Getcha hand off ya gun.

The man abides, getting to his knees, as Twymon goes over and watches him lay down.

BOBBY enters and runs to the desks, followed shortly by SAM.

BOBBY

Don't nobody try nothin'!

They aim their guns at the scared clients on the floor.

A.J. walks in, closes the door, and posts up next to it.

Assata approaches one of the tellers, a WHITE WOMAN (40s) with a sour expression. She tosses the duffel on the counter. The teller stares back at her, not moving.

ASSATA

The money, let's go! All these registers, plus the safe.

The teller snatches the duffel and opens her register, reluctant. Sundiata takes the gun from his guard, pockets it. He looks to the other tellers.

SUNDIATA

Get out. Come here.

He pushes open the low swing-door and gestures for the tellers to walk through. THE THREE TELLERS, except the one getting the money, step out to the waiting area.

A WHITE MAN (40s) wearing thick glasses lies on the wood a couple yards from the door. He looks up at A.J.

Assata watches the teller amble slowly to the next register. She looks at Assata without opening it.

ASSATA
C'mon, hurry up.

She opens it and starts adding cash to the duffel.

The SAME BANKER who served Carl lies on the ground before Bobby. He looks up at him.

QUEENS BANKER
You're making a mistake.

BOBBY
Man, shut up! Stop looking at me.

The man sneers up at him. Bobby PUNCHES him.

SAM
Chill, Bob!

Bobby glances over, angry, gives him a damning look for using his name. Assata glances over. RECOGNIZES the Banker.

ASSATA
(to Sundiata)
Take over.

Sundiata rushes to the teller. A.J. stands by the Guard. The man in the glasses BOLTS for the door past A.J. and BURSTS into the daylight while A.J. grasps air. The man ESCAPES.

A.J.
Fuck!

Sundiata FIRES into the ceiling.

SUNDIATA
Nobody fucking move!

Assata stands over the Banker, gun trained on him.

ASSATA
Remember Carl Franklin?

QUEENS BANKER
No!

ASSATA
Find his loan and approve it.

QUEENS BANKER
If it's denied, I don't have it.
He'll have to do a new application. I
can't, I—

ASSATA

I don't give a damn! When he comes back, approve it. If you don't, I'm coming back too. And my thirty-eight's comin' with me.

QUEENS BANKER

(meekly)

Alright, alright!

The teller is leisurely loading cash into the duffel.

SUNDIATA

Come on! Today!

The woman throws the last stacks of cash in the bag.

SUNDIATA (cont'd)

Let's go, last one, then the safe.

TELLER

I'll need the manager.

SUNDIATA

Then get him!

TELLER

He's not here yet.

SUNDIATA

It's nine thirty!

TWYMON

We can't wait.

A door can be heard CREAKING and SHUTTING in the office.

ASSATA

Sam, go back there.

Sam rushes into the hall, opens the first door on the right.

The teller once again stands there without loading cash.

ASSATA (cont'd)

I'm tired of this.

Assata rushes over and pulls her .38 on the woman.

ASSATA (cont'd)

All the money. Now.

The woman starts hastily unloading the last register.

Sam emerges from the hallway with the MANAGER (50s) by the arm. He TOSSES the man towards the teller window. Twymon takes him and leads him around the desk through the swing-door. The teller opens the room to the safe.

BANK MANAGER

The police are on their way!

Twymon PUSHES the manager into the safe room.

Assata turns and surveys the room. Bobby and Sam stand among the desks. Sundiata looks over at her nervously, then glances out the front windows. Assata takes a deep breath. What the hell have they gotten themselves into?

Twymon emerges from the safe room with the duffel in hand.

TWYMON

Let's go.

INT. ANDREW'S VAN

The van SKIRTS into the street. ASSATA watches out the back window, breathing heavily. SUNDIATA watches too. TWYMON, SAM, and BOBBY rifle through the earnings.

TWYMON

Damn, it looks better here than in the safe.

ASSATA

How much you think?

TWYMON

It ain't twenty. It ain't thirty. It's lookin' higher!

Twymon grins and Bobby raises his hand. They high-five, and then Sam gets in on the celebrating.

Assata looks back out the window in consternation.

INT. ASSATA'S APARTMENT - BROOKLYN - DAY

CASH is spread out on the dinner table and ASSATA sits counting it. SUNDIATA paces around with a glass of whiskey.

SUNDIATA

I *told* you it shoulda' been me on crowd control! Any swingin' dick with a gun can take a guard.

ASSATA
You're right.

SUNDIATA
I know!

ASSATA
Bobby was a bad pick.

SUNDIATA
Damn right.

ASSATA
Wasn't my guy.

Sundiata looks over, offended, but knows she's right.

ASSATA (cont'd)
Look, next time we'll vet 'em better.

SUNDIATA
Alright.

ASSATA
And no shooting.

SUNDIATA
Hey, shit was getting outta' hand!

ASSATA
Next time, don't.

Sundiata takes another sip of whiskey. Assata finishes counting the money, looks up and grins.

ASSATA (cont'd)
Thirty-six thousand, five hundred dollars.

SUNDIATA
Oh, baby! That's beautiful. That's new car money.

INT. ASSATA'S HALLWAY - LATER

ASSATA stands before Carl's door. It opens and CARL appears.

ASSATA
How you doin' Carl?

CARL
I'm fine, dear.

ASSATA

This might sound strange, but... you should go back to that bank in Queens. Do another loan application and see what happens.

CARL

But they denied me...

ASSATA

This time they won't. I'm sure of it.

CARL

Well if you're so sure...

ASSATA

And if you need a ride again, just let me know. Well... me and Sundiata.

INT. 131ST ST. CAFETERIA - DAY

ASSATA gives a paper bag to BERNICE. Bernice looks in.

BERNICE

Where the hell'd you get this?

ASSATA

Don't worry, girl. I told you I'd help.

BERNICE

Oh you're so good.

They hug. Then pull apart.

BERNICE (cont'd)

(joking)

Didn't jack an armored truck, did you?

Assata laughs.

ASSATA

Nothin' like that.

EXT. SICKLE CELL CLINIC - DAY

ASSATA comes out the front doors and walks up to Sundiata's car. She opens the door and steps in.

INT. BEDROOM - TWYMON'S APARTMENT - WILLIAMSBURG - DAY

ASSATA, SUNDIATA, and TWYMON stand over a wide wooden chest about four feet deep. Twymon's eyes gleam as he opens it.

Inside there are TWO automatic PISTOLS, TWO UZIS, THREE semi-auto pistols, STACKS of ammo boxes, and a GRENADE.

SUNDIATA

Jesus, man, you startin' a militia?

ASSATA

Where'd you get a fuckin' grenade?

TWYMON

Oh my dude's got everything. Why not?
Look at that shit!

ASSATA

You spent all your take on this?

TWYMON

I mean... not all of it.

INT. DHORUBA'S APARTMENT - BED-STUY - DAY

A breeze rolls in through the open window by the red sofa. DHORUBA stands by the T.V. which shows: shots of the war in VIETNAM. Dhoruba talks on the PHONE.

DHORUBA

I know, man, that's why I'm calling.
Just tell Eldridge if he needs
anything from Bed-Stuy, Dhoruba's got
him.

By the downstairs buzzer is a man named AVON WHITE (21), five-foot and four inches tall, with a slight Atlanta accent and a small gold earring in his left ear. He presses the buzzer and walks over to the sofa. Sitting at the table in the dining room, adjacent to the back hallway, are KAMAU, SAM, and TWO OTHER YOUNG BLA MEMBERS. A.J. and ANOTHER MAN (20s) converse in the kitchen.

KAMAU

I was thinkin' maybe a Cougar. Or a
Challenger.

SAM

I'm gettin' a fat chain, man.

KAMAU

You see what Twymon's been buying?

The door opens. ASSATA and SUNDIATA come in. Conversations hush and attention shifts to her. Avon mutes the T.V.

ASSATA

How's it going, boys?

SAM

Good! Great.

SUNDIATA

Couldn't be better.

Dhoruba hangs up the phone. Sundiata sits down on the couch.

DHORUBA

They been tellin' me they only got 2500 for a robbery of fuckin' 36K!

ASSATA

That's right, all seven of us got that.

DHORUBA

No, that's not right. They all riskin' serious jail-time for just a couple thousand.

ASSATA

What're we doing, Dhoruba? Are we just trying to help ourselves pay rent, pay the bills, buy another gun or two?

Sundiata has his arm draped over his forehead. Avon leans against the back of the couch.

SUNDIATA

It's about the community.

ASSATA

Exactly!

SUNDIATA

Hey I'm not complaining.

AVON

Don't seem right.

ASSATA

Nobody asked you a damn thing, little man. And who are you? Never seen this man before a day in my life he's gonna speak down to *me*.

(MORE)

ASSATA (cont'd)
 If I need anything off the bottom
 shelf, I'll let you know.

Avon turns away and starts sulking.

DHORUBA
 Look, I admire it, Assata. I do. But
 you shoulda consulted with us first.

ASSATA
 I shoulda' consulted you? What for? I
 don't have to answer to Panthers. The
 BLA needed money, I went out and got
 some. I mean, *somebody's* gotta do
something. Someone's gotta take
 charge, what've you been doing?

Dhoruba stares out the window, annoyed.

DHORUBA
 A lot... Y'know Angie Davis is comin'
 to town tomorrow to speak at MSG?
 There's gonna be a protest before it.

ASSATA
 (mocking)
 Didn't consult me.

DHORUBA
 Rememering Emmet. And condemning the
 police.

ASSATA
 Sounds good.

AVON
 Don't sound like money though.

DHORUBA
 Everything ain't about money.

AVON
 But can't we somehow... benefit.

SUNDIATA
 We could ask sponsor the event, tell
 'em to send money. Or do a fund-
 raiser. How 'bout a bake sale?

DHORUBA
 No, nothin' like that. Just keep a
 low profile, alright?
 (MORE)

DHORUBA (cont'd)

Gonna' be a lotta' eyes on us. Gotta' toe the line out there.

ASSATA

Oh so we gotta' toe the line. But pigs out there cross the line every day. We don't gotta' play by their rules.

Avon starts to throw a ball off the wall over the T.V.

DHORUBA

I know, but there's a time to get aggressive and a time when you don't.

ASSATA

Seems as good a time as any. This is a damn good opportunity to draw attention to us. We can recruit people through this. Spread the message to anybody watching on TV!

DHORUBA

Tomorrow *is* about message, and reaching the public. I agree. But more importantly, we don't want trouble. If it stays calm, stable, you know, it's gonna help our image.

ASSATA

Calm and stable? If only peaceful protest worked in a nation with no conscience.

(to Avon)

Stop with the ball.

Avon clasps his hands around the tennis ball.

DHORUBA

Assata, the press is gonna be all over this. We wanna play to them.

ASSATA

First time the media will ever be on our side.

DHORUBA

Hopefully tomorrow is.

SUNDIATA

I'm takin' bets.

On the TV: FRANK SERPICO speaking into microphones.

EXT. MADISON SQUARE GARDEN - DAY

The PLAZA outside the building is a mass of PROTESTORS surrounded and closely watched by POLICE OFFICERS in white helmets. Some NEWS VANS sit parked on the street. CAMERAMEN and REPORTERS are scattered on the edges of the crowd.

ASSATA stands with DHORUBA and ZAYD SHAKUR (male, 26) - no relation to Assata - who is shorter, has a thick mustache and a tall head of hair. ALL THREE of them chant along.

ALL
No justice, no peace! No justice, no
peace!

OFFICERS push PROTESTERS back.

OFFICER #1	OFFICER #2
Get back! Move! Get back, motherfucker!	Back up! Get over there! Stop that - hey you!

Assata leans over to Dhoruba and shouts over the din:

ASSATA
When's Angela speaking?

DHORUBA
Seven. It's ten bucks a ticket.

ASSATA
We should do something like that.
Good way of raising money.

DHORUBA
We don't got her kinda profile.
Besides, she needs the money to pay
her lawyers.

A FEW OFFICERS start getting more physical with SEVERAL PROTESTERS. They push them hard into the crowd. Officer #1 grabs hold of a BLACK MAN (20s) and PULLS him into the street as Officer #2 helps him, causing ONLOOKERS to come over and SHOUT at the cops.

MORE COPS and PROTESTERS descend on the position and it gets increasingly physical. Protesters are getting tossed around, another one gets detained. The officers take the flailing citizens over to their cruisers.

Dhoruba and Assata rush over to diffuse the situation, getting between COPS and PROTESTERS.

ZAYD

Let 'em go! Get off of 'em!

A scuffle breaks out on the other end of the plaza. Things escalate all around them, the energy of the mass turning to rage. Assata sees the crowd getting riled up: people YELLING at the police, throwing trash at them, chanting LOUDER:

ALL

No justice, no peace! No racist police!

Assata sees an opportunity.

She climbs atop a PARKED CAR and looks out at the crowd, the attention of the crowd still mainly on the cops. Dhoruba looks at her and throws his hands up: "What're you doing?"

She raises a clenched fist.

ASSATA

No justice, no peace! No racist police!

Eyes start to shift in her direction. The people right around her look up, attention gravitating towards her, including that of the police.

ASSATA (cont'd)

The people, united, can never be defeated! The people, united, can never be defeated!

More eyes turn to her. TWO OFFICERS push their way towards her, but Dhoruba and Zayd block them. SEVERAL protesters stand with them to create a barrier around the car.

The protesters at the police line are getting thrown around, pushing back, shouting. It's getting more heated. A BLACK WOMAN (20s) gets hauled away towards another police car.

ASSATA (cont'd)

Leave 'em alone! Stand, brothers, stand tall.

A BLACK PANTHER (20s) holds up a BULLHORN. Assata takes it.

ASSATA (cont'd)

(into the horn)
We are not criminals!

Now attention really starts shifting her way.

ASSATA (cont'd)
Hold on a minute! Hold on...

The crowd settles down a little bit.

ASSATA (cont'd)
We are not the criminals! We are the victims! It should be clear to us who the real criminals are. The top law enforcement officials in this country are a lying bunch of criminals.

The barrier around her thickens.

ASSATA (cont'd)
They call us criminals, but we did not murder over 250 unarmed Black men, women, and children, or wound thousands of others in the riots they provoked in the sixties. The rulers of this country have always considered their property more important than our lives. They call us criminals, but we do not control or enforce a system of racism and oppression that systematically murders Black and Third World people.

The crowd's attention has largely shifted to Assata.

ASSATA (cont'd)
For every pig that is killed in the so-called line of duty, there are at least fifty Black people murdered by police. They do their best to kill us before we're even born! We're burned alive in tenements. Our brothers and sisters OD daily from heroin and methodone. Our babies die from lead poisoning.

The news CAMERAS are trained on her.

ASSATA (cont'd)
We must defend ourselves and let no one disrespect us. We must gain our liberation by any means necessary. Black people must rise up and overthrow the American regime. Band together, organize, and take on the white oppressors with iron fists. It is our duty to fight for our freedom. It is our duty to win.

With that, she hands the bullhorn back to the Panther. Out of the crowd rise DOZENS of clenched fists. CHEERS and WHISTLES ring out. The crowd starts to chant again, riled up in a frenzy, as Assata steps down from the car. People push back against the police line as a unified force.

ALL

No justice, no peace! No racist police!

Dhoruba and Zayd huddle around Assata as cops struggle to get past the protesters around the car and reach her.

ZAYD

We gotta kick it, man.

DHORUBA

What happened to low profile?

ASSATA

Fuck a low profile.

They push into the crowd, away from the police line grabbing after them, disappearing among the protesters.

INT. FBI OFFICE - MANHATTAN

AGENTS scattered around at desks, wearing suits, talking on phones and typing reports.

SPECIAL AGENTS MIKE O'BRIEN (32) and JIMMY STAVRAKATOS (35) sit opposite each other at their desks. O'Brien is lean and clean-cut. Stavrakatos has a thick mustache and curly black hair. They're both working at their typewriters when a hulking man with a gray flat-top, SPECIAL AGENT-IN-CHARGE BROCKNER (50s), comes up with a FOLDER in his hand.

He plops the file on O'Brien's desk.

BROCKNER

New assignment, boys.

O'Brien opens the folder. On the first page: a PHOTOGRAPH of ASSATA on top of the car at the protest. The picture is labeled "JOANNE CHESIMARD. AGE: 24."

O'BRIEN

Who's this?

BROCKNER

Ex-Panther. Now a leader with the Black Liberation Army.

(MORE)

BROCKNER (cont'd)

That photo's from the fuckin' protest at MSG earlier today. Shit was on the news. Me and the ASAC think it's time to squash this shit.

STAVRAKATOS

Squash?

BROCKNER

That's right. We want these Black subversives fuckin' taken care of. Big crackdown. Get a team together. Throw the goddamn book at her and all her comrades.

O'BRIEN

What's she done other than say a bunch of shit at a protest?

BROCKNER

Read the file, O'Brien. She's not M.L.-fuckin-K, she's a communist!

Stavrakatos pulls at his mustache. O'Brien leafs through the folder, skimming the pages as he goes.

BROCKNER (cont'd)

And the paper's are gonna' love her. She's young, smart, and sexy. She'll be in the headlines every fuckin' day. Pump out reports, talk to press, you get the deal.

O'BRIEN

There's a lot of names in here.

BROCKNER

Yeah lotta faces. But she's the big fish. Got it?

BOTH nod. Brockner grins, flashes a thumbs-up.

BROCKNER (cont'd)

Happy huntin'.

He walks away. Mike and Jimmy share a begrudging look. Here's a lot of work.

INT. BANKERS TRUST CO. - QUEENS - DAY

A heavily accented NYPD DETECTIVE talks to the TELLER who handled the money during the robbery.

Over his shoulder, among the desks, the BANKER who met with Carl talks to an ASSOCIATE.

TELLER

Next thing I know she's shovin' a gun
in my face!

NYPD DETECTIVE

What kinda gun?

QUEENS BANKER

(whispering)

And if she finds out and comes to
kill me?

QUEENS ASSOC. BANKER

Well maybe the cops can catch her
first.

QUEENS BANKER

Fuck it, okay? Just fuck it. What's
one loan?

NYPD DETECTIVE

A revolver, okay, that's fine. And
what was she wearing?

INT. ANDREW'S VAN - NIGHT

ANDREW steers the car through a residential QUEENS neighborhood. TWYMON sits shotgun. ASSATA sits in the rear right seat, and AVON sits rear left.

AVON

Whatchu said out there today got me
inspired, girl.

ASSATA

Well, I'm glad. Pretty weird way to
get to Brooklyn, Andrew, what're we
doing?

ANDREW

You'll see.

ASSATA

Twymon whatchu got up there between
your legs?

Between Twymon's legs are an AMMO BOX and a BACKPACK.

TWYMON
Self-defense supplies. That's all.

ASSATA
Yeah I saw some of those earlier. You got plans?

TWYMON
Big plans. Always.

AVON
You looked good up on top of that car. Very good.

ASSATA
But how'd I sound?

ANDREW
There.. is that it?

Andrew points up the street to the left. Twymon leans forward to peer out.

PERSPECTIVE: NYPD CAR parked (plate #3802) before a brick INDUSTRIAL BUILDING and a DINER.

TWYMON
3802, that's it.

Andrew starts to slow down. On the near corner to the right, a young BLACK PANTHER (20), leaning on a parked SEDAN, nods to their car. Assata notices this too.

Twymon turns around and holds up the grenade with a grin.

TWYMON (cont'd)
Whatchu' think?

ASSATA
You're fuckin' crazy.

AVON
It's like you said earlier.
Liberation by any means necessary.

The car pulls to a stop on the right side of the road, half a block behind the cop car sitting on the left side.

ASSATA
Yeah but you're kicking the fuckin' hornet's nest! And we don't wanna kill no damn civilians either.

The TWO COPS can be seen inside the diner.

TWYMON

But nobody's out here! It's dead.

Assata looks out. Not a soul on the street. Has to agree.

TWYMON (cont'd)

Don't be gettin' soft on me now.
These are the guys who killed Emmet
Gardner.

Assata's disposition starts to change and she eases up.

ASSATA

That's what I thought when I saw the
tail by the payphone.

They watch her as she deliberates, staring out the window.

TWYMON

Let's take the fight to them like we
keep talkin' about!

ASSATA

It's a big thing to blow up a cop
car. You don't just do it on a whim.
They'll hunt you down for that. It
ain't shit a pig will forget. But...
where else is justice?

(to Twymon)

You gonna do it?

AVON

I wanna do it.

She raises her eyebrows at him. He looks uncomfortable but
tries to maintain a macho front.

AVON (cont'd)

I can do it!

She strokes her chin. Looks to Twymon, then to Andrew. They
stare back at her expectantly.

ASSATA

Lil' man has to prove himself.

AVON

Don't call me little.

ASSATA
 You ain't big 'til you done somethin'
 big.

Assata looks to Twymon. Nods her head over to Avon. Twymon hands the grenade over to Avon, who takes a deep breath, opens the door, and goes out.

TWYMON
 Man, I wanted to throw that shit.

ASSATA
 Next time, buddy.

EXT. STREET - MASPETH, QUEENS - NIGHT

AVON gets out of the VAN, grenade tucked against his side. He hurries towards the COP CAR, casting glances side to side and back over his shoulder as he goes along.

He comes up on it. Pulls the pin on the grenade. Rolls it under the car. Turns and SPRINTS towards the van.

The COPS come out of the DINER at that moment. They come around the back of the car to SEE Avon running away.

The cruiser EXPLODES. The cops fall. Avon hops in the van.

The van screeches away as the cops get to their feet and pull their pistols to FIRE wildly at the fleeing car.

Bullets ping off the metal and shatter the glass. One BURSTS through the window and CATCHES Avon's left shoulder.

ASSATA
 Shit!

She looks over to Avon, who winces in pain and clutches his bleeding shoulder awkwardly.

ASSATA (cont'd)
 Damn, damn, damn...

She pulls some napkins from her purse, folds them together quickly, and presses them on Avon's wound.

ASSATA (cont'd)
 Hold that there.

ANDREW
 Damn, Avon! You good, man?

AVON
 Yeah, man, I'm cool, I'm-
 (wincing)
 Ahhh, shit!

ASSATA
 It's stuck in there, he needs a
 doctor.

ANDREW
 Nah, nah, he'll be fine.

ASSATA
 Oh you gonna' get the bullet outta
 his shoulder?

ANDREW
 Shit!

TWYMON
 Head north, man.

ANDREW
 We don't wanna go to Brooklyn?

TWYMON
 Nah take him to Elmhurst.

ANDREW
 Shit! Man, this got fucked.

Assata RIPS Avon's shirt at the forearm. Pulls the sleeve under Avon's armpit, spread on the shoulder over the wound, and ties it by his clavicle.

EXT. ELMHURST AVE. STATION - NIGHT

The bullet-riddled VAN grinds to a stop out front. ASSATA and TWYMON climb out. The doors close and the van TEARS off.

EXT. ELMHURST HOSPITAL - NIGHT

The VAN pulls to the curb. ANDREW jumps out. AVON opens his door and steps slowly down. They head towards the ER doors. Andrew goes to help Avon walk, but he brushes him off.

AVON
 I got it, man. Get outta' here.

ANDREW
 You sure?

AVON

Yeah.

Andrew turns back to the van to see a POLICE CRUISER pull up behind it. He turns on his heel and heads the other way.

AN OFFICER emerges from the front passenger seat.

QUEENS COP

Hey! This your car?

ANDREW

(over his shoulder)

Nah, man.

QUEENS COP

Hold it. Stop! Freeze!

He raises his pistol on Andrew. Andrew stops. He puts his hands up. The cop advances.

ANDREW

What'd I do?

QUEENS COP

That's your car!

ANDREW

No it isn't!

QUEENS COP

I saw you get out of it. Get on the ground. On your knees.

Andrew kneels with his hands up. The cop comes up to him.

QUEENS COP (cont'd)

Hands behind your back!

The cop forces Andrew's hands back behind him.

ANDREW

Shit! You're gonna break my arm, man.

The officer slaps the cuffs on Andrew's wrists and starts to search Andrew's pockets. He finds his CAR KEYS.

QUEENS COP

Ford keys, huh? Like the one right over there?

He hoists Andrew to his feet and pushes him towards the cruiser. The OTHER COP starts towards the E.R. doors.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - POLICE STATION

ANDREW is handcuffed to a chair. A HULKING COP (30s) raises a PHONE BOOK and whacks him in the face with it.

BIG COP
Who threw the grenade?

DETECTIVE THOMPSON sits at the table watching.

DET. THOMPSON
You didn't do it alone, Mr. Jackson.
Who was with you?

ANDREW
I want a lawyer.

Thompson looks up. The cop smacks him again. Then once more.

DET. THOMPSON
It only gets worse from here.

ANDREW
Fuck you!

THREE hits from the book. Blood drips from Andrew's nose.

DET. THOMPSON
This ain't shit compared to prison,
buddy.

Andrew heaves and spits at Thompson, speckling his tie.

DET. THOMPSON (cont'd)
Alright. Enough nice shit.

Thompson stands, removes his BELT, and raises it overhead.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - ELMHURST

AVON lies in a bed with bandages over his shoulder. O'BRIEN sits bedside, and STAVRAKATOS paces by the window.

O'BRIEN
You're in big trouble, kid. You
fucked. Up.

STAVRAKATOS
They already got your buddy in a cell
at the station.

O'BRIEN

I heard he talked the second they got him in there.

AVON

Bullshit.

O'BRIEN

God's honest truth!

AVON

Fuck all y'all, man.

STAVRAKATOS

Hey! Pal! This ain't somethin' you walk away from. You bomb a cop car, you're goin' in.

AVON

I don't know shit about that.

O'BRIEN

Why ya gotta bullet in your arm?

AVON

Buncha dudes started shootin' right up the way, man, I was just walkin' down the street!

STAVRAKATOS

Funny, didn't get any reports about that.

AVON

It's New York City! Every time a gun fires don't make the papers.

O'BRIEN

You had no connection to the man helping you into the building?

AVON

Helping me? I didn't know the motherfucker.

O'BRIEN

We know you're friends with Assata Shakur.

AVON

What's this gotta do with her?

O'BRIEN
Did she order the hit on the car...

Avon laughs.

AVON
Order the hit... this ain't the
mafia. She wouldn't fuck with the
hornet's nest like that.

O'Brien and Stav share a look. This is getting nowhere.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY

O'BRIEN and STAVRAKATOS step out of the room and close the door behind them. An NYPD OFFICER sits outside the room.

O'BRIEN
Whatdya think?

STAVRAKATOS
It might give us leverage but...

O'BRIEN
I don't think he'll flip.

STAVRAKATOS
Not on this. It ain't enough. We
gotta step up the pressure.

O'BRIEN
You think she was there, though?

Stavrakatos puts his hands on his hips. Shrugs.

STAVRAKATOS
The boss on the street with the
soldiers? I don't see it.

They head down the hall, passing A NURSE (black, 30s) with a cup of WATER in her hand, who goes into Avon's room.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

The NURSE enters and AVON's anxiety turns to relief.

AVON
Thank God.

She sets the cup down on the table by the bed.

NURSE
You need anything else, lemme know.

A thought strikes him.

AVON
Coffee?

NURSE
(turning to leave)
Sure.

AVON
Wait! Can you spill it on that cop
out there?

She laughs. He looks at her intently. Her smile fades.

NURSE
You serious?

AVON
Yeah. Just a little accident. Totally
harmless.

She considers.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

The NURSE walks up the hallway towards Avon's room with a cup of coffee in her hand. She sees the cop. She angles towards him as she nears, then, feet away, looks over her shoulder, still moving forward, as if called upon.

NURSE
(feigning down-hall)
What was that?!

Her toe kicks the leg of the chair and she tips the coffee into the cop's lap. He HOWLS and leaps to his feet.

HALLWAY COP
Jesus christ, lady!

NURSE
I'm so sorry, sir. It was an--

HALLWAY COP
You fuckin'.... You...

He bites his tongue.

HALLWAY COP (cont'd)
Where's the fucking bathroom?

She points down the hall. He glares at her as he speeds off.

Avon watches through the window to his room. He opens the door, watches the cop enter the bathroom, and steps out.

NURSE
You gonna' clean this shit up?

He grabs her by the shoulders and kisses her on the mouth.

AVON
I love you, baby.

He bounds off down the hall as she wipes her mouth. At the end of the hallway, he boards the elevator.

FADE TO:

EXT. FREE CLOTHING BANK - BROOKLYN - DAY

A line of PEOPLE, predominantly Black, stand outside the building in thin jackets and tattered hats. Clouds of breath puff from their mouths. ASSATA goes down the opposite walk.

TITLE CARD: **WINTER**

A WORKER comes out of the building.

WORKER
We're outta coats!

GROANS from the people in line.

WORKER (cont'd)
I'm sorry!

Assata stops and looks over grimly. She surveys the line.

EXT. SICKLE CELL CLINIC - DAY

There are BOARDS over the doors and windows. A young BLACK PANTHER stands outside holding a stack of newspapers. He waves one in the air at a PASSERBY.

INT. SUBWAY CAR

ASSATA and SUNDIATA are sitting next to each other. The train-car is dirty, dimly-lit, and covered in graffiti. Assata is wearing a wig, Sundiata a black beanie.

SUNDIATA

Fifteen different companies. No interviews. Nothing. At the last one, I call 'em, lady tells me I'm black-listed. I say, "What for?" She says, "I don't know. You just are."

ASSATA

Black-listed? With all the tech companies they got here...

SUNDIATA

13 years of experience. Pshh. There's some bullshit goin' on.

A BEAT COP walks down the car towards them. They quiet immediately and lower their heads. He eyes them briefly as he walks past, but keeps on going.

INT. SUNDIATA'S PLACE - BROOKLYN

KAMAU and TWYMON sit at the table, playing cards. Twymon wears a leather cap and a pristine black leather jacket. SUNDIATA sips a beer and reads *The Black Panther* newspaper.

AVON sits on the couch watching T.V., his left arm resting next to him. EIGHT other BLA MEMBERS (20s) are scattered around the room, and THREE sit at a long table by the foyer painting signs that read: CHISHOLM FOR PRESIDENT.

ASSATA stands by the T.V. She reaches down and mutes it.

ASSATA

Alright, good to see y'all again. Is this everybody?

SUNDIATA

Pretty much.

ASSATA

Okay. Look, it's time to get something goin' again. I know a number of can't even pay utilities, let alone rent.

KAMAU

Get a job.

Sundiata laughs coldly.

SUNDIATA

Good luck!

KAMAU

I mean like we did.

TWYMON

That last one, couple of H dealers in Flatbush, brothers didn't see us comin' by a mile. They were shittin' themselves, couldn't even strap up we was on 'em so fast.

ASSATA

And that was a good take. But that was three weeks ago, guys. And what'd you do with that money?

Twymon flicks some dust off the lapel of his jacket.

ASSATA (cont'd)

I say we do another bank.

SUNDIATA

I'm out.

ASSATA

Whatchu gonna' do then?

SUNDIATA

I don't know, but I'm done with banks. Too hot.

AVON

I'm down.

ASSATA

You sure?

AVON

Hey, I'm already wanted. Can't get a job, can I? Might as well.

KAMAU

You got one in mind?

ASSATA

No, but we can find one. It's been long enough since the grenade thing, and Andrew ain't talkin' to 'em, so it's time we got out there again.

KAMAU

I don't know.

ASSATA

How well is the BLA doin, huh? Look around. Our neighborhoods? Places shuttin' down left and right. Brothers and sisters out in the cold, can't even get a coat. We have an obligation to them. And in helping them, they grow stronger and we do too. And Black liberation is one step closer. But trust me, we could use that cash injection. Without us, the community won't have anybody looking out for it.

KAMAU

How much you get last time?

TWYMON

2500 each.

ASSATA

We need a getaway driver. Since Andrew's in jail.

Assata eyes Kamau, who briefly considers this. Then he nods.

KAMAU

Okay. I can do that.

Assata looks to Twymon. He shakes his head.

TWYMON

I'm good at the moment. Got no need to rob a bank.

ASSATA

We could use one more, though.

Twymon puts his hands up with an "I'm out" expression. ONE of the GUYS painting signs turns around and raises his hand. This is JOHN RIVERS (22), a thin man with a thick mustache.

ASSATA (cont'd)

Alright, that's four. I think we can get it done with four. Gotta' be a lot smoother than last time, though, and more efficient.

TWYMON

With no Bobby, it will be.

ASSATA

And with no Sundiata.

SUNDIATA

Hey!

EXT. MANUFACTURERS HANOVER TRUST - BRONX - DAY

A BANK at the crossing of a main road and a small avenue, with ornate stonework over the sign and large glass windows.

A BLUE FOUR-DOOR pulls up across the street, in front of a RESTAURANT with a green awning. KAMAU can be seen at the wheel, AVON behind him. They pop open their doors.

INT. MANUFACTURERS HANOVER TRUST

Quiet. A few PATRONS in the wide room, TWO by the desk, and TWO talking with BANKERS.

AVON rushes through the front door and immediately raises his PISTOL at the GUARD by the entrance.

AVON

Get on the fuckin' ground!

Next, JOHN rolls in, PISTOL trained on the OTHER GUARD standing by the teller desk. The clients start panicking. ASSATA comes in, sporting a black leather jacket.

ASSATA

Everybody get down. Don't move! This is a robbery.

KAMAU comes in last, shutting the door behind him and turning the lock under the knob. He takes over watching the Guard by the desk as Assata pulls a .357 on the Guard by the door. Avon strolls up to the teller desk, where THREE FRIGHTENED TELLERS stand anxiously watching his approach.

AVON

The money. Now.

He flops the DUFFEL on the counter and points his gun at the TELLER (white woman, 30s). John goes up to the desk, gun trained on the Teller, as Avon watches the patrons.

AVON (cont'd)
Any of y'all fuckin' move, you know what happens.

The Teller fills the duffel with cash from the registers. Avon turns and looks up over the desk, sees TWO CAMERAS pointing down at him. He quickly faces away. Looking at Kamau, standing a few feet away, he gestures to the cameras.

AVON (cont'd)
Shoulda worn masks, man.

KAMAU
Shit.

He faces away too.

The Teller finishes filling the bag from the registers. She puts the duffel on the counter before John.

JOHN
The safe.

BRONX TELLER
It's empty.

JOHN
Fuck you mean it's empty?

BRONX TELLER
It's Friday. They emptied it last night cuz we're closed over the weekend.

John turns, exasperated, to Avon. Avon looks to Assata.

ASSATA
Let's go.

John grabs the duffel and follows Avon away from the desk. Assata goes out the front door, Kamau follows shortly.

EXT. MANUFACTURERS HANOVER TRUST - BRONX - CONTINUOUS

ASSATA emerges from the BANK while tucking her REVOLVER into the back of her waistband. Just then, a COP CAR comes rolling up the street from her left towards her position.

KAMAU comes out, she turns and stops him.

ASSATA
Twelve! Twelve!

JOHN and AVON freeze as they come out the doors and quickly hide their guns in their jackets.

The cop car rolls slowly by. They hold their breaths. It passes and turns left, away from them. They all breathe a sigh of relief and RUSH across the street to the CAR.

INT. ASSATA'S APARTMENT - BROOKLYN - DAY

ASSATA sits at the dinner table, as before, counting money. AVON sits next to her. JOHN sits on the couch. KAMAU is in the kitchen, fishing through the fridge.

ASSATA
(grimly)
Thirty-seven hundred.

AVON
Let's go that's like a thousand more than last time!

KAMAU
No, man, this is three thousand, seven hundred fuckin' dollars.

AVON
Shit.

ASSATA
Yeah.

She sits back, dejected.

ASSATA (cont'd)
Everybody gets six hundred.

AVON
Oh my God.

JOHN
What about the rest?

ASSATA
That goes to the people.

JOHN
Fuck that, let's just split it!

ASSATA

This is about more than us! I mean, shit, we can't even spare thirteen hundred for them?

AVON

Seven hundred each.

ASSATA

Six fifty. That's *it*.

JOHN

I gotta go back to making signs.

Avon huffs and stomps off into the kitchen.

Kamau stands at the kitchen counter, opening a BEER with a bottle opener. Avon leans against the sink panel, fuming.

AVON

Can you believe this bitch? I'm done, man, that's fucked. All that over six hundred dollars?!

KAMAU

Six fifty.

EXT. FREE CLOTHING BANK - BROOKLYN - DAY

ASSATA enters the building with an ENVELOPE in her hand.

Outside, the line stretches down the block.

The NURSE from Elmhurst, now in civilian clothes, stands among the crowd, blowing warmth into her cold hands.

Assata exits the building and heads back across the street. She stops at the street corner and looks back at the line of people. Steam clouds out of her mouth as she breathes a heavy sigh. How many banks would they have to rob to help all these people? She wonders.

INT. MANUFACTURERS HANOVER TRUST - MORNING

O'BRIEN and STAVRAKATOS talk to the TELLER who handled the money during the robbery. An NYPD DETECTIVE stands off to the side, writing on a pad and looking around.

BRONX TELLER

And there was a woman by the door with a big afro.

The agents exchange a furtive glance.

O'BRIEN
What was she doing?

BRONX TELLER
Just standing by the door.

STAVRAKATOS
Was she armed?

BRONX TELLER
Yeah she had a gun.

O'Brien nods. He points to the cameras.

O'BRIEN
Those work?

INT. CAMERA ROOM - HANOVER TRUST

O'BRIEN and STAVRAKATOS stand before a small TV hooked up to a REEL-TO-REEL. The SECURITY GUARD rewinds to the robbery.

O'BRIEN
Alright stop it.

On the paused TV:

AVON and JOHN standing before the desk. KAMAU with his head turned, feet away. In the far corner of the image, very grainy, is ASSATA. Her facial features are heavily obscured. Stavrakatos points at her.

STAVRAKATOS
That her?

O'BRIEN
Maybe. Even if it isn't, it is. And that looks like Avon White in the front.

STAVRAKATOS
Yeah...
(to the guard)
We're gonna need to confiscate this.

EXT. MANUFACTURERS HANOVER TRUST - BRONX - MORNING

O'BRIEN and STAVRAKATOS step out. O'Brien holds a BOX.

O'BRIEN
We gotta track down Avon.

STAVRAKATOS
Over this, plus the cop car, he'll
definitely fuckin' flip.

O'BRIEN
But is there enough to get Chesimard?

Stavrakatos shrugs and lights a cigarette.

STAVRAKATOS
Either way, let's light a little fire
under their asses and see what
happens.

O'BRIEN
Yeah... What can we shut down?

STAVRAKATOS
How 'bout that cafeteria? That free
breakfast thing up in Harlem.

O'BRIEN
For what?

STAVRAKATOS
I dunno. Health violations?

INT. 131ST ST. CAFETERIA - THE NEXT DAY

A normal day at the cafeteria. A FEW DOZEN PEOPLE sit at
tables chatting and eating. BERNICE is by the coffee-maker.

The front doors BURST open and FBI AGENTS storm in. O'BRIEN
and STAVRAKATOS come in, IDs out, and head towards Bernice.

BERNICE
What the hell is going on here?

O'BRIEN
We're shutting this down. You got
health violations all over the place,
and known ties to criminal terrorist
organizations.

BERNICE
What the--?

STAVRAKATOS
Is Joanne here?

BERNICE

What? Who?

O'BRIEN

Joanne Chesimard. Assata Shakur?

BERNICE

No, she isn't.

STAVRAKATOS

Has she been here?

BERNICE

Lots of people come here, I don't know all of 'em.

O'BRIEN

Alright alright.

(to Stavrakatos)

Start asking around.

O'Brien turns to a bereted BLACK PANTHER (20s).

O'BRIEN (cont'd)

You seen Assata lately? You know where she is?

He shakes his head. SUNDIATA watches by the door to the back hallway. He opens the door and goes out.

EXT. KAMAU'S APARTMENT - HARLEM - DAY

ASSATA and KAMAU stand next to some LOCALS, older MEN and WOMEN sitting and standing around on the sidewalk. Assata is speaking with a TEENAGE BOY as a CAR pulls up to the curb.

ASSATA

Now they talk of peace. After all the death they've brought to that country. For what! The amerikan goddamn imperialist machine. Ruthlessly destroying the global south and extracting the resources, I swear--

SUNDIATA rushes up from the car.

SUNDIATA

Assata! They shut down the breakfast program.

ASSATA
Who did?

SUNDIATA
The FBI.

ASSATA
What?!

SUNDIATA
Yeah, they came in, a bunch of 'em.
Two of 'em come up to Bernice and
start asking if you're there. She
said no, they go around asking people
where you are.

ASSATA
My god...

Sundiata sits on some steps. Assata looks down.

ASSATA (cont'd)
Those fuckin' pigs...

She takes a harsh drag of the dregs of her cigarette. Tosses
it on the ground and squashes it with her heel.

ASSATA (cont'd)
What reason did they give?

SUNDIATA
Health violations. Ties to criminal
terrorist organizations!

Assata laughs dryly. Shakes her head and looks down.

ASSATA
Bullshit. Cuz of me?

They don't answer.

She stares out at Harlem and wonders, rage now mixing with a
profound sense of guilt and worry.

ASSATA (cont'd)
I'm goin' home.

SUNDIATA
You want a ride?

ASSATA
No, it's alright. I'll take the
subway.

EXT. CENTRAL AVE STATION - BROOKLYN - SUNSET

ASSATA descends the covered stairs from the platform and the red mezzanine facade. A PHONE BOOTH sits off to the right.

SEVERAL HOMELESS PEOPLE sit around with shopping carts, on the sidewalk under the station. Assata nods to them as she goes, passing dilapidated cars and overflowing trash cans. A strong gust of wind blows some scraps of paper against her passing leg. She pulls her jacket tight around her.

EXT. CENTRAL AVE AND BLEECKER ST. - BUSHWICK - SUNSET

ASSATA turns left onto Bleecker and crosses the street. ST. BARBARA'S CHURCH looms overhead at the corner, its elaborate basilica stretching up into the orange sky. A VOLKSWAGEN parked by the curb has been STRIPPED of most of its parts.

A young BLACK WOMAN (teens) bundled up against the fence outside the church approaches Assata.

TEEN BY THE CHURCH

Assata. Don't go home.

ASSATA

What?

TEEN BY THE CHURCH

It's crawling with pigs. They're waiting for you. FBI too.

ASSATA

Once a-fucking-gain with these guys.

Assata looks down the street towards her place. She looks back to the girl, bemused, and takes a deep breath.

ASSATA (cont'd)

Alright, thank you.

Assata glances around, unsure of where to go. The church's big wooden doors are shuttered. The streets grow empty. A JUNKIE stumbles in her direction from across the way.

TEEN BY THE CHURCH

(to the junkie)

Yo! I got what you need.

Assata ambles back, away from the corner, casting a befuddled glance at the girl, before she turns and starts back in the direction of the station. Then she stops at the corner, looks down her street, and starts towards her place.

EXT. BLEECKER ST. - BUSHWICK - CONTINUOUS

ASSATA surveys the cars parked along the road across from her apartment. She spots a BLUE FORD sedan. Looks in through the front passenger window. SEES: a RADIO HANDSET

She casts a glance around the street as she pulls a small pocket NOTEBOOK from her purse. Takes out a pen. Scribbles something, tears out the page, and places it on the car's windshield, fastened by the wiper.

Then she sets off back in the direction of Central Ave.

EXT. CENTRAL AVE STATION - BROOKLYN - TWILIGHT

ASSATA stands in the phone booth, listening to the receiver, burning cigarette hanging from her lips. The line rings.

ASSATA
C'mon, man, shit.

She looks around, antsy. No answer. She hangs up. Takes a drag off her cigarette and flips through her NOTEBOOK.

She sets it on the metal counter below the phone. Slides a couple quarters into the slot. Puts the phone to her ear.

Rings and rings. She looks over to the BODEGA on the corner. TWO MEN walk out the door and past the booth. One of them eyes her as they go by. No answer on the line.

She hangs up. Flips through the notebook. Two more quarters in and she listens again. No answer.

She slams the phone into the set, exasperated.

ASSATA (cont'd)
Where the fuck is everybody?

She turns to leave the booth, looks out to the street, and sees the two men from the bodega standing by the curb over by one of the rail-posts. Assata removes the REVOLVER from her purse and stuffs it in her front jacket pocket.

She steps out into the cold, steam rising from her mouth, and glares at the men. They survey her. She turns and heads hastily up the stairs to the station.

EXT. BLEECKER ST. - BUSHWICK - NIGHT

O'BRIEN and STAVRAKATOS head away from Assata's building, out of which pour SEVERAL NYPD COPS. They reach their car and O'Brien notices the note. He takes it out and reads:

"See you later boys. - Love, Assata"

O'BRIEN
God dammit!

STAVRAKATOS
What?

O'Brien throws the note onto the hood and Stav picks it up.

O'BRIEN
Oh she's fuckin' done now. Thinks she can outplay us. She's going the fuck down.

He gets in the car as Stavrakatos crumples up the note and tosses it to the curb with a huff.

I/E. CENTRAL AVE. PLATFORM - NIGHT

The platform is mostly deserted, save for a COUPLE standing further down the tracks and SOME TEENAGERS over by a bench.

ASSATA taps her foot, gaze trained on the tunnel, anxiously awaiting the train. She glances back. Nobody there.

EXT. RIVERSIDE DRIVE - UPPER WEST SIDE - NIGHT

A BLACK SEDAN rolls slowly up the street.

A swank FOUR-STORY MANSION with ornate stone work above the windows and sides of the green tiled roof is just up the block. TWO POLICE CRUISERS sit on the street out front.

The front passenger window slides down as the car nears the mansion. TWO COPS stand flanking the front door of the building. Another two hang out around the corner, chatting.

The sedan comes up next to the mansion. An arm pops out of the right window holding an UZI and FIRES at the mansion.

The bullets pepper the stone walls and riddle the cops before they can react. The gun clicks empty. The car SCREECHES off as the other officers come running up, FIRING their pistols at the fleeing sedan.

INT. SUBWAY CAR

ASSATA sits on the train looking out at the East River as the car passes over the MANHATTAN BRIDGE. She hears shuffling at the end of the near-empty car.

A sweaty ITALIAN MAN (20s) with greased back hair watches her. Next to him, a scrawny BLACK KID (teens) with his hands in his pockets. They're slowly making their way towards her.

Tense, she stares at them as they move closer. Her hand grips the pistol in her pocket. She starts to pull it out.

The men freeze. The Italian looks from her hand to her eyes. Assata pulls the revolver out just enough for its silver coat to glint off the florescent overhead light.

The Italian nudges the kid and they back away. Assata slides her hand back into the pocket.

EXT. GREENWICH VILLAGE - NIGHT

ASSATA emerges from the underground staircase at Houston St. She looks around uneasily. The SOUND of POLICE SIRENS echoes in the distance to the north. She listens for a moment, wondering where they come from, where they're heading.

Then she takes a right and heads up the street.

INT. FBI OFFICE - DOWNTOWN - NIGHT

The office is mostly empty. A few desk lamps on here and there. O'BRIEN sits at his desk, talking on the PHONE.

O'BRIEN

Yeah, name's Joanne Chesimard.....
That's right. Officer's names are
Michael O'Reilly and Roy Polliana.
Yeah..... Yeah, no problem..... Oh
that was somethin' like 89
thousand?..... Yeah. Bye, Gene.

Hangs up the phone. Smirks. Checks his watch.

O'BRIEN (cont'd)

Welp. That's a good day's work.

EXT. VILLAGE VANGUARD - LATER

ASSATA stands in a phone booth once again. The red awning of the jazz club hangs nearby, and the smooth song of a saxophone and trumpet escapes, muffled, from the club's red front doors.

She puts the phone back. Weary, she exits the booth and shutters as the wind whips her face. The music hits her, and she turns to the building.

With nothing else to do, she heads inside.

INT. VILLAGE VANGUARD

A very small CROWD. A lean band with a SAXOPHONIST, TRUMPETER, PIANIST, and DRUMMER, all of whom are Black. They play a slow, sultry song.

ASSATA sits alone at a table, smoking a cigarette, watching the band play.

Her gaze slips to a long stare into the middle distance as she loses herself in thought. A worried expression. Absentmindedly raises the cigarette to her lips and takes a drag.

Her eyes grow misty and red at the edges. She might cry. But she holds it back, snuffles harshly, and looks down. She is so hopelessly alone, and beating herself up.

EXT. VILLAGE VANGUARD - NIGHT

ASSATA stands in the booth for the third time. PATRONS exit the jazz club. The show must have ended. She talks into the phone.

ASSATA

Kamau, finally! Where you been?.....
 Alright..... I'm in Greenwich
 Village, I need a place to stay
 tonight..... Thank you..... Thanks,
 I'll be there in a little bit.

INT. KAMAU'S APARTMENT - HARLEM - MORNING

ASSATA wakes up on the couch in yesterday's clothes. She GROANS and sits up, moving her feet to the floor. KAMAU sits at the table reading the paper and drinking coffee.

KAMAU
Good morning.

ASSATA
Morning.

She puts her elbows on her knees and leans forward.

ASSATA (cont'd)
What am I gonna do?

KAMAU
I don't know. But if they're after
you, they're gonna be after me in no
time.

Assata shakes her head and rises, grumbling, to her feet.

ASSATA
Let's go get breakfast.

INT. DINER - HARLEM

Mirrored walls and big plate-glass windows. The CLIENTELE is primarily Black, some Hispanic patrons mixed around as well.

ASSATA and KAMAU sit in a booth by a window, plates of eggs and toast before them next to steaming cups of coffee.

KAMAU
You heard what happened last night?

Assata shakes her head, still chewing on some toast.

KAMAU (cont'd)
Someone shot up the D.A.'s house over
on the west side.

ASSATA
They kill him?

KAMAU
No. But they shot the two cops
standing out front.

ASSATA
Dead?

KAMAU
I don't know yet.

Assata puts her fork down.

ASSATA
Why didn't I know about this?

KAMAU
You know now.

ASSATA
That where everybody was last night?

KAMAU
No.

ASSATA
Well who did it?

KAMAU
I don't know for sure. I remember Bobby Vickers talkin' about it with Twymon the other day.

ASSATA
Bobby and Twymon...

KAMAU
Whoa, now I don't know exactly. They was just talkin' about it.

ASSATA
Well where were Sundiata and Dhoruba last night? Where was Avon?

KAMAU
Not with me. How should I know?

Assata sips some coffee. She sets it down. She bites her lip a little, restraining some frustration.

ASSATA
All these guys decidin' things on a whim, runnin' and gunnin', not working with the group. Independent. I'm trying to be organized and they're off doing whatever the fuck.

KAMAU
This is the fight! Can't always be controlled.

ASSATA
Now I gotta' be told everything after the fact. Don't y'all trust me anymore?

KAMAU
Of course we do!

Unconvinced, she pushes the eggs around on her plate.

ASSATA
Can't even go home.

KAMAU
Ain't this the fight you wanted?

ASSATA
Maybe. I guess so. But what, Bronx
take was too low, so they cut me out?
Say fuck her?

KAMAU
It's not like that.

ASSATA
Right.
(looking down)
Man, I asked for over-easy!

Assata pushes her plate away and sits back. She folds her arms and looks out the window.

EXT. CAFE - HARLEM - MORNING

ASSATA and KAMAU step out to face the brisk morning air. She hastily lights a cigarette. There's a NEWSPAPER STAND on the corner. Kamau goes up to it and scans the papers.

KAMAU
Oh shit, look!

She looks at the stand. Kamau shows her the *Daily News*. A headline reads "Was that JoAnne?" She takes it from him.

ASSATA
(reading)
Wanted in connection with the two cop
killings... oh my god... and the
robbery of a Brooklyn bank on the
first of March. Fuck me!

She CRUMPLES up the paper.

NEWSPAPERMAN
You gotta pay for that.

Assata takes deep drags off her cigarette as she paces around, trying to manage her anxiety.

ASSATA

Motherfuckers! I can't believe... Why me?

KAMAU

Kinda cool you're in the paper though.

ASSATA

They're just... I didn't do this shit, why is my name bein' used?

Kamau watches, unsure of how to calm her. She takes deep breaths, placing her hands on her hips and standing tall.

KAMAU

I've never been in the paper.

ASSATA

It ain't shit.

She THROWS the paper in a trashcan and hands the Newspaper Vendor a dollar as she strides past.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - FBI OFFICE - DOWNTOWN

BROCKNER watches through the two-way mirror as O'BRIEN and STAVRAKATOS interrogate AVON, who looks exhausted. The PHOTO from the Bronx robbery is on the table.

O'BRIEN

We got your ass, Avon. We got you on everything, buddy, the bank, the guns, the grenade in the cop car! That's 20 years right there. On top of everything else. Whatdya think the guards at Rikers are gonna think of that?

STAVRAKATOS

Come on, kid. Save yourself. You wanna' spend the rest of your life in jail or take a plea, help us out, and walk free.

O'BRIEN

We'll drop the charges!

Avon's lips remain firmly pressed, but his weary eyes speak to his growing inability to persevere.

STAVRAKATOS

Trust me. Ya ain't gonna' get a better deal than this.

Avon wrestles with the idea of snitching. He frowns deeply, his forehead wrinkling. What else can he do?

AVON

I want a lawyer.

O'BRIEN

Look, we can get someone for ya, but he's just gonna tell you to take the deal. He ain't gonna get you outta this.

STAVRAKATOS

When we say we've got your ass, we mean it. Not like the guys at Rikers are gonna have your ass, though.

O'BRIEN

All we want is a little info on Assata and anybody else who was there.

STAVRAKATOS

Assata goes to jail and you get off scott-fucking-free, buddy!

O'BRIEN

Or spend the rest of your life in jail. You pick.

O'Brien sits before Avon on his side of the table.

O'BRIEN (cont'd)

Think about it, when has she needed you? When has she trusted you?

STAVRAKATOS

You're just a little fish to her, Avon. A pawn in her game.

Avon starts to nod his head. This all seems to start sitting right with the way he's been feeling.

AVON

So I can throw her under the bus that was boutta' hit me?

O'BRIEN
 And walk on home after. While your
 boys in blue make sure nobody comes
 after you.

AVON
 Shit. It's a deal.

O'Brien smiles and Brockner fist pumps.

O'BRIEN
 I'll get a notepad.

INT. SUNDIATA'S CAR - HARLEM - DAY

ASSATA gets in, cigarette in her mouth. SUNDIATA looks over.

ASSATA
 (agitated)
 Where you been?

SUNDIATA
 Look, there was traffic--

ASSATA
 I mean last night.

SUNDIATA
 I went out. I don't know what's so
 wrong with that. Are we married?

ASSATA
 I needed a place to crash. Had to
 come all the way up to Harlem, late
 last night, on the fuckin' subway.

SUNDIATA
 You have an apartment.

ASSATA
 Cops were there.

SUNDIATA
 Whatchu mean?

ASSATA
 The cops were waiting for me. Girl on
 the corner told me about it. Said not
 to go home.

SUNDIATA
 Shit.

ASSATA

They're onto us. The cops, the FBI, the who-knows-what-else. If it smells like bacon, it's on my ass.

SUNDIATA

I mean I know they were askin' about you, but--

ASSATA

You see the Daily News today?

SUNDIATA

Girl, you know I don't read that shit.

ASSATA

There's an article accusing me of this bank robbery in Brooklyn for eighty nine thousand dollars and, more importantly, of shooting those cops at the D.A.'s house!

SUNDIATA

What cops?

ASSATA

You didn't hear about it...

SUNDIATA

No! But first of all, you picked the wrong fuckin' bank to rob. That's all I know. 89!

He laughs. She smirks and shakes her head, ashing the cigarette out the window.

ASSATA

Last night, somebody drove past the Manhattan D.A.'s house and shot up the place. Two cops were standing outside. Apparently they're still alive. Anyway, for some reason, I'm being accused.

SUNDIATA

Damn your shit just gets hotter.

ASSATA

They probably saw I didn't come home and said, 'If she ain't home, she must be doing this random shit on the Upper East side.'

SUNDIATA

But you didn't...

ASSATA

Hell no!

SUNDIATA

Damn wait! You know... that mighta' been Twymon's robbery?

ASSATA

Excuse me?

SUNDIATA

Yeah him and that girl he's livin' with, Phyllis. They were talkin' about robbing a place in Brooklyn just last Saturday.

ASSATA

Bet he brought those guns. How come I always seem to be the last to know about this shit?

SUNDIATA

Guess it's on a need to know basis.

Assata takes an angry drag off her cigarette.

SUNDIATA (cont'd)

Look, Twymon's been doin' his own thing, that's all.

ASSATA

We asked if he was in, he said no. Said he was flush with cash.

SUNDIATA

I don't know. Bronx boys been on their own game, especially now that J.T's down in Atlanta. Their shit's been crazy. Couple weeks ago, he and Blood and Sha-Sha were in St. Louis--

ASSATA

What--

SUNDIATA

And took the cops on this crazy-ass chase through downtown. Blood and Sha-Sha get caught, Twymon gets away.

ASSATA

He always does.

SUNDIATA

Comes back up here. Moves to a new place. You think you got heat on you? They on Twymon like the 'fro on yo big-ass melon.

Sundiata pulls the car over. Assata looks up at the beat-up brownstones. A GROUP of OLDER BLACK MEN sit outside on milk-crates and old wooden chairs.

Assata surveys the cars on the street as she gets out.

INT. ZAYD'S APARTMENT - HARLEM

A small apartment with paisley-patterned wallpaper peeling at the edges. ZAYD sits at the small table by the kitchen, where SUNDIATA grabs a BEER from the fridge. ASSATA stands at the window, looking out at the street.

ASSATA

They're gonna be on you too soon enough.

ZAYD

I'm a Panther, baby, they been on me.

ASSATA

Not like this.

SUNDIATA

They shut down the breakfast program.

Sundiata cracks open the can of beer.

ZAYD

Heard about that.
(shrugs)
Whatcha gonna do.

ASSATA

Start another?

ZAYD

Maybe rob a fuckin' bank.

ASSATA

I should call another meeting.

ZAYD

Or help us here. Workin' on the heroin problem we got in this city. The Party's doin' some good things.

ASSATA

The Party's fucked now, Zayd. Huey's paranoid, ex-communicating everybody. Respected people, our friends.

SUNDIATA

Now that Cleaver's gone, his guys are tradin' bullets with Huey's.

ZAYD

Cleaver's guys are BLA now! Dhoruba?

ASSATA

Chapters are gettin' shut down all over the place, Huey's losin' his mind, and they're out there fighting each other!

ZAYD

It's complicated, alright? I know. But we're still here, still fighting.

ASSATA

You're not a revolutionary, Zayd, you're a reformist.

ZAYD

Oh how fuckin' dare you? I'm a professional revolutionary.

ASSATA

Handin' out pamphlets 'bout heroin with the aunties in church. You're not in the streets, you're not fighting directly, you're treating the symptoms.

ZAYD

I'm out there every day. Just cuz I'm not robbing banks and shooting cops don't mean I'm not fighting.

ASSATA

Just like the rest of them. Making compromises, lettin' 'em win. Accepting the shit they feedin' you.

ZAYD
Y'all BLA folks are crazy.

ASSATA
You can't change the system from
within when it's already broken!

ZAYD
You think we readin' different shit?

SUNDIATA
Alright, can y'all shut up?

Sundiata squeezes his forehead. Zayd is fuming. Assata looks
bitterly out the window, checking once again for cops.

ZAYD
I don't need this shit. Y'all get the
fuck out.

SUNDIATA
I just opened a beer.

ZAYD
Then finish it. And get out, I got
shit to do.

Sundiata gets to his feet and starts chugging.

ASSATA
Man, you gotta drive.

INT. FBI OFFICE - DOWNTOWN

O'BRIEN and STAVRAKATOS are putting on bullet-proof vests.
The AGENTS around them are arming up. The bulletin board
behind them is full of pictures now, with red strings
crossing the frame. BROCKNER walks up to the guys.

O'BRIEN
They've got his girlfriend in
handcuffs right now. The second his
head pokes out, we'll be on him.

BROCKNER
Got some jamokes from South Bronx
gonna come help you out.

EXT. FBI OFFICE - AFTERNOON

O'BRIEN, STAVRAKATOS, and SEVERAL AGENTS come out, vested up and wearing blue jackets. They hop into their unmarked cars.

INT. TWYMON'S APARTMENT - SOUTH BRONX

TWYMON peeks out through the blinds at the street.

PERSPECTIVE: PHYLLIS (22) getting pushed into a POLICE CAR.

Twymon retreats from the window and rushes into his bedroom.

BEDROOM

TWYMON goes into the closet and pulls out two guns: an AUTO PISTOL and an UZI. Sets them on the bed.

Goes over to the bedside table. Retrieves two boxes of ammo. Sets them by the guns. Takes the guns and ammo as he leaves.

LIVING ROOM

The guns are on the table. TWYMON is at the window again.

PERSPECTIVE: TWO BLUE CARS (FBI) park down the block.

Beads of sweat have started to gather on his forehead. He wipes his face as he goes and grabs the telephone.

INT. SUNDIATA'S PLACE - SAME TIME

The phone rings. SUNDIATA answers.

SUNDIATA
Hello?..... Shit man, what for?

INTERCUT TWYMON/SUNDIATA

TWYMON
I don't know. That shit in Brooklyn probably. Buncha cars parked down the street just now too.

SUNDIATA
Cops?

TWYMON
Unmarked. White boys at the wheel just sittin' there.

SUNDIATA

Then get the fuck outta' there.

TWYMON

Come pick me up.

SUNDIATA

Hell no. Get somebody from the Bronx.

TWYMON

Who? Everybody's gone.

SUNDIATA

I just got home. Even if you did get picked up, you're just gonna' get followed.

TWYMON

Well what the fuck am I s'posed to do?

SUNDIATA

Sneak out. Wait 'til it's dark, I'll come pick you up a few blocks away.

TWYMON

How long I gotta wait?

Sundiata checks his watch.

SUNDIATA

I'll get you at seven. Where you at?

TWYMON

My place!

SUNDIATA

I know, man, where is that? Fuckin' move every other week...

TWYMON

Tinton Avenue.

SUNDIATA

I don't know--

TWYMON

Just meet me at the subway stop at Jackson Ave. It's on Westchester.

INT. O'BRIEN'S CAR - TINTON AVE. - SUNSET

O'BRIEN at the wheel. STAVRAKATOS in shotgun holding a walkie-talkie. The car is parked.

STAVRAKATOS

(into handset)

No, don't storm up there. We'll wait 'til he comes out. He's gonna have to at some point. You go in his place, they'll have to scoop your brains off the floor.

O'BRIEN

Whatdya think he's packin'?

STAVRAKATOS

How should I know? Whatever it is, I bet it's fuckin' automatic.

INT. TWYMON'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

TWYMON peers out the window. He checks the time: **7:00.**

Goes over to the table. Grabs the PISTOL and the UZI, tucks them in his waistband. Pulls his jacket down to hide them.

Checks that he can reach around to grab them. He takes a SKI CAP off the hook by the door. Pulls it low on his forehead.

Grabs the door handle. Takes a deep breath. Goes out.

EXT. BACK ALLEY TWYMON'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

TWYMON exits the building out the back door. Looks left and right as he crosses the backlot to the gate across the way.

EXT. WALES AVE - CONTINUOUS

TWYMON hops the fence and lands by the dumpster. He turns right and heads up the street.

Down the block to his left, TWO AGENTS sit in their car. One looks through binoculars. The other speaks into a handset.

INT. O'BRIEN'S CAR - TINTON AVE. - SAME TIME

STAVRAKATOS holds the walkie. O'BRIEN starts the car.

O'BRIEN
Which way is Wales?

STAVRAKATOS
Go up and make a left.

EXT. 152ND ST. - NIGHT

TWYMON turns left from Wales Ave., glancing over his right shoulder while trying to keep his head low. He hurries up.

INT. O'BRIEN'S CAR - 152ND ST. - SAME TIME

O'BRIEN glances between the windshield and the left window. STAVRAKATOS sits forward, surveying the sidewalk.

STAVRAKATOS
That him up there?

O'BRIEN
Which one?

STAVRAKATOS
In the hat.

He picks up the walkie.

STAVRAKATOS (cont'd)
He's goin' west on 152nd. Someone cut him off and get an I.D.

EXT. 152ND ST. - SAME

SUNDIATA is parked down the block by the SUBWAY STATION.

A DETECTIVE in a blue suit-jacket gets out of the car parked by the intersection with Jackson Ave. He unbuttons his jacket as he walks east towards Twymon.

TWYMON hustles up the walk, glancing over his right shoulder at the cars in the street. Then he looks ahead at the Detective coming towards him.

The OTHER BRONX DETECTIVE gets out of the same car and follows the first detective by about fifteen feet.

The Detective passes a grocery store, and now he's twenty feet away. He tries to be unassuming.

Then fifteen. He speeds up.

Then ten. Twymon glances over his shoulder again.
Five feet. The Detective's right hand drifts from his side.
They reach each other. The Detective lifts Twymon's cap.

BRONX DETECTIVE

Police!

Twymon glances up, they lock eyes for a split second, then Twymon pushes past him.

BRONX DETECTIVE (cont'd)

Freeze!

Twymon whirls around and FIRES WILDLY at the Detective.

Bullets PIERCE the Detective's right shoulder and arm, sending him onto the pavement.

O'BRIEN's CAR skirts to a halt, as do THREE OTHER UNMARKED police and FBI cars along 152nd.

Sundiata starts heading in the direction of the shooting.

Twymon spins back around, breaks into a jog, weapons in hand. The OTHER DETECTIVE runs towards him, pistol raised.

Twymon raises guns akimbo and FIRES at the Other Detective, who hits the ground. He catches a bullet in the side before ducking behind a parked car that soon gets RIDDLED with bullets, shattering the glass of the windows and windshield.

O'BRIEN and STAVRAKATOS hop out of their car, pistols aimed at Twymon, who has begun to run onwards.

Up ahead of Twymon, TWO PARKED SQUAD CARS shield TWO AGENTS and TWO NYPD COPS from his view.

O'Brien and Stavrakatos chase him from the street. Another TWO COPS pursue from behind on the sidewalk.

Some of the AGENTS and COPS ahead of Twymon poke up from behind their cars and FIRE at him. All misses before Twymon aims and FIRES back, peppering their cars. They return fire. He takes cover on a HATCHBACK parked to his right.

Sundiata watches as he approaches on the opposite sidewalk.

O'Brien, Stavrakatos, and the OFFICERS in pursuit close in on Twymon, ready to fire.

Twymon EMERGES from behind the car, guns aimed at the cops up ahead. They've all got their guns trained on him, as do O'Brien and Stavrakatos. An ERUPTION of gunfire on Twymon.

The sound of a BODY hitting the pavement. O'Brien and Stavrakatos loom over, panting, sweaty.

STAVRAKATOS

Too bad dead guys can't testify.

Sundiata stands across the street watching in shock. Then he turns and runs down the block to his car.

He reaches his car, glances back in the direction of the shooting with wild eyes. Hurriedly jumps in the car, starts it up, and DRIVES off.

INT. SUNDIATA'S PLACE - LATER

ASSATA sits at the window, smoking and looking out. KAMAU sits on the couch watching news coverage of the VIETNAM WAR.

ASSATA

How can I be expected to love and worship a god whose master plan includes the enslavement, torture, and murder of Black people?

KAMAU

Islam is just a religion, opposed to oppression. And the Koran says oppression is worse than slaughter. So a true Muslim is a true revolutionary.

ASSATA

Look, I mean, if I had a religion, it would be Islam, but--

The door BURSTS open. SUNDIATA rushes in, flustered.

SUNDIATA

They killed Twymon.

ASSATA

What?

SUNDIATA

The cops, the FBI, I saw it all, man, they shot him down in the street, like a dozen of 'em.

Sundiata goes into the kitchen and pours himself a glass of whiskey while Assata and Kamau process Twymon's death. Assata walks away from the window and stands by the couch.

Sundiata ambles back in and shakily sips from the glass.

ASSATA

They just shot him for no reason?

SUNDIATA

He shot back. Clipped two cops.

He puts the glass down, falls into a seat, puts a hand on his head, eyes closed. Assata's expression turns stony.

ASSATA

He was a fighter. Right up to the end.

KAMAU

And a crazy motherfucker.

Assata takes a long drag of her cigarette, eyes cast down. Stillness in the room as a somber air fills the space. All of them lost in thought. Silence. Then:

ASSATA

Well, either way, we can't give up now. We can't just back down, go home. We knew this would happen. And any one of our dead or imprisoned brothers and sisters wouldn't want us to stop fighting either. I won't let Twymon's death — and the deaths of so many others — be in vain!

KAMAU

So whatchu gonna do, huh? What can you do? Can't even go home.

ASSATA

I don't know. But come on! Just cuz it got hard don't mean we cash in and walk away.

KAMAU

I say... we do exactly that.

ASSATA

Then what was it all for?

SUNDIATA

And if we died tomorrow?

Assata stubs out her cigarette and gathers her thoughts.

ASSATA
Y'all wanna give up, that's on you.
I'm goin' home.

SUNDIATA
Yeah, go get shot like Twymon. Step
out your front door to see a dozen
cops waitin' for you.

Assata grabs her jacket and walks towards the door.

ASSATA
I'm gonna' find a new place.

SUNDIATA
So? Twymon found seven. They just
gonna' follow.

She leaves. Sundiata looks to Kamau.

SUNDIATA (cont'd)
These are all valid points, man. I'm
just sayin'.

KAMAU
I feel you.

EXT. ASSATA'S APARTMENT - BUSHWICK - MORNING

ASSATA wears a disguise to look like a very poor woman, hair a mess, clothes in tatters, beat-up sunglasses. She looks up and down the street, standing off to the side of the road.

Ten feet away, A COUPLE of YOUNG BLACK MEN (teens) load up a VAN with FURNISHINGS from her apartment.

Down the street, a CAR with TWO COPS, one with binoculars.

One of the MOVERS looks up at the house.

MOVER #1
That everything?

Assata looks the other way, pretending to be a stranger.

ASSATA
Yeah. I'll meet you there okay?

They get in the van.

INT. UNDERCOVER FBI CAR - SAME TIME

One AGENT speaks into the handset.

BROOKLYN AGENT
Nah I can't tell. Could be. Who
should we follow?

EXT. ASSATA'S APARTMENT - BUSHWICK - SAME

The VAN drives down the street. ASSATA watches it go.

The FBI CAR follows the van. As it passes, Assata spots the DRIVER glancing over at her. She looks away.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - FBI OFFICE

O'BRIEN sits across from STAVRAKATOS at their desks. O'Brien is on the phone, as is BROCKNER, who stands. O'Brien holds his finger up, then looks to Brockner.

O'BRIEN
They've got it. West Queens.

BROCKNER
(into phone)
Get me Judge Gagliardi.

EXT. ASSATA'S NEW PLACE - LONG ISLAND CITY - DAY

The TWO UNDERCOVER FBI AGENTS in the CAR sit across the street from the apartment with the VAN from before parked out front. The TWO MOVERS bring furniture into the building.

One speaks into a walkie.

BROOKLYN AGENT
It's five thirty-eight, fifty-first
avenue. I got the movers right now.

INT. FBI OFFICE - DOWNTOWN

O'BRIEN and STAVRAKATOS look at the bulletin board.

O'BRIEN
That oughta be enough.

STAVRAKATOS

The rest is up to the lawyers. But we did our part.

O'Brien looks at the PHOTO of ASSATA.

O'BRIEN

Ready to bring her in tomorrow?

STAVRAKATOS

So fuckin' ready. Took us long enough.

INT. ASSATA'S NEW PLACE - QUEENS - SUNSET

ASSATA comes in wearing a new disguise, one that makes her look like some kind of disco queen. She sets her bag down and looks around the place. The walls are painted white, her things are scattered around, boxes lying in the middle of the floor, nothing is hooked up.

She lights a cigarette and goes over to the window overlooking the street. Looks out. Takes a drag. Walks away.

She stands in the middle of the room, distinctly alone. Surveys the chaos around her. Throws her hands up.

BEDROOM

ASSATA walks in to see her mattress and bed-frame by the wall. She takes one end of the frame and sets it down.

INT. ASSATA'S NEW PLACE - DAWN

BEDROOM

ASSATA sleeps soundly on her bed in the new room. The last bits of twilight cast a purple glow into the room.

INTERCUT LIVING ROOM/BEDROOM

The FRONT DOOR CRASHES OPEN as TWO FBI AGENTS storm in with pistols raised as they clear the corners.

Assata snaps to attention, scrambling.

O'Brien and Stavrakatos walk in. The latter holds a WARRANT.

O'BRIEN

FBI! We're coming in and we have the building surrounded.

Assata reaches for the REVOLVER on her bedside table but stops. The fear of death flashes cold through her mind and down her spine. She retreats her hand.

O'BRIEN (cont'd)

Do not attempt to flee. You will be fired upon.

STAVRAKATOS

Check the back.

ONE of the first AGENTS goes to the bedroom. The bedroom door opens, he AIMS his gun.

QUEENS AGENT

Get on the ground! Now!

Assata puts her hands on her head and gets to her knees. O'Brien and Stavrakatos enter the room. Stavrakatos tosses the warrant on the ground before her.

STAVRAKATOS

Warrant.

O'BRIEN

Joanne Chesimard, you are under arrest for the armed robbery of the Manufacturer's Trust Bank in the Bronx.

STAVRAKATOS

You have the right to remain silent, to an attorney, all that shit...

The AGENT slaps the cuffs on her, hoists her to her feet. O'Brien takes her by the arm and leads her out.

EXT. ASSATA'S NEW PLACE - LONG ISLAND CITY - DAWN

O'BRIEN and STAVRAKATOS each hold one of ASSATA's elbows as they come out of the building and lead her to the CAR. She remains stoic, lips firmly sealed, head high.

As they reach the car, Assata looks up the street. In the distance, the EMPIRE STATE BUILDING glows against the purple sky of the morning twilight. They usher her into the car.

EXT. MANHATTAN DETENTION COMPLEX - DAY

The tall, beige, brutalist building looms large over lower Manhattan with two towers comprised of wards and levels of cells, joined by a walkway some stories up over the street.

INT. BASEMENT - MANHATTAN DETENTION CENTER

ASSATA, in handcuffs and a jumpsuit, is led by TWO GUARDS down the cell block. The doors are large, thick, steel with a small slot in the front for food.

They stop before an opened cell. A Guard undoes her handcuffs while Assata looks in:

A thin COT against the wall. A metal TOILET and SINK. Two stone slabs jut from the wall across from the bed, meant to serve as desk and chair. The rest is CONCRETE. There is no window, but a dim light above the bed.

A Guard pushes her. She stumbles in. The door shuts. She stands, alone, unsure of what to do with herself.

EXT. U.S. DISTRICT COURT S.D.N.Y. - LOWER EAST SIDE

The ornate pillars of the state court building loom in heavy beige above the street, atop the long set of stairs leading up to it from the sidewalk. A PAIR of LAWYERS in suits ascend the steps. A PRISONER in an orange jumpsuit is led by TWO OFFICERS down the steps past the lawyers.

INT. COURTROOM - U.S. DISTRICT COURT S.D.N.Y.

A tall ceiling with lamps hanging from it and dark-brown wooden walls with red chairs. The JUDGE sits atop his bench with the witness stand beside it to the right.

AVON WHITE takes the witness stand. A BAILIFF approaches him holding a book. Avon raises his right hand to make the oath.

INT. JAIL CELL - U.S. DISTRICT COURT S.D.N.Y.

KAMAU and ASSATA sit in small cells opposite each other with white-bricked walls, a bunk bed, and a small sink and toilet. A SPEAKER hangs in the upper corner of the cell.

WILLIAMS (O.S.)

Mr. White, isn't it true that you spent eight months at Matteawan Hospital for the Criminally Insane?

AVON (O.S.)

Um, yes. But that was just to get outta prison.

WILLIAMS (O.S.)

How'd you manage that?

AVON (O.S.)

Told 'em I was Allah.

The trial continues.

Assata leans against the bars. Lines of worry and rage are etched on both of their faces.

ASSATA

This motherfucker.

WILLIAMS (O.S.)

I see. Now, you testified that the defendant was wearing overalls at the robbery, is that correct? Yet, the woman in this picture is wearing a jacket!

ASSATA

Get him, Evelyn.

KAMAU

Can't believe he fuckin' flipped on us!

ASSATA

Can't believe I trusted him.

KAMAU

Yeah, I thought I could too. But the other day, I shoulda' known. He said he was done with you.

Assata shakes her head, hands clasped, knuckles white.

AVON (O.S.)

Well I can't remember all the details exactly, but I remember the main things.

KAMAU
You think we're fucked?

ASSATA
I don't know...

They lean wearily on the bars of their cells.

INT. COURTROOM - U.S. DISTRICT COURT S.D.N.Y.

One of the JURORS stands. The JUDGE clears his throat.

JUDGE BAUMAN
Have you reached a verdict?

JUROR #1
Yes, your honor.

JUDGE BAUMAN
Go ahead.

JUROR #1
(reading)
State of New York versus Joanne
Chesimard and Fred Hilton, case
number five-five-three, two-six-D,
seven-one-two-one, c-f. As for the
charge of armed robbery, we the jury
find as follows, as to the defendants
in this case, the defendants are not
guilty.

Relief and deep sighs from Assata and Kamau.

O'BRIEN mutters angrily and STAVRAKATOS slaps his knee.

STAVRAKATOS
Fuck!

INT. ASSATA'S NEW PLACE - QUEENS - LATER

ASSATA, KAMAU, SUNDIATA, and ZAYD stand around the table and
raise their glasses cheerfully.

SUNDIATA
They turned our own brothers against
y'all. But it wasn't enough. Glad to
have you back. God bless and amen.

ALL
Amen.

They down their glasses.

KAMAU
Thank God Avon's a dumb-ass.

INT. BEDROOM - ASSATA'S APARTMENT - BROOKLYN

ASSATA and KAMAU sit drunkenly at the edge of her bed.

ASSATA
I... y'know, I was so worried. I figured they had us! But like... Avon was a shitty witness.

KAMAU
Fuckin' Avon. I was scared too. I didn't have nobody else but you.

She looks at him. He looks back. Next to each other so close, warm from drinking, the tension rises.

ASSATA
I don't know what's waitin' for me tomorrow.

KAMAU
I don't wanna worry til it gets here.

He goes in for the kiss. A little sloppy from drinking, but tender, and Assata returns the kiss. He puts his hands around the nape of her neck.

The kiss gets more passionate. She pulls her legs up onto the bed and turns at the torso to face him more directly.

She pushes him onto his back, his head hitting just beneath the pillow. They kiss more intensely. Kamau tugs at her blouse. She pulls at his collar.

KAMAU (cont'd)
(between kisses)
Should we...?

ASSATA
What if I...

KAMAU
Pregnant? If you do... the child will be taken care of. Our people won't let it grow up like a weed.

They start to remove their clothes.

She kisses him, now shirtless and in her bra. Then she stops, sits up, and looks down at him with heavy-lidded eyes. She thinks for a moment, weighing this heavy decision. He looks up at her in wait.

Then she smirks.

ASSATA
Take off your pants, baby.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - BROOKLYN - MORNING

ASSATA and ZAYD step out with coffees in hand and stand out front by the plate-glass window.

ZAYD
Yeah well he expelled me from the party, just like damn near everybody else.

ASSATA
Shame. Man got so paranoid. As soon as I get back out there I'm gonna--

ZAYD
Out there? You just got out. You only avoided jail time cuz them two couldn't give a good testimony. You should chill for a bit.

ASSATA
I don't wanna let fear stop me.

ZAYD
As soon as you try something, they're gonna be on you again and this time they won't fuck up. You gotta get outta town, girl, we all do.

ASSATA
I know it's hot but I should take the second chance I'm luck to have.

ZAYD
Just get outta New York. Go somewhere else. The fight don't gotta be here. There's nobody left. They put Dhoruba in jail for that shooting at the D.A.'s house.

Assata considers this. They turn and head down the street.

ZAYD (cont'd)
 What I'm sayin is... while you're
 alive, you betta' live.

Assata swishes her cup around, mulling this over.

ASSATA
 Well where can we go?

ZAYD
 I got some friends down in Baltimore.
 Friends of the family, you know what
 I mean.

ASSATA
 Baltimore...

ZAYD
 I know you just moved in to your new
 place in Queens, but... you've done a
 lotta shit in this town. It'll come
 back for you. Every day you stay here
 is one day closer to bein' back in
 jail or dead. Those are the options.

Assata sighs. Takes a swig. Looks into her cup.

EXT. ROOF - ASSATA'S BUILDING - LONG ISLAND CITY - NIGHT

ASSATA stands on the roof, a cigarette burning between her middle and index fingers, the rooftops of Queens unfolding behind her as she faces west, towards Manhattan's skyline and the Empire State Building dead ahead, lit up against the night sky, and the Chrysler Building over to the right.

The sound of a cop car's SIREN rises from the city noise as Assata takes a drag and looks down at her street. She SEES:

A BLUE SEDAN (like O'Brien's) parked across the street.

She eyes it with suspicion. Then she looks up and out over the city. Like taking one last look and trying to savor it.

INT. SUNDIATA'S CAR - NEW JERSEY TURNPIKE - DAY

SUNDIATA drives, ASSATA rides shotgun, ZAYD sits behind her. It's a bright, sunny day on the highway.

The RADIO plays. Assata and Zayd both smoke.

ASSATA

What they got goin' on in B-more?

SUNDIATA

I'll be honest, not a whole lot. Ha-ha, but the cops down there are a mess. They don't control shit. So we can hang low for a lil bit, FBI won't have any idea, maybe I can get a job too.

ASSATA

Shit, I just realized, I never said bye to Carl. I hope he started that bookstore.

SUNDIATA

Yeah so I don't gotta drive him around anymore.

Something catches his eye in the rearview mirror.

PERSPECTIVE: a STATE TROOPER CAR. The lights come on.

SUNDIATA (cont'd)

Shit!

ASSATA

What now?

SUNDIATA

Fuck, I gotta pull over.

Zayd pulls out a PISTOL and tucks it under his shirt.

ASSATA

Get y'all ID's out.

ZAYD

What's my name again?

ASSATA

I'm Justine Henderson, that's all I know.

Sundiata pulls the car over. The COP CAR pulls over behind them. The TROOPER (HARPER, 30s) at the wheel talks into a handset. Then he EXITS the car, start towards them.

At the window of the car.

TROOPER HARPER

You know how fast you were goin'?

SUNDIATA
I don't know, seventy.

TROOPER HARPER
Seventy-three. This is a sixty-five
zone. License and registration.

Harper looks hard at the three of them as Sundiata reaches to the glovebox. Opens it. Harper glimpses a HANDGUN inside. Sundiata hands him his ID and the registration.

TROOPER HARPER (cont'd)
ID's. All o' you's.

ANOTHER POLICE CAR pulls up behind Harper's. Assata and Zayd hand Harper their fake ID's. Harper takes them to his car.

Sundiata watches in the rearview as Harper talks to the other TROOPER (FOERSTER, 40s).

TROOPER HARPER (cont'd)
(out of earshot)
These are all fakes, Vern, I can
tell. Good ones, but they're off just
a little.

Sundiata watches as the TROOPERS talk.

SUNDIATA
I got a bad feeling.

Harper approaches the car, Foerster waits by the trunk.

TROOPER HARPER
Get outta the car.

SUNDIATA
What for?

TROOPER HARPER
Get out.

Harper reaches in and opens the handle. The door opens. He grabs Sundiata by the shoulder and hoists him from the car. Takes him around to the Foerster.

EXT. NEW JERSEY TURNPIKE - CONTINUOUS

SUNDIATA is pushed against the car. FOERSTER and HARPER crowd around him. Harper holds up Sundiata's phony I.D.

TROOPER HARPER
I've seen a lotta fakes in my time,
but this—

SUNDIATA
Fake?! Man I--

TROOPER HARPER
Save it.

TROOPER FOERSTER
You got any drugs, firearms in there?

SUNDIATA
Nah, man, nothing like that.

TROOPER HARPER
You wouldn't mind us taking a look
then, would you?

SUNDIATA
Whatchu gotta look for? You don't
have the right!

TROOPER HARPER
Shut up!
(to Foerster)
Go check.

Foerster puts his hand on his pistol as he steps around to the right side of the car. Harper starts pulling Sundiata's hands behind his back.

SUNDIATA
What am I bein' arrested for? I
didn't do nothin!

TROOPER FOERSTER
Get on out now, you's!

INTERCUT INT. CAR/EXT. TURNPIKE

Assata has her purse open. She reaches for the REVOLVER. Stops. Looks in the side view mirror. SEES Foerster with his hand on his sidearm. She puts her purse down.

ASSATA
Fuck it. We didn't do shit.

TROOPER HARPER
She's movin' around in there!

Foerster hears this, pulls out his gun, aims it at the car.

TROOPER FOERSTER
Outta the car! Now!

Assata grips the door handle. Looks back at ZAYD.

ASSATA
It's gonna be alright.

She opens the door. Steps one foot onto the pavement.

TROOPER FOERSTER
Come out slowly!

Assata gets out, and puts her hands in the air.

Harper forces Sundiata's face into the trunk. Sundiata pushes back. Zayd pulls his gun out and stalls to get out.

TROOPER FOERSTER (cont'd)
Hands in the air!
(to Zayd)
You, in the car, get the fuck outta there!

TROOPER HARPER
(to Sundiata)
Stop resisting!

Assata glances over and sees Zayd holding his pistol.

ASSATA
Zayd, don't!

TROOPER FOERSTER
He's got a gun!

Foerster fires at Zayd in the car, causing metal sparks to fly off the trunk and siding, as Zayd covers. Assata walks towards the officer, with hands raised.

ASSATA
Stop! Stop shooting.

TROOPER FOERSTER
Get back!

Sundiata turns on Harper, whose attention has shifted away, and he GRABS Harper's sidearm. They wrestle for it. As Foerster looks to Harper and Sundiata, Assata turns towards the car and rests her right hand on the roof.

ASSATA
Zayd, don't shoot, man, shit!

Foerster looks to Assata just as she spins to face him.

Foerster FIRES at her, hits her in the right arm, which spins her around, when another bullet catches her in the back of the shoulder, and a third hits her left arm as she FALLS to the pavement, crying out in agony.

Zayd starts FIRING out the back windshield at Foerster. Bullets tear into Foerster, two in the chest, one in the shoulder, and then one in the head.

Foerster hits the pavement, dead. Harper punches Sundiata, sending him into the side of the car. He pulls his gun and trains it on the back windshield.

Zayd FIRES at him. Harper trades SHOTS, catches one in the leg, falls back. Zayd starts to reload. Harper stumbles over to his cruiser and opens the driver door. Sundiata scrambles back into the car.

TROOPER HARPER
(into handset)
Requesting backup! Shots fired, shots
fired!

He covers behind the open driver door and FIRES at the car. Assata, bleeding heavily, crawls back up the open passenger door. She starts to pull herself in.

Zayd pops another mag into the pistol as bullets tear into the car. One CATCHES him in the shoulder.

ZAYD
Ahh!

He FIRES wildly out the back. Bullets ding off the cop's door. Harper shoots back.

Another bullet catches Zayd in the NECK. He falls back, dropping the gun, clutching his bleeding throat.

Sundiata starts the car. Assata pulls herself into the passenger seat and the car SCREECHES back into the road, passenger door still hanging open.

Harper EMPTIES his clip at the fleeing car, then hobbles back into the cruiser and takes off after them.

Sundiata puts pedal to the floor and the car FLIES across the highway. Assata groans. Zayd, wild-eyed, gurgles.

SUNDIATA
Zayd! Ah shit, man. Ah fuck. Oh this
is fucked up. This is...

He looks in the rearview. They're gaining some distance.

SUNDIATA (cont'd)
Assata, you alive?

ASSATA
Yeah. Agh. Damn...

Sundiata SEES the TOLL PLAZA up ahead. CARS are backed up.
All the gates are DOWN.

SUNDIATA
Fuck!

Blood pools on the back seats and floor as Zayd's neck wound
oozes through his hands. He struggles for breath.

ASSATA
Stay with me, Zayd. C'mon, brother.

SUNDIATA
We got nowhere to go.

ASSATA
What?

SUNDIATA
They shut the toll plaza! We're
fucked.

ASSATA
No... aw please... no.

Sundiata veers off into a GULLEY at the edge of a FOREST.

SUNDIATA
I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Y'all on your
own.

ASSATA
Just go, man. Get away.

The car STOPS. Sundiata flings open his door and SPRINTS
out. Assata watches him run into the woods. She looks into
the backseat. Zayd lies there, unmoving. His wide eyes stare
vacantly into the distance through the roof.

The sound of SIRENS grow louder. Assata looks out the back windshield, of which all the glass is shattered, to see a COHORT of POLICE CARS barreling towards her. She looks forward to see the closed toll plaza. She sighs.

Weakly, she nudges the open passenger door. It swings wide open. She groans as she sets her feet once more on the pavement. The sirens grow incredibly loud.

Assata emerges weakly from the car. SEVERAL COP CARS stop about fifty feet away. Cops get out, guns pointed at her.

Bloody, she trudges towards them with one arm raised meekly in the air, the other dangling at her side. A light breeze rolls by. The sun bears down hard on her, almost blinding. All the cops aim at her, rushing towards her, shouting threats and commands that are muffled by the daze she's in. She moves weakly towards them.

One foot before the other. Tries to speak. Red bubbles ooze out of her mouth. Is this the end?

She falls. TWO COPS take her by the arms, and drag her away.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - LATER

ASSATA comes to consciousness. Blinding lights of glaring whites and overwhelming noises. She's hooked up to all kinds of machines. FACES all around her: NURSES, DOCTORS, COPS, O'BRIEN, STAVRAKATOS. Many of them are just watching her, but as her eyes scan the room, they come closer.

DOCTOR

We got the bullets out and you're relatively stable. But you'll have to stay here a little while. Don't cry now. And don't move too much either.

The Doctor leaves. One of the COPS is trying to take fingerprints off her limp hand. The Nurse is prodding her.

HOSPITAL COP #1

Who fired the first shot?
Was it you? We know there was a gun in your purse.
Why'd you shoot the trooper?
Why'd you shoot the trooper?

O'BRIEN

So you thought you could get outta town, huh? Start your operation somewhere else?
Get the band back together?

O'BRIEN (CONT'D)

Like we weren't gonna follow you? You slip the noose one time, that's luck, but it doesn't happen twice.

HOSPITAL COP #2

Who was driving the car, Ms. Chesimard? Do you know where he went? Do you have any idea where he might have gone?

STAVRAKATOS

We're gonna fuckin' bury you for this. Bury you. You're never gonna see the sun after this shit, I swear to God. Now you tell us what happened to the driver.

NURSE

Don't sit up, missus, you're too weak and you'll bust your stitches. Just lie back. You're gonna feel a slight prick here, don't worry.

Assata closes her eyes and drops her head onto the pillow, exhausted and completely disinterested in this chaos of questions, threats, and comments. She drifts off.

O'BRIEN

Fuck me, there she goes again.

STAVRAKATOS

Forget it, she's done anyway. Even if she doesn't talk now, she's not goin' anywhere.

They start to walk out.

O'BRIEN

Let's just make sure we don't have another Avon White situation.

STAVRAKATOS

Look at her. She couldn't escape even if she wanted to.

EXT. FOREST - NEW JERSEY - SUNSET

SUNDIATA, dirty and soaked with sweat, frantically climbs up a hill past a tree. HELICOPTERS circle overhead. SHOUTS from out in the woods echo as COPS with flashlights search. Sundiata emerges from the edge of the treeline at the crest of a mount and looks out over a GENTILE SUBURB.

EXT. CLINTON WOMEN'S PRISON - NEW JERSEY - DAY

A maximum security ward. Tall white walls surround the facility. Panoptic guard towers dot the tops of the wall at corners along the perimeter.

INT. JAIL CELL - CLINTON

ASSATA sits at the metal stool affixed to the wall before a small stone desk. Papers and a pencil sit before her. Her hands lay in her lap. She has a bulbous belly, pregnant. Her heavy-lidded eyes stare through the desk somberly.

Sounds from the hall echo through the chamber and seep in through the slot in the door.

PRISONERS

White power! White power!

Assata picks up the pencil and writes.

ASSATA (V.O.)

They put me in a ward with the goddamn Aryan Sisterhood.

CLINTON GUARD (O.C.)

Shut up! Shut the fuck up!

Assata glances over. SEES a GUARD walk past. She turns back to the papers. Takes a deep sigh. Starts to write.

ASSATA (V.O.)

Black brothers, Black sisters, I want you to know that I love you and I hope that somewhere in your hearts you have love for me. My name is Assata Shakur - slave name joanne chesimard - and I am a revolutionary. A Black revolutionary. By that I mean that I have declared war on all forces that have raped our women, castrated our men, and kept our babies empty-bellied.

We see her laying in bed, anguished, holding her pregnant belly. An empty tray slides into the slot in the door.

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

I have declared war on the rich, who prosper on our poverty, the politicians who lie to us with smiling faces, and all the mindless, heartless robots who protect them and their property.

Next, TWO GUARDS haul her out of the room as she struggles helplessly against them.

ASSATA (V.O.) (cont'd)
I am a Black revolutionary, and as such, I am a victim of all the wrath, hatred, and slander that amerika is capable of. Like all other Black revolutionaries, amerika is trying to lynch me.

INT. SHOWER ROOM

We see GUARDS standing shoulder to shoulder. One points a hose off-camera and water SPEWS out.

ASSATA (V.O.)
I am a Black revolutionary woman, and because of this I have been charged with and accused of every alleged crime of which a woman was believed to have participated. The crimes in which only men were involved, I have been accused of planning.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - PRISON WARD

ASSATA is in agony as she gives birth. A DOCTOR waits to catch the baby and a NURSE alongside. TWO GUARDS stand behind them, watching.

ASSATA (V.O.)
Every revolution in history has been accomplished by actions, although words are necessary. We must create shields to protect us and spears that penetrate our enemies. Black people must learn how to struggle by struggling.

We see them take her NEWBORN BABY away in a blanket as Assata's arms are outstretched, asking to see the child.

INT. JAIL CELL - MAXIMUM SECURITY

ASSATA looks emaciated and incredibly grim. She smokes and watches as GUARDS take the newspapers, writing papers, and pencil away, leaving the desk blank.

ASSATA (V.O.)

Every time a Black Freedom Fighter is murdered or captured, the pigs try to create the impression that they have quashed the movement, destroyed our forces, and put down the Black Revolution.

ONE of the GUARDS comes back into the cell and pulls the cigarette from Assata's mouth.

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

The pigs also try to create the impression that five or ten guerrillas are responsible for every revolutionary action carried out in amerika. That is nonsense. That is absurd.

Assata stands at the small slitted window in the top corner of her cell. She looks out. SNOW is falling.

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

Black revolutionaries do not drop from the moon.

INT. CARL'S APARTMENT - DAY

CARL stands in threadbare clothing with his SON, both of them very thin. They wear grave expressions. BOXES are packed all around him. A MOVER comes in and takes the TV.

ASSATA (V.O.)

We are created by our conditions.
Shaped by our oppression.

EXT. HARLEM - WINTER - DAY

BLACK MEN, BOYS, WOMEN, and CHILDREN stand along a dilapidated street. They unfold before us sitting on boxes and crates, standing before closed stores, arms folded or tucked in their pockets in the winter wind.

ASSATA (V.O.)

We are being manufactured in droves in the ghetto streets, places like Attica, San Quentin, Bedford Hills, Leavenworth, and Sing-Sing. They are turning out thousands of us. Many jobless Black veterans and welfare mothers are joining our ranks.

The FACES of the pedestrians are grim, critical, serious, and a few hopeful souls are smiling, some playful, some optimistic, and many less so.

ASSATA (V.O.) (cont'd)
 Brothers and sisters from all walks
 of life, who are tired of suffering
 passively, make up the BLA.

A TRIO of young BLACK MEN (teens) stand at a street corner
 handing out PAMPHLETS and SELLING PAPERS.

ASSATA (V.O.) (cont'd)
 There is and always will be, until
 every Black man, woman, and child is
 free, a Black Liberation Army. The
 main function of the BLA at this time
 is to create good examples, to
 struggle for Black freedom, and to
 prepare for the future.

CHILDREN huddle around a FIRE burning in a METAL trash can.

ASSATA (V.O.) (cont'd)
 And we must fight on. We must love
 each other and support each other. We
 have nothing to lose but our chains.

INT. VISITATION ROOM - CLINTON

A TITLE card: FOUR YEARS LATER

ASSATA's MOTHER, DORIS (60s) comes into the room with
 Assata's DAUGHTER, KAKUYA (4), clinging to her finger. They
 sit down across from Assata, who smiles teary-eyed.

ASSATA
 Hi, baby.

Kakuya gazes at her curiously. Doris takes the phone.

DORIS
 Hi, sweetie. How you doing?

ASSATA
 I been better, mom. But I'm
 surviving. How's Kakuya doing?

Doris looks at the child, who still stares up, befuddled.

DORIS

She's alright. She knows your her mother. But she doesn't quite understand everything.

Assata puts her hand on the glass before Kakuya. The child looks at it, puzzled, then reaches out with a little finger and puts it to the glass. Assata fights to hold back tears.

INT. JAIL CELL - CLINTON

ASSATA sobs uncontrollably in her bed, shoulders shaking, knees pulled to her chest. Despair roils within her as she bursts with emotion. She gags and rolls onto the floor.

She crawls to the toilet and heaves. Stops. Takes some deep and shaky breaths, her face a wet mess. She looks to the slitted window. The sky is gray.

INT. VISITATION ROOM - CLINTON

ASSATA sits across from THREE PEOPLE, two BLACK MEN and one WHITE WOMAN, MARILYN BUCK (32). One of the men, MUTULU SHAKUR (29) talks through the phone.

MUTULU

So we paid a visit to Bamberger's department store. Came away with quite a lot, gotta say.

ASSATA

Good good.
(quietly)
And you have all the... proper identification?

MUTULU

Got it all taken care of.

ASSATA

And in terms of cars?

MUTULU

Two of 'em. By that school down the road. Before that, maybe we'll take a van from the parking lot.

Assata glances quickly to ONE of the two GUARDS by the door. He is looking at ANOTHER PRISONER.

ASSATA

Alright. I'll see you soon, then.

They hang up the phones.

EXT. CLINTON WOMEN'S PRISON - NEW JERSEY - DAY

The sun hangs high. MUTULU leads TWO other BLACK MEN, SEKOU and RONNIE (20s), with coats on towards the facility.

INT. RECEPTION - VISITATION ROOM - CLINTON

MUTULU, SEKOU, and RONNIE show false IDs to the GUARD at the desk. He dismissively waves them through.

INT. VISITATION ROOM - CLINTON

MUTULU enters first, then SEKOU, then RONNIE. ASSATA sits at a booth, a nervous stare on her face.

Mutulu opens his jacket, pulls out a .45. GRABS the GUARD by the door, puts the pistol against his head. Sekou pulls his own .45 out and points it at the other GUARD, on the other side of the phones. Sekou leaps over the swing-door to the right by the wall and WHIPS the Guard with the pistol. Holds him by the collar.

RONNIE pulls out a stick of DYNAMITE.

RONNIE

Nobody try no shit!

Assata gets up, goes over to the swing-door by Sekou and the second Guard. She pushes it open and walks through. Sekou follows with Guard in hand.

Mutulu pushes his Guard through the door to the reception area, goes in. The rest follow.

INT. RECEPTION - VISITATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

MUTULU and his GUARD, then RONNIE, then ASSATA, then SEKOU and his GUARD. The RECEPTION OFFICER hops to his feet, puts a hand on the phone.

RONNIE

I'll blow us all to fuckin' hell man!

The Reception Officer freezes. Assata strolls up to a PANEL by the desk with CAR KEYS on rungs. She pops the window to the panel open and takes a set of keys.

They move through the room and into the hall.

INT. FRONT HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

ALL SIX of them move in single file down the corridor. Up ahead, two GUARDS by the front gate snap to shocked attention. One rushes to a PANEL on the wall.

MUTULU

Open the gate or I'll fuck this boy
up!

The GUARDS freeze. All SIX of them stride up to the door. The Guard by the panel presses a button, a BUZZER sounds, the door unlatches.

EXT. CLINTON WOMEN'S PRISON - DAY

THE SIX of THEM bust through the front door and hurry across the parking lot. A SIREN BLARES from the prison SPEAKERS.

Over to the rows of VANS they go. ASSATA clicks the keys and a HORN BEEPS among the rows. They rush towards the sound. Come up on a VAN with its lights blinking and HORN beeping.

They pull the doors open. The Guards get SHOVED to the ground as MUTULU takes the wheel and SEKOU rides shotgun. RONNIE and Assata get in the back.

The VAN tears through the lot and CRASHES through the closing front gates, sending metal and sparks to fly.

INT./EXT. MARILYN'S HATCHBACK - ROUTE 3 - DAY

MARILYN puts pedal to the metal as they fly down the highway. ASSATA sits shotgun. She looks behind them. SEES MUTULU in his BLACK COUPE, with SEKOU in shotgun and RONNIE in the back. She turns back around.

ASSATA

Slow down, girl. They don't know what
we're driving.

MARILYN

Sorry.

She slows down a little bit.

ASSATA
Where we going?

MARILYN
Pittsburgh.

ASSATA
Guess I better get comfortable.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOME - PITTSBURGH - DAY

Up in DUQUESNE HEIGHTS, a ramshackle white house with a deteriorating driveway cut into the grass. Across the ALLEGHENY, the yellow bridges of the Steel City. MARILYN's CAR pulls into the driveway.

INT. SUBURBAN HOME - PITTSBURGH

ASSATA smokes by the open window. MARILYN and MUTULU stand in the living room behind her, both turned looking at her. The NEWS plays on the TV.

MARILYN
You said it yourself: we must fight on. We can go back, go underground, rebuild somehow.

ASSATA
(under her breath)
You ain't the we, but...
(audibly)
Who's left?

Marilyn and Mutulu aren't sure.

ASSATA (cont'd)
Sundiata: in jail. Dhoruba, Kamau,
Andrew: all in jail. Twymon's dead.
Zayd's dead. I can go on!

Silence from Marilyn and Mutulu.

NEWS ANCHOR
Following the escape, Miss Chesimard is now at the top of the FBI's most wanted list. Officials say there is a state-wide search in New Jersey and New York.

ASSATA
Turn that shit off.

She takes another drag and gazes back at the window as Marilyn mutes the television.

ASSATA (cont'd)
We're all fugitives. So where exactly
can we go?

MUTULU
Not many options. Algeria. Cuba.

ASSATA
How much do we need for Cuba?

MUTULU
Oh we've got enough. Like I said...
that department store. Pretty
lucrative.

ASSATA
What about my daughter?

MARILYN
Something can be arranged.

MUTULU
For you, lots of things can be
arranged.

On TV: a BANNER in HARLEM reads, "ASSATA IS WELCOME HERE."

INT. HALLWAY - HARLEM TENEMENT - 4:30 AM

Doors are closed. Silence. Everybody must be asleep. Then a loud BANG and a door swinging open, followed by boots clicking on the wood, bounding up the stairs, and voices:

HARLEM COP #1 (O.C.)	HARLEM COP #2 (O.C.)
Police! We're entering the building!	NYPD! Do not attempt to flee.

A door opens. A BLACK FATHER (40s) peeks into the hall.
Another door opens. A BLACK MOTHER (40s) peers out.

A third door opens and a small BLACK CHILD (<5) charges into
the hall with little balled up fists. He glares down the
corridor. His AUNT (30s) stands in the doorway.

Flashlights shine on them from down the hall. Now we see A DOZEN NYPD OFFICERS and SEVERAL FBI AGENTS as they come up the stairs. The ones in FRONT have M-16s with mounted flashlights. They CHARGE down the hall.

HARLEM COP #1
Everybody out and into the hall!
Who's in there?

He heads into the first room to the left with COP #2.

INT. BEDROOM - HARLEM TENEMENT

A BLACK MARRIED COUPLE is shaken awake in their beds by THREE COPS with M-16s and flashlights.

HARLEM COP #2
(shouting)
Who else is here?!

HARLEM COP #1
Get outta the bed!

They're YANKED out of the sheets and tossed to the wall.

INT. LIVING ROOM - HARLEM TENEMENT

O'BRIEN and STAVRAKATOS walk in wearing their vests, carrying their pistols. They survey the room as a scared BLACK FAMILY of SEVEN, including GRANDPARENTS, is walked into the hallway by GEARED-UP OFFICERS.

O'BRIEN
Well they say only five percent talk
to cops. Just gotta find them.

STAVRAKATOS
Any chance they even know where she
is?

O'BRIEN
We can't just sit on our hands when
someone like Assata breaks out.

STAVRAKATOS
I know. Made a big show of bringing
her in, what a victory, then boom...
slips right out again.

O'BRIEN
She's a slippery one.

STAVRAKATOS
Like a fuckin' snake.

Stavrakatos NOTICES the BLACK SON (teens) walking by, and he points at the kid.

STAVRAKATOS (cont'd)
Hey you! Come here. Whatdya know
about Assata breakin' out?

HARLEM TEEN
Nothin!

STAVRAKATOS
That's exactly what someone who knows
somethin' would say, come on.

He grabs the teenager by the arm and shepherds him
forcefully out of the room.

INT. HALLWAY - HARLEM TENEMENT

The corridor is FULL of scared and annoyed BLACK RESIDENTS
of all ages, in underwear and sleep clothes, squinting into
the flashlights and lined up against the walls. COPS bark
orders and shout questions at them in a thick din.

EXT. HARLEM TENEMENT - 137TH ST. - 4:35AM

SAM - one of the young BLA members from the first robbery
back in QUEENS - stands in a PHONE BOOTH on the corner
across the street from the building that's being raided.
Talking into the phone:

SAM
I'm lookin' at it right now, man.....
Nah, nobody gonna' say shit. Nobody
knows anyway. Just me. And they ain't
gonna' get to me, Mutulu..... I'm
still standin', man. I'm here. But
it's not safe for y'all to come.....
They got eyes everywhere. You can't
see them, but—..... Alright, man. I
will. I'll watch after lil' 'Pac for
you.

He hangs up.

INT. SUBURBAN HOME - PITTSBURGH - 3:40AM CT

MUTULU hangs up the hallway phone. He sleepily ambles back towards his room when he SEES a light seeping from beneath a door. Then two pillars of shadow. ASSATA opens the door.

ASSATA

Who was that?

MUTULU

Sam. He said the pigs just raided a building in Harlem. Lots of shouting and shit. Had rifles. Y'know.

ASSATA

Looking for me?

He shrugs as he trudges back into his room.

ASSATA (cont'd)

Alright.

She closes the door.

GUEST BEDROOM

Assata walks over to the bed, sits on the edge, lights a cigarette from the bedside table.

Goes over to the window. Looks out: PITTSBURGH lit up at night. She takes a harsh drag. It's obvious to her now that, unfortunately, she can't go back. She sighs.

INT. LIVING ROOM - SUBURBAN HOME - MORNING

ASSATA sits at the breakfast table with MARILYN. They both drink coffee. MUTULU stands by the couch.

MUTULU

I'll call my guy and he'll set us up with a ticket for you.

ASSATA

Wouldn't mind spendin' a few days in the Bahamas. Could use the vacation.

MARILYN

I wouldn't stay long. You can be on vacation for the rest of your life once you reach Havana.

Assata smiles at this. Marilyn laughs. Mutulu heads for the phone by the window.

ASSATA
So when should we leave?

MARILYN
This afternoon, I guess.

ASSATA
Mutulu, when you're done, I gotta make a call.

INT. GUEST BEDROOM - SUBURBAN HOME - NOON

ASSATA is on the phone.

ASSATA
I know, mom, but we can get her down to me in a couple years for the summer. We can do—..... It's my only option..... Yeah, can you put her on?..... I love you too.

She waits for the phone to change hands, takes a drag off a dwindling cigarette, blinks back the tears starting to well.

ASSATA (cont'd)
Hey, baby. It's me. I miss you, sweetie. How's school, you're in school now right?..... That's okay..... Well, honey, I'm free now! But I can't... come home right now. Mama's goin' to live somewhere else. But you're gonna get to come visit! And we'll have so much fun together I—..... I know, baby. I know. I can't explain it to you right now, but I'll tell you all about it when you get older, okay?

She rubs her forehead and rocks a bit on the edge of the bed, stifling her emotions.

ASSATA (cont'd)
You're gonna see me real soon, I promise. Everything's gonna be good, baby. It's gonna be better.

MUTULU knocks on the door.

MUTULU (O.S.)
We better get goin'.

ASSATA
Gimme a minute!
(back into phone)
I gotta go now, Kakuya..... I love
you, baby, and I miss you so so
much..... Alright, honey. Bye-bye.

A CLICK on the other end of the line. Assata lowers the phone from her ear and holds it in her lap. A TONE sounds after a couple seconds.

She frowns deeply and silently weeps. Sniffles. Hangs up the phone. Takes a deep breath.

Raises the cigarette to her lip, ash falling from its end into her lap, as she takes a hard drag. Stares out the window, eyes glossy and red. A brief silent moment passes as Assata gazes off, lost in thought, enveloped in a still air.

Then she stubs out the cigarette in the cut-glass ashtray on the bedside table. Next to it: the beat-up copy of Lenin's "What Is To Be Done?" She takes it and looks at its weathered pages and torn spine.

INT. PLANE - DAY

A small passenger plane. ASSATA watches out the small oval window as they gain altitude over FLORIDA.

The plane gets out over the water. She leans forward to look back. SEES Florida recede from view.

EXT. AIRSTRIP - BAHAMAS - DAY

ASSATA steps off the plane with a BRIEFCASE in hand. Awash in sunlight against the tarmac, squinting through her shades, she smiles. It's a far cry from her cell in Clinton.

INT. PROPELLER PLANE - EVENING

A storm rages out the window. ASSATA sits, sweating, filled with fear, as RAIN batters the metal and stings the window. The plane jerks up and down, left and right. There are a COUPLE of OTHER PASSENGERS. ONE of them is praying.

The PILOTS shout back and forth with each other.

INT. CUSTOMS OFFICE - CUBA

ASSATA smokes as she sits across the desk from a CUBAN CUSTOMS OFFICIAL with a thin mustache and a congenial voice.

CUBAN CUSTOMS GUY
So you had a good flight?

Assata takes a heavy drag and glares back, unamused.

CUBAN CUSTOMS GUY (cont'd)
Anyway, there are many questions I
have to ask you now. Okay?

Assata nods. Out the window, it is NIGHT.

EXT. CUSTOMS OFFICE - MARINA - HAVANA - DAWN

ASSATA lies on a bench outside the office with her jacket on her face, sleeping as best she can. Her legs dangle over the armrest. Her suitcase sits by the bench with the briefcase resting on top of it.

An old 50s-era CHEVY pulls up at the curb. A suited man with finely groomed hair steps out. He is an INTELLIGENCE OFFICER (40s). The sound of the car door shutting rouses Assata, who removes the jacket from over her eyes to look over.

The Officer approaches her. She sits up.

CUBAN INTEL GUY
Miss Shakur?

ASSATA
Yeah?

CUBAN INTEL GUY
(extending hand)
Ernesto tells me about your
situation.

She shakes his hand.

CUBAN INTEL GUY (cont'd)
On behalf of the Cuban government,
I'd like to personally guarantee you
will be safe from American forces
here.

She smiles and rises groggily to her feet.

ASSATA
Thank you so much.

He starts for the door of the office.

CUBAN INTEL GUY
We helped your friend, Mr. Newton, in
a similar way some years ago.

He opens the door for her. She goes in. He follows.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - HAVANA - DAY

ASSATA enters a room on the top floor with beige walls and red-tiled floors. She holds the briefcase and a PORTER comes in behind her with her suitcase. He sets it down and walks out without missing a beat. She continues into the space, then turns to the Porter. She pulls out a couple dollars and goes to hand them to him.

He holds up a hand to refuse and turns.

ASSATA
Oh right. Sorry.

The Porter closes the door behind her as he leaves.

I/E. BALCONY - HOTEL ROOM - HAVANA - DAY

She opens the glass sliding door and steps out, to look over the tan rooftops of central Havana. The sun glows. Assata takes a deep breath through her nose, taking it all in.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - HAVANA - DAY

ASSATA sits at the desk by the window across from the kitchen, phone to her ear.

ASSATA
I know, Sam. But what could I do?
Make orders? Tell you guys, whoever's
left, to do this or do that? No,
I—..... Well, like Kwame. Speaking
from exile. As a leader of thought.
The action's behind me now. What more
can I do?

EXT. STREET - HAVANA - DAY

ASSATA walks down the street, joining the hustle bustle of the flowing crowd of pedestrians. Nobody pays much mind to her at all. She walks comfortably, casually. A weight seems to have lifted from her shoulders.

Something catches her eye in the display window of a store to her left. TYPEWRITERS of various colors and sizes sit on a red cloth in the display case.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - HAVANA - SUNSET

Orange sunlight cascades through the room and glows on ASSATA's face as she sits at the desk before her new typewriter. At the center of the page reads the words: "AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY".

She thinks for a moment. Then hits return. The typewriter carriage slides right, setting the guide page-right.

She turns the knob. Then types out a sentence.

ASSATA (V.O.)
I believe in living.

Assata glances out the window, thinking of her next words. Then looks back down. She begins to type again.

The click-clack of the keys and the strikers against the page, echoing through the chamber.

The sounds of Havana seep in through an open window, and the curtain flutters in the salt breeze.

FADE OUT.