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Building City:

The impact of theory, creativity, and market in feature film development and practice-led film research

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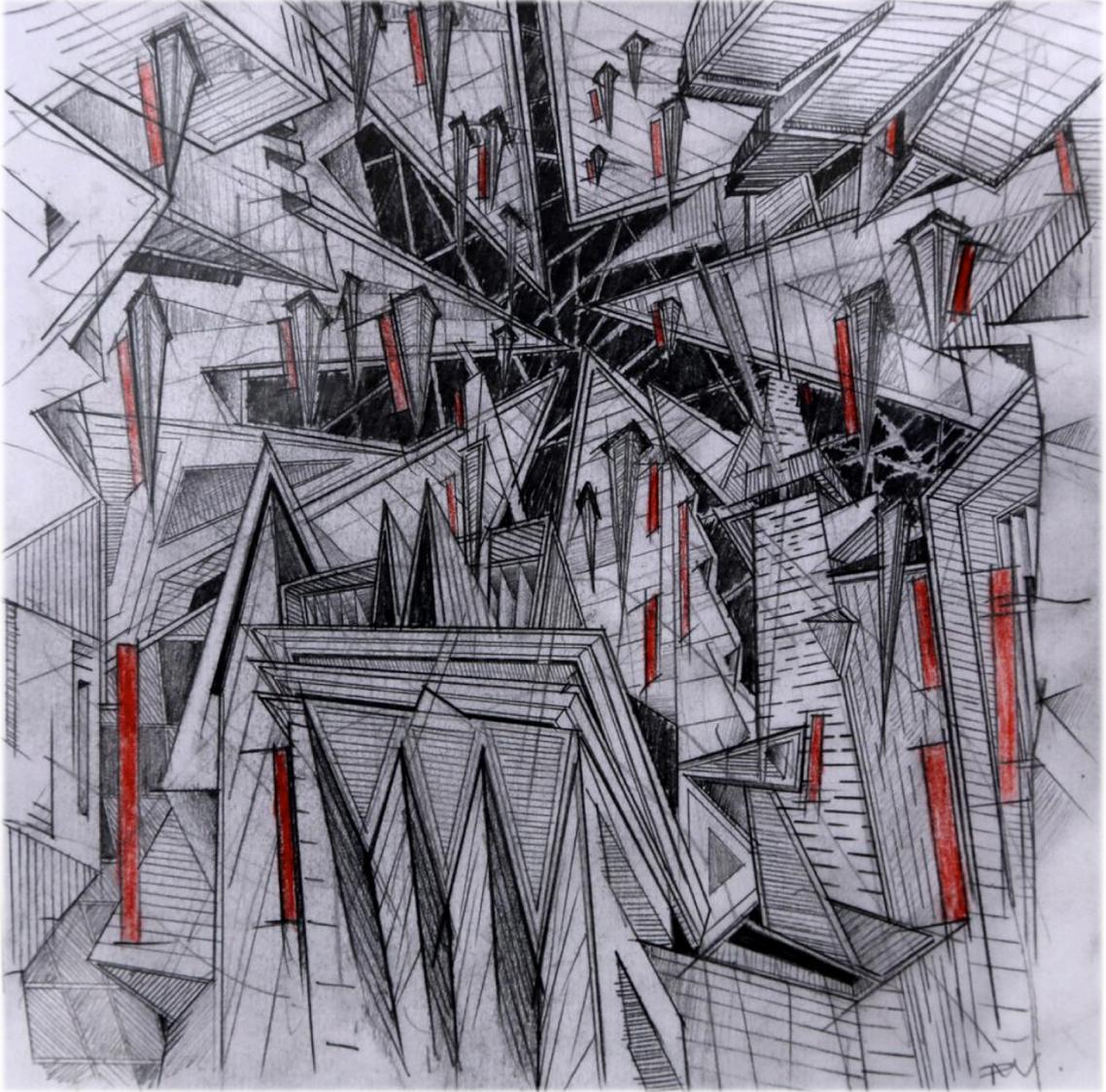
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**Building *CITY*:
The Impact of Theory, Creativity, and Market
in Feature Film Development and Practice-Led Film Research.**

by

Mikey Murray

Presented to Bangor University in fulfillment
of the thesis requirement for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

School of Creative Studies and Media
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Abstract

This thesis is *practice-led research* in the field of commercial feature film development in the UK. It addresses the growing interest in practice as research in film, while proposing how traditional research methodologies can be broadened to allow for a more fluid use of practice as research in film for the future. In doing so, this thesis indicates that practice-led research is a critical tool for allowing a more functional understanding of the film industry generally because as a methodology it has the potential to encourage filmmakers and practitioners to engage with academic and research environments, and can ultimately expose more specific aspects of the filmmaking craft.

Contextual analysis of this type does reveal the unfortunate presumption that often exists within film studies that there is a dichotomy between the theory of, and the practice of, making a film. Traditionally page-based film criticism has investigated film by seeking out associative theory and critiquing filmmaker's work, while the filmmakers themselves often suggest that their artefacts ought to speak for themselves. As the development of making an industry film has rarely been subject to process specific theoretical critique by the filmmakers that created them, film practice has suffered a divorced relevance as a mode of research at doctoral level. The creative artefacts within this study, however, face a number of affects from film theory and this thesis confronts the traditional notion of a divide between page-based critical theory and production practices in film and builds towards an outcome that promotes a core relationship between the two. By presenting practical feature film development artefacts and providing a page-based critical insight, new knowledge can be revealed about how the UK film industry and critical theory both function as stimuli for creativity in film. The methodology here treats the filmmaker (myself) as a critical commodity in understanding the film industry and will show how the practicalities of making a film as a research artefact is influenced by a fusion of three core determinants: *Critical Theory*, *Creative Process*, and *Market Forces*. Structured around these three elements primarily, this study creates a working model for practice-led research, while giving an insight into the processes of feature film development in the UK.

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Many thanks to both the department of Creative Studies and Media at Bangor University for employing me as a part-time lecturer during my PhD and also to The School of Film and Media at The University of Lincoln who showed great faith in me by employing me as a full-time lecturer before my PhD was completed.

My mum and dad have offered their support over the last five years by asking, “Are you finished your PhD yet?” at frequent intervals along the way. I feel sure that completed, this thesis will still remain a strange curiosity for them. They are however solely responsible for shaping me into an independent and ‘hands on’ individual, and never tried to steer me away from my true passion for film, even considering my temporary move into their attic after completing my MA turned into a six year squat. Their love and support has been ever present throughout my entire life, and although I have never been great at saying it, I love you both very much.

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INTRODUCTION



“Nothing in the world is any good unless you can share it.”

Figure 1.1: *Jeff Bailey* (Robert Mitchum) in *Out of the Past* (1947)

To begin this thesis, it should be pointed out that *practice-led research* is still a relatively new concept in film studies at doctorate level. Questions regarding how a practice-led thesis actually functions in the academic environment still exist because of the historical tension between the functionally opposing spheres of practice and theory in film. Consequently, progression of film practice as a vocational learning agenda for students in film at undergraduate and masters level, has also contributed to a general dichotomy of attitudes between those who make films and those who write about film. There is a general sense amongst film academics that film practitioners employed in the tertiary education environment are there to teach the fundamentals of making and constructing films. Conversely, some practitioners often feel that theorists should be left to critique and theorise cinema because their artefacts adequately communicate in a separate film language. Several researchers have crossed the borders between theory and practice or have attempted to bridge the gap. However, while it appears that there is still a traditional reluctance to combine theory and practice in film outputs from an industry perspective, practice as research is clearly beginning to gain a foothold in the film research environment. Film students have expressed their desire to engage in practical production of films in academia historically, something evidenced in the abundance of student film dissertations that combine a theoretical approach with the creation of practical artefacts. However these studies have often been constructed in a

manner whereby the student or students are under pressure to develop a research agenda for the production of their film, or the development of a screenplay that has been influenced from a traditional theoretical approach to research. This theoretical approach has often demanded that the researcher create a hypothetical problem, or a suggestion for film language, that will be put to the test or somehow 'proven' by means of a film production or a screenplay. In other words, frequently the relationship between theory and practice is one whereby the general nature of the work was research-led. However, it would seem that film students who have career goals for the filmmaking industry are lured towards the commercial side of film production and are reluctant to align their work to the rigours and demands of a theoretical or academic approach. As a result, vocational university courses are becoming more popular and while discord between film practice and film theory continues to affect the tertiary education system. There is still a general lack of understanding how film practice fits into the traditional academic system. 'Practice as research' is at the forefront of changing the attitude towards practice within research in film however, and it is now becoming more widespread in academia because, as the leading researchers in the field: Smith and Dean (2009), Biggs (2009), Barrett & Bolt (2010) et al report, the influx of film practitioners into the research environment is building interest in the practical application of film, and creating an avenue for practice-led research.

My own intention in this thesis is to construct a practice-led research project through the personal development of a commercial, feature-length film production called *City*. My aim is to write and then direct this film, and the research element will focus upon the practical considerations that face me as I progress with my feature film development. By developing this film I am attempting to build a career progression in terms of my situation as a writer/director of drama films. Furthermore, I will also give a wider indication that film production, combined with my own theoretical approach, will offer an alternative perspective to film criticism and perhaps broaden the scope of traditional forms of film theory. This study intends to show that if the practitioner addresses the practical considerations of developing a feature film, and reports on the instances where a theoretical approach guides the construction of the artefacts, then it can help to build a clearer understanding of the practitioners' process of creating film productions and content. From my dual position as a practitioner and an academic

researcher in the field of film, the core outcomes of this thesis are to reveal how the first-time feature filmmaker experiences practical and research methods and how as a research-active filmmaker I can contribute to a more informed understanding of practice-led research in film. I also wish to provide a clearer and more in-depth understanding of how the British film industry operates with, and reacts to, new and developing filmmakers.

From the start of this practice-led thesis in film it was clear that I should challenge the more traditional forms of film research and this essentially forces me, as a practice-led researcher, to justify my methodology from the outset. One such challenge, for example, is to substantiate the continued reference to 'I' and the personal journey within these pages, because that is often a key source of conflict when we consider the traditional academic approach. While I should not have any obligation to make a case for a personal practice plan as research, I have found throughout the process of my research there is still a general unwillingness in the field of critical research to accept an individual's perspective on their film practice, and personal opinions about their work as a recognised mode of research. This is because the outcomes can often be seen as subjective in the reflective nature of practice-led research in film. It is, however, slowly becoming more widely accepted that critical practice-led fields are reliant upon the practitioner as a core influence on how we understand the research because the practitioner usually positions or has a direct influence how we read the outcomes of the research. Indeed, Mathieu (2013) points out that the projects that we work on as practitioners, and the people we choose to work with, are all fundamentally linked to the development of the filmmaker's career path. Therefore it becomes essential that my thesis includes an intrinsically personal account of the production of the film artefacts, because how else can a filmmaker report their findings objectively? There are issues that arise from collating data and information through the processes of interviewing industry practitioners, as is the case in this thesis, because there can sometimes be a practical requirement in the film industry to protect intellectual property and personal communication. I have referenced many of the direct influences from collaborators by adding email correspondence and full interview transcripts in the appendices of this thesis. This supports the thesis by giving a clear indication of industry context. All parties have given permission to use correspondence freely, though some social

elements of emails have been blotted out as they involve private chit-chat that is both personal and irrelevant.

I did not initially intend to make a case for practice-led research as a relevant field of research in film in my thesis, but because it is still a relatively new area of research, it becomes necessary to explore practice-led research as a methodology¹. I am not the first film researcher to explore the principles of practice-led research by any means, but the field is continually evolving and my individual process, although personal, is relevant because it gives a truthful insight into the process of film production. John T. Caldwell in conversation with Patrick Vonderau (2013) confirms the problematic alliance between practice research and more traditional forms of critical film studies when he suggests that “disclosure of the fieldworkers actions” (Caldwell in Vonderau, 2013: 14) is an important element of the research. Caldwell talks of a “traditional approach” that he has witnessed, whereby doctoral candidates in film have been warned to remove personal story out of their theses because it may “undermine the evidence and logic of the dissertation.” He further reveals how as a practitioner, he is “still stuck in the middle of this institutional and disciplinary tension between...self-reflexive disclosure and the ‘Draught approach’ from film history” (Caldwell, 2103: 14). From a personal point of view, I am a practice-led academic, someone whose research is primarily focused on how my practice fits into the industry, but I’m also interested in how it might impact upon ongoing fields of film theory and the future of film production research. The approach here comes with the full understanding that the reflections and theorisation surrounding the practice are, at this moment in time, essential to the justification of practice as research. It will also become clear, as the reader progresses through the chapters of this thesis, that my *practice-led research* also reverts to *research-led practice* at times; especially when I discuss the parameters of working within heavily theorised film studies topics like genre, film noir theory, and screenplay studies. The benefit of reporting the progression of the practice in a written document such as this is that one can start to see how reflexive the filmmaking process is. Ultimately, research by way of practice becomes a crucial commodity in film because it is an industry that creates produced artefacts, and only through involvement in a film’s construction can we fully understand the processes of that structure and the

¹ See Introduction sub-heading, *Practice as Research in Film: The Basis for My Approach* (p.8)

environment in which it takes place. Critical theory has historically undervalued the importance of the individual or a production team's engagement with the process of taking a film through various elements of development and production process, and those understudied areas of practice are where this thesis attempts to add significant insight.

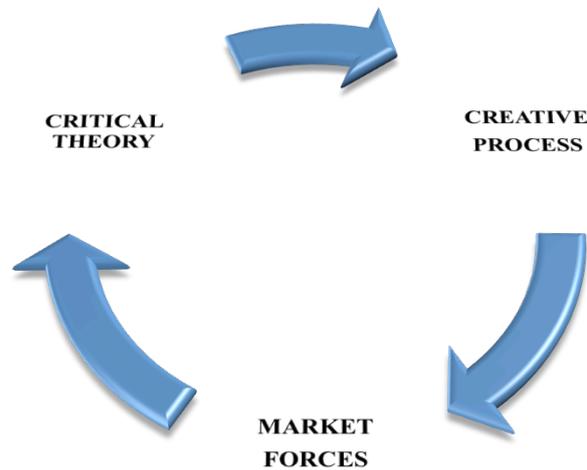
Several researchers now operate in the specific, contemporary field of practice as research in the arts, and some of the most prominent of those are Estelle Barrett, Barbara Bolt, Iain Biggs, Hazel Smith and Roger T. Dean, who produced several core texts in recent years. Smith and Dean (2009) point out that research in the arts that is practice orientated can be “research conducted in the process of shaping an artwork; or research which is the documentation, theorisation and contextualisation of an artwork – and the process of making it – by its creator” (Smith & Dean, 2009: 3). In research terms, the practitioner is the creator in their chosen role, the person who is engaged in the process of parallel production and theoretical research. But once again, it becomes problematic to take a practitioner's approach to research without reverting fluidly between different forms of analytical address; while first person address *and* more traditional forms of critical analysis do need to crossover under these parameters. All of the commentators in the field of practice as research also make clear that, because the practitioner is a critical commodity in understanding the process of practice, the practitioner's individual position, both in terms of where they stand as a filmmaker and researcher, and where they progress to, have huge implications for their theses. It is, therefore, a natural argument to suggest that a filmmaker's experiences throughout the development of their practice artefacts, if reported, can bring a wider understanding of the conditions under which they work, and of film production generally. Consequently, the individual chapters, and specifically the conclusion of this thesis, are often created around personalised accounts of the experience of the filmmaker throughout the creative process.

Smith & Dean (2009) and Barrett & Bolt's (2007) insights into practice as research have significantly influenced the approach to this thesis. Smith & Dean's cyclic “model of creative arts and research processes” (Smith & Dean, 2009: 20) provides an undeniable suggestion that when we as practitioners consider our research methodology in relation to practice, there will always be difficulty in distinguishing

between where research leads the practice and practice leads the research. As suggested above, practice leads this particular thesis, but on occasion there are clear moments whereby the practice is affected and led by research. Through the development of my screenplay with third party producers, it also starts to become clear that there are other core influences over the research when the filmmaker is trying to create a commercial product. Economic and collaborative pressures are hugely significant in commercial filmmaking and I refer to those influences collectively as *market forces*, an area that has powerful implications over practice-led research. This is notable in those situations where there is an aim to create a film for the broader film marketplace and not simply to fulfill a theoretical agenda. Film production, as becomes apparent throughout my thesis, is governed by the forces of producers, financial implications, and the need to *sell* the product to given markets at various stages of production and pre-production. The word ‘sell’ is highlighted because the stages of selling the product of the film throughout – the idea, the script, the filmmakers, the film – do not always involve the exchange of money or indeed the ownership of a product, and often refers to a smaller instance of convincing film professionals that their attachment to the product is beneficial. The collaborative nature of working with producers who have their own agendas related to the expectations of distributors and the paying public puts significant pressure on the whole process. I have developed a cyclical model² that gives a clearer research agenda for the practice-led researcher under these conditions. Smith and Dean’s initial discussion regarding the relationship between research and practice needs to include an added element that allows for the pressures that come from the industry in this instance. Stuart Hall’s *‘Circuit of Culture’* (Hall, 1997: 1) includes a much clearer notion that the industry that filmmakers operate in is a fundamental concern for the theorist and/or practitioner, and so that essential aspect is added to Smith and Dean’s core concerns regarding how research and practice combine.

² See *Figure 1.2* (p.7)

Figure 1.2 – Three-point reflexive basis for the structural approach to my practice-led thesis.



The model I have created here is simplistic, but it borrows Smith and Dean’s fundamental relationship between academic research and practice, and brings with it the cultural influence of Hall, and the importance of consumption to the overall process. It becomes the model for this approach to practice-led research because as any filmmaker engaged in research will begin to understand, each of these three included elements impact forcibly upon the decision making process throughout, especially practice-led film research projects that have a commercial end goal for the artefacts.

Added to *market forces* in the model are the categories *creative process* and *critical theory*—terms influenced by theories posited by Smith & Dean (2009). *Creative process* refers to the subjective implications throughout the research; the creative elements of the artefact that interlock with these other elements and inform or are informed by one another in the structural approach for the practitioner. *Critical theory* is an all-encompassing term with which to address the relevant approaches and discourse of theorists who have contributed to the fields of film study—particularly where those contributions influence the practitioner. Ultimately, there are a number of considerations from film theory that are tied to the filmmaker’s creative approach, and it

is important to acknowledge that critical theory encompasses more than simply *page-based theory*. Filmmakers, for example, have often engaged in a more practical education in the screenwriting or filmmaking craft. Additionally, for the practice-led researcher, it can be argued that any gap that exists between theorists and practitioners across academia and the industry becomes bridged because the two disciplines fundamentally rely upon each other throughout any practice-led research endeavour. The three-point model that I present here ultimately becomes the basis for the structure and methodology in this entire thesis, and the chapters within this thesis are loosely aligned with the core elements of the model as a result. This thesis also includes various types of research address, because as Caldwell (2013: 21) argues, production research methods should include several types of research. Caldwell includes ethnography, participant observation, interviewing, economic analysis, textual analysis and grounded theory. All of these variant types of empirical and theoretical analysis are presented here, as well as a personal analysis of the artefacts that are so critical to this study.

Practice as Research in Film.

As discussed, textual analysis and historical research have traditionally dominated the landscape of critical film studies. Not until recently has practice started to become recognised as a legitimate form of research. Smith & Dean et al. draw our attention to the fact that this growth in practice as research in the humanities has been the result of practitioners trying to better “justify and promote” their work in the academic environment, and to “argue – as forcefully as possible in an often unreceptive environment – that they are as important to the generation of knowledge as more theoretically, critically or empirically based research methods” (Smith & Dean, 2009: 2). As Biggs also notes, an artist now has the ability in the academic world to create an artefact as a piece of knowledge through attention to the “goals” or “norms” of its production and can ultimately “satisfy the demands of what research is” (Biggs, 2009: 68). Most of the commentators in this field agree however that the practical orientated or ‘praxical’ (Bolt, 2007) knowledge that arises out of handling artefacts in practice is somewhat different to historical research or theory. Additionally, it is also a different

approach when researchers or students simply apply theory to practice. Sullivan advocates this notion when he suggests that, “Generally, artists have left the responsibility of assessing the significance of what they do to others, preferring to let critics, historians and cultural theorists do the talking.” (Sullivan, 2009: 41), but both he and the key commentators in the field have created a generally perceived notion that creative practice as research must involve a theoretical write up to better explain the intention. Bolt agrees with Sullivan’s summation, stating that, “practice-only postgraduate research can disable practice-led research by confusing practice with praxical knowledge and sever the link between the artwork and the work of art” (Bolt, 2007: 33-34). Szczepanik & Vonderau (2013) expand the problems of practice as research in film when they suggest that literature that investigates production has a tendency to ignore empirical or historical research, even though it is those elements that are vital in our understanding of modern technological and cultural advances. Szczepanik & Vonderau argue further that, traditional forms of research bolster practice research. Therefore, it starts to become clear that any approach to practice as research is a complex undertaking that generally ought to consider more fully how to situate a practical work in the expanse of theory in the field. It would seem then that the boundaries between research-led practice and practice-led research begin to blur under this type of scrutiny.

As pointed out above, the essential nature of this thesis makes it difficult to maintain exclusivity for a singular practice-led trajectory, especially when discursive written elements form part of the overall process. Fundamentally the creation of practice artefacts leads this thesis, but there are several sections throughout where the practice is affected by the theoretical research. As a result, the written parts of this thesis are not simply an add-on, or reflection on the practice, but are an active part of the research that has both a participatory and separated function in the structure of the research as a whole. This thesis is informed by the practice, but through its completion it also informs the process of creating the artefacts – with all of the core elements of the research output existing as a whole. Interestingly, however, the practice elements within a thesis such as this can potentially exist in an alternative state to the theoretical sections largely because the written theory is capable of being removed from the artefacts without affecting the impact of those artefacts within their own forms or markets, even if the information contained within the theoretical written elements does inform the practice. There is an important point to be made here: practice-led research requires interaction between practice and theory, even if there is a difficult

relationship between the two. However, the market for which film artefacts are developed will, for the most part, see the associated theoretical work in practice-led research as nothing more than a mild curiosity that ought not to get in the way of producing and selling a film. However, and due to that complication, I suggest once more that my research here is fundamentally ‘practice-led.’ I will continue to define it as such because each element of the practice (screenplay, pilot film, storyboards etc) can exist without the justification of this written element, whereas much of the written theoretical elements within will make little sense without the evidence of the artefacts.

Use of the terminology ‘practice-led research’ is further complicated by the term ‘Practice-based’, and these distinctions become difficult to pin down, especially considering that a formal difference is a source of debate among the key theorists in the field. I instinctively use the definition ‘Practice-led’ because my research started with the production of the screenplay artefact and was fundamentally led by its creation. Hanney (2013) in his essay, *Towards a Situated Media Practice*, also suggests that where practice forms the crux of the thesis that we can regard the research as practice-led. That definition can be challenged however and Creativity & Cognition Studios (a web platform dedicated to understanding practice in digital media and the arts) suggests that, “If the research includes a creative artefact as the basis of the contribution to knowledge, the research is practice-based” (online). However, I would argue that my research here is not ‘clear-cut’ in its use of the screenplay artefact as the singular focus for the research, but that the development of the screenplay was just the beginning of the route into the research. This thesis includes more than one practical artefact because it attempts to investigate various elements of the creative process to develop several wider outcomes concerned with understanding the UK film industry and the environment of practice as research as a whole. In the article about the distinctions between practice-led and practice-based research on their website, Creativity & Cognition Studios also refer to practice-led research as leading primarily “to new understandings about the nature of practice” (online). And because my thesis is also concerned with a general investigation of how practice works in the research environment, and it includes the ‘operational significance’ for that practice, it conclusively falls more readily into their definition, ‘practice-led research’.

Smith & Dean (2009: 3) agree that “overlapping” is natural in practice as research and as a result the structural approach here attempts, in the main, to reflect the concerns and research trajectory of the filmmaker as I progress through the practical elements of creating

the associated film artefacts. Haseman and Mafe also suggest that, “practice can only lead research when the researcher is genuinely immersed in and attentive to the possibilities generated through creative practice...they do not need to find a stance from whence they can view their whole research enterprise” (Haseman & Mafe, 2009: 222). But even if there is no need to find a stance from where to view my research, it proves problematic to propagate a thesis that completely adheres to discussing the theoretical points that were raised, as they were raised. As a result this written element cannot fully reflect the chronology of the research because of the nature of film production and the parallel threads of advancement that take place in a film’s development; in short, the fixed chapter structure of this written element of the thesis, does not necessarily reflect the order of the research, but is created to give a logical pathway for the reader. It also becomes important to point out that while the research begins as a process driven insight, elements of goal orientated theory will develop out of that process, most specifically when it comes to justification of some of the creative decisions made throughout the practice process.

Because this study begins with the writing and development of a film that is a means to further my personal career in the film industry, it seems justified to believe that the study has greater relevance in terms of legitimacy, especially when discussing the considerations of creativity and restrictions in the marketplace. I am not simply making a film in an attempt to prove a hypothetical point, it is a piece of work that does exist outside of the theoretical context of a written doctoral thesis, even if at times it informs or is informed by this merger. Hesmondhalgh describes filmmakers and writers as “symbol makers” (Hesmondhalgh, 2006: 1), but even in consideration of his statement, there is no discussion within these pages about the semiotics of cinema, or how one reads a film. Instead this thesis works from a base understanding that film and the practice elements function within their own distinct language parameters. These parameters are ultimately read, understood and recognised via “resemblance” to generally accepted forms and logic as Deleuze (2000) or Wittgenstein’s *Form of Life* philosophy points out; because otherwise the filmmaker or screenwriter would be forced to continually explain in written words his or her own practical language. Explanation of intention of the creative artefacts is evident in this thesis, but the screenplay and film are simply presented as valid research in their own forms. This does not mean of course that the filmmaker consciously applies the theories of

Wittgenstein or Deleuze when writing the screenplay, or designing the shots, but there is a connection between those theories and how the approach is presented here in this written element of the thesis. Various instinctive forms of analytical address are used to describe the creative elements of writing the screenplay and developing the ‘vision’ for the film here, and that is because the decision making process is often subjective or creative. And while *reflexive* inquiry can be a source of conflict between the processes of practice research and theoretical research, tacit knowledge of practice (Polanyi, 1966) is crucial because it often informs the research methods. Bordwell points out the following in relation to this subject:

Much of contemporary theory in literature, art, and film consists of assembling received doctrines of vast generality, recasting them to fit one’s interests, yoking them to other (often incommensurable) doctrines, and then applying the result to a task at hand...(Bordwell, 1996: x).

Bordwell’s suggestion, although directed at critical research, is also relatable to practice-led research in film, because the intonation of one’s own demands in any research becomes paramount to the output. I am attempting to make a success of my practice in the marketplace and to purposefully record some of the procedural elements of the entire process into a structured thesis in order to better inform our understanding of film research and film production in the UK. My experience of the industry might be similar to other practitioners, but it will not be the same. Other screenwriters and directors will face different experiences than I have, but by sharing our experiences we can collectively build a tangible picture of our industry. This sub-chapter is added by way of justification for my methodology because I still feel that practice research is not yet properly understood in film studies. I should not have needed to explain how practice can work as research because critical research does not have to justify its own methodology, but with continued endeavour, and more film practitioners engaging with their work from a research perspective, this type of pre-emptive passage in future practice-led film research will all but disappear.

The Structure of the Practice and Written Elements

The processes of making my film flows out of the cyclical model that I have suggested in this introduction, and this written component of my thesis often takes the form of critical and factual analysis of the creative process. While it often clarifies elements that exist in the practice, it also reports and reflects on the instances where the research and on-going immersion of the filmmaker in relevant theoretical frameworks starts to impose and inform the creative process. Highlighting points on the cyclical model that are pertinent to my research is important because there are decisions made in the creative process that are informed by traditional academic research (*critical theory*), arrived at through commercial pressures (*market forces*), or made through an aesthetic subjectivity (*creative process*). There is also the possibility within my research for decisions to have been made via personal subconscious abstraction, but that is still informed in some way by the cyclic of elements mentioned because my knowledge of film was generated from my immersion in the theory, creativity and market of film as my life has progressed. I will shed some light upon some of the creative decisions in the practice after the fact, but by the nature of tacit knowledge of film production and restrictions on thesis length, some will ultimately remain unreported. The chapter structure of the written sections in this thesis are loosely broken into the three elements present in the cyclical model. However, this cannot be too rigid because there is necessary occasion within every chapter to shed light on all three of the cyclical elements over the practice products. A defined chapter structure *is* utilised for the critical work, but the analysis remains a synthesis of intuitive analytical approaches that continually overlap throughout a process that cannot ultimately be reported in a linear progression of developments. This is because the development of a film rarely happens in a linear or chronological manner.

Because this thesis is practice-led, the first element presented to the reader in chapter one is the most recent draft of the screenplay for *City*. It is important for me, as a practitioner, to give the reader the screenplay as the first point of contact to justify my methodology and to foreground and encourage engagement with a creative element first, otherwise the thesis struggles to hold its proposed position as *practice-led*.

Chapter two delves into the finer detail and theorisation of *film noir*³, and how I pursued a deeper understanding for the principles of film noir while I was writing my screenplay. Throughout the development process, film noir theory has ultimately become a core consideration for the film and for me as a filmmaker. The imposition of noir might initially seem to be an obvious choice for a filmmaker who is armed with an incipient vision for creating a dark thriller with a down-beat ending and a social message. However, with a deeper investigation into the historical theory of film noir, the problem of how to write in the genre becomes convoluted amongst a framework that surrounds over seventy years of tradition and varying definitions of the term ‘film noir’. Sanders for example proposes, “that many...would agree that they know film noir when they see it even though they cannot define the term film noir per se,” (Sanders, 2006: 91). But understanding film noir as a theoretical entity rather than simply an instinctive, creative or market driven form becomes an important challenge; no less because throughout the history of noir theory it becomes clear that a host of commentators agree that the universal term is not a comprehensively definable one. While the development of a film that is written and sold as a film noir are the nucleus of the practice in this study, as the filmmaker, I am challenged to research the historical backdrop of film noir in order to substantiate use of the term and have a better personal understanding of the form. Chapter two ultimately attempts to justify the core area of *critical theory* in the cyclical model because it initially situates genre as having a profound effect over the modern film marketplace and the production of the practice artefacts.

Chapter three, continues this thesis through the discussion of screenplay development and how, as a communicative creative artefact, it utilises all three of the core elements of the proposed cycle in the process of developing a film. By analysing how the screenplay employs narrative restrictions and conventions set out by a need to create a recognisable film noir, chapter three also appraises how genre concerns inform and guide the screenwriter. The synthesis of the cyclical model’s core elements begins to impact heavily in this chapter, as it becomes clear that *market forces* and the screenwriter’s need to resort to the *theoretical* and *creative* backdrops of film noir begins to have a key influence over the construction of the artefacts. Amy Devitt’s

³ The contexts of film noir are discussed in chapter two, however a discussion of film noir elements also informs chapter three.

(2004) notion of how genre writing is managed through the inclusion of *formal markers* that are recognised by the reader is used to discuss how a practitioner writes in a genre form. However, the chapter also investigates the need for the modern screenwriter and filmmaker to avoid overused markers or cliché because it may ultimately hurt the production in the marketplace.

In chapter four the thesis analyses empirical data from the industry and begins to suggest why *market forces* have such a significant role in engaging with both film practice and film theory. It discusses the need to understand the budgeting of a feature film, the differences between low-budget and micro-budget filmmaking, and the ramifications of existing market trends over the development of the feature film ‘*package*’⁴. To create an informed discussion, core, primary data from the *British Film Insitutes*’s statistical yearbooks are used to investigate specific trends in the British independent film market. Furthermore, interviews with filmmakers, both attached to *City* and otherwise are also used to give first-hand accounts of industry practice and experience. Chapter four closes by describing how *City* is situated in the marketplace and outlines what might be done to improve the UK film industry in order to help the production of UK independent films.

Finally this thesis presents a short pilot film production within chapter five, and it discusses several key areas that influenced its production, specifically why the pilot becomes an important functional element for the film package overall. Chapter five also examines the increasing industry trend and demand for pilot films in the development of a feature film project, how the pilot has become a critical resource in the development of my film, and my ability to sell the idea for my feature film as a first time director. The pilot currently forms the most advanced element of practice in the thesis because the feature has not yet been made, but chapter five offers an insight into many of the elements of the process that became key indicators of how production processes for feature film work functionally in the UK. The analysis in chapter five addresses the factors that potentially hinder *City*’s ability to progress into a feature film production, and the personal evidence cited in this chapter further exposes the difficulties faced in the development of any feature film.

⁴ ‘Package’ is a term used across the industry to describe a film’s associative elements and market value.

The chapters of this thesis ultimately focus purely on the artefacts and the creative and development concerns that surround them. The conclusion is heavily influenced by a personal report on the overall process of developing my film artefacts within both the industry and the research environment, and ultimately returns to discuss practice-led research as a process within the film sector generally. On that basis, my thesis becomes an important research document for any theorist or practitioner that is attached to, or hopes to engage in, a study of film production or screenwriting in the UK marketplace. While many filmmakers consider theoretical and critical approaches to film within their filmmaking they have rarely been documented directly, and my intention with this thesis is to engage more fully in a critical approach to my filmmaking and document the experience as I progress. The overall intention of the thesis is to combine traditional forms of research with creative concerns and statistical data to create a work that is defined by the three elements of the cyclical model presented in this introduction⁵. An overview of the practice is presented that ties together *creative process*, *critical theory*, and *market forces*, and demonstrates how a film interacts with a written research output. The core production artefacts and this written element combine to communicate a unique blend of practice-led evidential language. My intended outcomes are:

- To demonstrate how practice-led research benefits the under researched area of film production.
- To outline how *critical theory*, *creative process* and *market forces* combine to influence practice-led researchers in a reflexive cycle.
- To provide an insight, and a better understanding of the feature film marketplace in the UK.

As Bordwell (2006) suggests, however, the researcher always has their own interests at the forefront of their outputs. I decided to develop a thesis in practice-led film because I understand that it is a growing field in film studies and academia; it was an opportunity to progress as a filmmaker, while fulfilling the research requirements needed for progression in the pedagogical and research environments of film studies.

⁵ See figure 1.2 (p. 7)

CHAPTER ONE - CITY SCREENPLAY

CITY

by
Mikey Murray

6th April, 2012

WGA Registered.

Nic Crum / Naysun Alae Carew

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

FADE IN:

1

EXT. CITY SCAPE - NIGHT

1

A mess of shimmering lights reflect on a vast black river.

SUPER: 'THE NEAR FUTURE'

On the north side, corporate glass super-structures rise out of the haze. They seem to boast across the water to the gloomy lights on the south-side.

A distant SIREN.

In the south-side, shadow wins the battle over light. Misty showers of light from sporadic working street-lamps toil to illuminate rain splashed, deserted pavements. Concrete buildings are slopped with a clutter of hopeful corporate adverts, but the smashed windows reveal a truth.

A HOODED FIGURE steps under a street-lamp. He skillfully makes the finishing touches to his graffiti on the side of a derelict shop.

From across the street the large wall of graffiti he works on can be seen. He has spray-painted....

'WELCOME TO THE BELLY'

The 'Hoody' finishes his work and retires into the foreboding shadows.

2

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

2

A limp video camera resides blindly in the blackness overhead.

Nearby, a dimly illuminated sign reads 'ALL NIGHT NEEDS' above a grocery shop.

By the shop, TWO STREET URCHINS give money to an OLDER LAD in a hooded tracksuit. They receive something in return.

Their attention is caught by a woman who approaches with a stroller....

MELISSA GRANT; blonde, thirty-something and heady in a trashy way - She isn't fazed as she advances on them.

In the buggy is CARL; a one-year-old baby with soft red hair - without his mother, he'd be a picture of innocence.

The 'HOODY'S' step back to let Melissa pass. A respectful nod to her as she does.

3 INT. 'ALL NIGHT NEEDS' - NIGHT

3

A DOOR-OPENING-BUZZER sounds as Melissa struggles to enter with her stroller.

Under the strange hue of the fluorescent lights and encased in a Perspex cell, the edgy OWNER stops packing the cigarette shelf behind him....

OWNER

Cold tonight isn't it?

Melissa ignores him. She carries on through the market with her boy. She shops around the aisles; milk and bread.

As she stops to consider a bottle of wine, The DOOR-BUZZER interrupts the hum of the refrigeration units.

A DARK FIGURE, all in black and wearing a balaclava mask, steps into the store.

The owner turns, but scuttles under the counter as the intruder points a gun at him.

Melissa is momentarily confused as the ominous figure approaches her. Confronted by the masked man, she stands frozen to the spot; bottle of wine in hand.

MELISSA

What do you want?

He cracks her across the face with his elbow. She clatters into a grocery shelf and plunges to the floor among a pile of beer cans. The wine bottle smashes.

CUT TO BLACK:

Melissa's HEIGHTENED BREATHING....

FADE IN:

....as she tries to focus on her bloodied hand as it gropes for grip among the broken glass and spilled wine.

She hears Carl GIGGLE and quickly turns. Focussing properly, she's in time to see Carl being lifted from his stroller.

Melissa scrambles and clutches at the kidnapper's ankle.

MELISSA (cont'd)

You're fucking dead.

The man struggles to free himself but Melissa has a tight grip and is being dragged.

He directs his gun at her face. Blood has started to run from her nose.

She stares up the barrel before it is pressed into her swollen cheek. A tear rolls from her eye and her powerful grip weakens.

The man breaks free. The BUZZER sounds again as he exits the market into the darkness with Carl in his arms.

Dazed, Melissa tries to lever herself up. The spilled wine soaks into her 'joggers'.

4

INT. LARGE SUBURBAN HOME (LOUNGE) - NIGHT

4

A glass of champagne is poured.

MANY GUESTS fill out a room which owes much to contemporary Scandinavian style; warmly lit, stylish and up-market.

A large Cake that resides on a table displays: 'HAPPY ANNIVERSARY - 25 YEARS'

Addressing the guests is KERR; the epitome of elder style and sophistication - he effortlessly makes his expensive grey suit look comfortable and is well at ease with his sixty-five years.

He is flanked by his wife BELINDA; she is 15 years his junior - but she got the life she wanted.

KERR

(quieting the guests)

....and I might add that it is wonderful to have my two oldest home from university for this special occasion. It's important that I'm reminded just how badly they dress from time to time.

Playful DISAGREEMENT from the guests. Kerr looks at his two daughters, they are either side of twenty-years-old. He raises a glass to them and they both smile back at him.

At the back of the room, and enjoying the surroundings, is LISA; a refined and serious thirty-something with porcelain skin.

And behind her shoulder, with a beer in hand, is her husband. He is Max Leary; stoic, mid-thirties and kinda scrawny - his collar and tie have never been a partnership and he'd rather be anywhere but here.

Max watches EMILY; a flaxen haired ten-year-old, as she stands in front of Kerr and Belinda with a beaming smile.

KERR (O.C.) (cont'd)
 And no we're not forgetting this
 little rascal who's constantly
 under our feet....

AUDIO FADE:

Kerr's speech becomes slow and silent....

Max is momentarily transfixed by the picture perfect family
 and his eyes focus on Emily. She looks up at her father
 happily; she's preened and in a pretty dress.

AUDIO IN:

A BIG GROUP LAUGH.

Max snaps back to reality.

KERR (cont'd)
but seriously. I'm proud of
 all of my children.

Kerr makes eye contact with Max momentarily.

Max studies the side of Lisa's face; she anticipates the
 rest of Kerr's speech.

His speech continues, but Max takes the opportunity to
 ghost out of the room and step out into....

5

EXT. LARGE SUBURBAN GARDEN - CONTINUOUS

5

The garden is spacious and beautifully landscaped with a
 perfect lawn. The air is quiet and fresh; a far cry from
 the streets of the Belly.

Max lights up a cigarette, the undulating MURMUR of Kerr's
 speech and the party can still be heard behind him.

He crosses to the edge of the garden and stands on a bench
 so that he can look out over a surrounding high fence. His
 vantage point is in the hills and from this elevated
 position, a carpet of beautiful and uncomplicated city
 lights spread out before him like stars on a clear autumn
 night.

EMILY (O.C.)

Max.

Max turns. He throws his cigarette away - ashamed to have
 been caught.

EMILY (cont'd)
 You shouldn't smoke.

MAX
 Emily. What's up?

EMILY

I was bored with daddy's speech.
He can go on a bit.

She climbs up on the bench beside Max.

MAX

Always one step ahead aren't you?

EMILY

I try to be. What are you
looking at?

He points.

MAX

The lights in the south-side.

EMILY

They're really far.

MAX

Not as far as they seem.

Emily looks at Max curiously.

EMILY

What is out there?

MAX

People.

They look at each other. Emily is fascinated.

KERR (O.C.)

She'll be gunning for your new
badge, Detective?

Max turns to see Kerr approach.

Emily is disappointed - she knows that's an end to her
conversation.

Kerr arrives at the bench and puts his hand out to Emily.
She takes it and he lifts her down.

Max also steps down.

KERR (cont'd)

(to Emily)

There is some cake inside.

Emily looks at Max - Her attention now elsewhere.

Max smiles at her and she runs off to the house.

KERR (cont'd)

She's curious to know everything.

MAX
She's terrific.

They watch her make her way into the house.

KERR
Are you thinking about adopting?

MAX
I still want to. Lisa's tied up
with work at the moment.

Max sits and retrieves a cigarette.

Kerr sighs - disappointed at Max lighting up.

KERR
She'll come around. Anything you
guys need?

MAX
You've done plenty.

KERR
I've kinda thrown you in at the
deep end.

Max nods.

KERR (cont'd)
Trent will help you swim.

MAX
That guy is a prick.

Kerr frowns - Max is pushing it.

KERR
He's better police than I ever
was.

MAX
I can't see it.

Max looks at Kerr to gauge his mood. Kerr takes the
opportunity to sit down on the bench with him.

MAX (cont'd)
I should be thanking you.

KERR
Yes you should.

Max takes a draw on his cigarette.

Kerr reaches over and clasps the back of Max's neck.

KERR (cont'd)
 It's time to advance, Max.
 You're ready.

Max dips his head. A long, slightly awkward, moment as they gather their thoughts.

KERR (cont'd)
 Right. I'm done buttering you
 up. C'mon, we'll get you another
 drink.

They rise to head back inside.

KERR (cont'd)
 You and Trent will get there. I
 like to mix my talent.

6 EXT. 'ALL NIGHT NEEDS' - NIGHT

6

A car pulls up and parks perfectly inside the spread of a street-light. Inside the car a set of rosary beads swing on the rear-view mirror.

TRENT DALTRY rises out the driver's side; a sturdy and audacious detective who's irresistible presence eclipses the dark alleyways and dangerous street surroundings - something deep down in his soul drives him.

He strides towards 'ALL NIGHT NEEDS'.

There's a police car by the shop. A FEMALE MEDIC, tends to Melissa's cut hand at the passenger-side.

TRENT
 (to the medic)
 Tell the mother I'll be right
 with her!

Melissa scowls at him as he enters the shop.

7 INT. 'ALL NIGHT NEEDS' - CONTINUOUS

7

Trent strolls through the store. He looks at the scattered beer cans, broken glass and the empty stroller.

A FORENSICS guy scans the area for prints with a scanner.

FORENSICS
 Complete waste of my time.

Trent nods.

FORENSICS (cont'd)
 On your own tonight?

TRENT
 Always.

FORENSICS
 (sneering)
 Where's the new kid?

Trent shrugs.

FORENSICS (cont'd)
 They should have mail order
 newbies for you.

Trent returns outside.

8

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

8

Trent sees DAVID, a beat copper.

TRENT
 The workie was the only witness?

DAVID
 Yeah. He didn't see much though.
 All he heard was Melissa say....

He reads his notebook.

DAVID (cont'd)
 "What do you want?" and a bit of
 a commotion. Then the masked guy
 left with the kid.

Trent looks across at Melissa as she is treated by the
 medic.

DAVID (cont'd)
 Nothing from the store camera
 either. The guy said the
 recording drive is bust.

Trent looks up at a street camera that looms overhead in
 the blackness.

TRENT
 You check the eyes?

DAVID
 Like the rest around here - a
 long time blind.

Trent is drawn towards Melissa. Her face is swollen.

TRENT
 (to Medic)
 Buzz off.

She reluctantly moves, but stays within earshot.

TRENT (cont'd)
Where's your other half tonight,
sweet stuff?

Melissa spits some blood on the ground.

TRENT (cont'd)
Word is you two aren't
specifically cosy anymore.

Melissa glares at Trent.

TRENT (cont'd)
Dexter would sure as almighty
hell be my number one suspect.

Trent lifts Melissa's chin; perhaps a little too roughly.

TRENT (cont'd)
Well?

MEDIC
Excuse me. I need to get her
treated.

TRENT
What about the treatment you'll
need after I make sure you're
drudging in the Belly for the
rest of your life?

The medic backs off - she knows he means it.

TRENT (cont'd)
Did you give a voice to any of
the uniforms?

Melissa ignores him.

TRENT (cont'd)
(to David)
Like I suspected. Couldn't give
a shit about her kid.

Melissa swallows her nausea, but quickly models a response.

MELISSA
Fuck you.

Trent smiles, completely unperturbed. He heads back
towards his car. David struggles to keep up.

DAVID
You think Dexter did this?

TRENT
How does he earn his crust?

DAVID
He's a dealer.

Trent throws his hands up; a 'there you have it' gesture.

Trent gets to his car. From the corner of his eye, he sees two 'HOODIES' in the shadows watching - they irk him.

He climbs into his car; his rosary beads swing on the rear-view mirror.

Trent starts the engine and rolls the window down.

TRENT
You get a statement from those youngsters?

He thumbs over his shoulder.

DAVID
Where?

Trent drives off.

David looks across in the shadows. There's no-one there.

9

INT. KITCHEN (SUBURBAN HOME) - NIGHT

9

Max has a beer in hand. Kerr has iced a glass but a muted television has caught his attention.

He proceeds to pour a drink and he unmutes the T.V. - A 'public-school' COUNCILLOR gives an address in front of the Town Hall.

COUNCILLOR (T.V.)
....As I said before it's time that we clamped down on this explosion of crime. The extra five percent funding will bring a better police presence and improve their resources.

The news programme cuts to the Councillor being buffeted by press as he struggles to his car.

REPORTER (T.V.)
Can the five percent make a difference?

COUNCILLOR (T.V.)
A question from someone who was listening?

REPORTER (T.V.)
Is the money being spent in the Belly - Or more protection for the north?

KERR

Good--

COUNCILLOR (T.V.)

The South-side is top of our agenda.

Kerr shrugs, exasperated.

2ND REPORTER (T.V.)

Has arming the police made things worse, councillor? Has it fuelled the rise of gun crime in the city?

The Councillor stops at his car and turns; several microphones are shoved up to his face.

COUNCILLOR (T.V.)

It is an incontestable fact that gun crime was a problem in this city long before our decision. This economic malaise is having a detrimental effect everywhere, and until things improve we'll have to continue to operate with limited resources. Our officers are vulnerable and the streets are difficult. Are you suggesting that these brave men and women don't have a right to defend themselves?

The Councillor retires to his waiting car.

Back to the Studio presenter--

Kerr mutes the Television. He exhales purposefully.

KERR

He's losing it.

MAX

Why don't you put yourself in there?

KERR

You've got a lot to learn.

BELINDA enters. She puts her hands on her hips.

Kerr looks at Max - The party beckons.

10

INT/EXT. CAR - NIGHT

10

Lisa drives. She and Max peer out of the windscreen.

Their surroundings are dominated by high rise office glass. It's a clean and impressive area, but deserted and soulless; a demarcation-zone by night.

Huge billboards advertise new build flats in 'North Hills'.

They approach the mouth of a tunnel; the sign above exclaims....

'SOUTH SIDE'

Lisa is not enamoured by the sign.

ECHOING noise as the car enters the tunnel and starts to descend on the downward camber.

The flicker of the tunnel lights on the windscreen intermittently obscure Max and Lisa's faces.

In the rear view mirror, Lisa watches the mouth of the tunnel shrink into the distance.

The car veers over the centre line.

MAX

You watching the road?

Lisa snaps to attention and corrects herself.

They exit the tunnel and the ECHO stops.

Max and Lisa both look across at a near-derelict shopping area....

'WELCOME TO THE BELLY'.

One shop remains open. A fortified pawn-shop offering 'Cash for Gold'. Idle, rust-ridden shutters confirm the demise of the other shop units.

Resigned, Lisa makes a left turn.

11 EXT. STREET (APARTMENT BLOCK) - NIGHT. 11

A lonely multi-storey apartment block rises into the black sky; it's a throwback to architecture long past, but it has since been saved and renovated. The gate of the underground garage clanks open and Lisa's car pulls in.

12 INT. MAX'S APARTMENT (LIVING AREA) - NIGHT 12

Max and Lisa enter. Lisa carelessly drops her keys on the table. Max goes directly to the fridge for a beer.

The flat is contemporary and minimalist; orange street light stripes the lounge through venetian blinds.

LISA
Aren't you coming to bed?

Max opens his beer and takes his jacket off.

LISA (cont'd)
We could talk for a bit.

MAX
I'm not tired.

LISA
Don't sit up all night.

He switches the television on - Lisa is used to this disappointment and she retires for bed.

Max flicks to 'News 24'.

The news story on television unfolds, the elements on-screen sensationally visualise the newscasters dialogue--

NEWSCASTER (T.V.)
....police at the scene reported
that small snap seal bags were
being sold to children as young
as seven....

Max turns it up.

NEWSCASTER (T.V.) (cont'd)
....the contents of the bags
were: a cotton swab, a teaspoon,
a lighter, a syringe and one
short potent mix of heroin....

Max sits on the sofa.

NEWSCASTER (T.V.) (cont'd)
....children are being offered
this, outside of schools and at a
price they can easily afford. An
act dedicated to bolstering the
market for heroin across the
south side.

13 INT. MAX'S APARTMENT (BEDROOM) - CONTINUOUS.

13

Lisa lies awake in the dark, compounded by the faint noise of an ALARM in the distant night; as well as the dampened NEWS from the television....

NEWSCASTER (O.C.)
In a related story, a child was
abducted tonight in the south
side. The child, Carl Grant,
fourteen months old....

14 INT. MAX'S APARTMENT (LIVING AREA) - CONTINUOUS. 14

NEWSCASTER (T.V.)
was in the care of his
 mother, Melissa Grant, at the
 time.

INSERT ON NEWS: Photo of Melissa.

Max leans forward - He knows her.

NEWSCASTER (T.V.) (cont'd)
 Police have named the child's
 estranged father, Dexter
 Grant....

INSERT ON NEWS: PHOTOGRAPH OF DEXTER (A particularly
 devilish arrest-sheet shot)

NEWSCASTER (T.V.) (cont'd)
as their number one suspect
 in the abduction. Thirty-Four-
 year-old, Grant, a notorious
 crime boss and gunrunner, is also
 thought to be the probable
 culprit for this new wave of
 heroin grooming. He is a key
 figure head in the south side and
 has previously served eight years
 for voluntary manslaughter--

Max shuts the television off and swigs his beer.

15 INT. MAX'S APARTMENT (BEDROOM) - NIGHT. 15

Lisa's eyes are open but she faces away from Max as he gets
 in bed.

Max lies on his back and stares at the stripes of street
 light on the ceiling.

AUDIO FLASHBACK:

KID (V.O.)
 Max. You've got to run.

END AUDIO FLASHBACK.

Max closes his eyes.

16 INT/EXT. CAR - DAY 16

'STOP CHILDREN'

Max's P.O.V. - Two YOUNG BOYS (7-8 year olds) are being
 ushered over a zebra crossing by a 'lollipop lady'.

It's windy as hell and the kids are being buffeted. One of them is lagging behind the other.

AUDIO FADE TO:

FOOTSTEPS on a corridor floor....

17 INT. POLICE HQ (CORRIDOR) - DAY 17

Daylight from corridor windows flickers across Max's face as he walks.

The building is decrepit and in need of modernisation; more like a 1960s high school than a police station.

Max knocks on a door; 'Detective Chief Constable - J.L.KERR'

KERR (O.C.)

Yeah?!

Max enters....

18 INT. POLICE HQ (KERR'S OFFICE) - CONTINUOUS 18

Kerr works at his computer. The daylight sneaks through any available slit in Kerr's window blind.

KERR

Hell of a wind out there--

MAX

The stolen child case.

Kerr removes his glasses.

KERR

Is not for you. You have a case.

MAX

That can wait.

Kerr gets up and shuts his office door.

KERR

Enthusiasm. I like it.

(pause)

But you need to stay on the Whitton case for now - she was one of our own and we need to find her.

MAX

I'm getting nowhere with that case. Let me take the child.

KERR

Look. I brought you in to pick
up some of the slack for
Trent....

Kerr sits back down

KERR (cont'd)

....And I can't give you that
case. We both know that.

Kerr shares a look with Max that confirms an end to it.
Max shakes his head as he leaves - It's too soon to die on
this hill.

19

INT. POLICE HQ (DETECTIVE OFFICE) - DAY

19

Trent leans over his computer; he prefers not to sit.

Another detective, JONES sits at his desk and 'bitches' to
Trent about something; he's bedded in with Trent and has an
incipient slyness.

A desk fan spins air at head height from the top of a
filing cabinet. A large map of the city adorns the wall
behind Jones; the north and south are clearly separated by
a river, the south side also hemmed in by a bypass road.

The office is dingy and much of the natural light has been
shuttered out.

Max enters and slams some papers in his 'IN' basket.

Trent holds a stopping hand out to Jones; he has taken an
interest in Max. He relaxes by perching on his desk,
rotating his wedding ring around his finger as he chats....

TRENT

What's the malfunction, Leary?

Max pouts like a child that has just been told off.

TRENT (cont'd)

You're in a marathon, Kid. Not a
sprint.

MAX

Who's on the missing child case?

TRENT

I was adrift on that last night,
while you were out playing in the
hills. Pity - word is you've got
a tidy interest.

Trent winks - He's enjoying this.

MAX

Your sledge-hammer approach won't work with Melissa.

Trent ambles over to Max. Max takes a step backward; the whirring fan now behind his head.

TRENT

My approach? I've been peggin' down gigs like these for fifteen years, Lappy.

Trent adjusts Max's tie to straighten it.

TRENT (cont'd)

Give yourself a chance to settle in, huh.

Trent looks at Jones. Raised eyebrows between them.

TRENT (cont'd)

Kerr wants you on the Whitton search. But remember that's my gig. Straight to me if you catch even a sniff of where she is.

Trent crosses to his desk and puts his jacket on. He smirks with Jones and then strolls out.

Max seethes. He touches his monitor and it powers up. He points at what he wants on screen - the Whitton file.

He looks at her headshot and reads, 'Missing person'.

Max opens his desk drawer and stares at a gun in there. He decides against it.

He strides out of the office.

Jones picks up his phone as he watches Max leave.

20

INT/EXT. CAR - DAY

20

Max drives. In the harsh reality of daylight the graffiti and broken streets are more visible; the Belly is truly neglected. There are few people around, but a 'HOODY' is not afraid to make his presence known and he steps to the kerb; his shadowed face staring out as Max passes.

In front of Max a traffic light turns amber, Max slows initially but decides to hit the accelerator as he approaches it. He passes through after it has turned red.

Max drives past 'All Night Needs'. There is no activity.

He drives on a little further and parks. He takes a deep breath to ready himself, then he gets out.

He looks around to gauge the scene.

Two bedraggled street urchins approach him.

YOUNGSTER
Look after your car, Mister?

Max flashes his I.D. at them, then dips into his pocket.

MAX
You see anything last night?

The boy shakes his head. Max hands him some change.

CUT TO:

P.O.V. - In a rear view mirror, Max is being watched as he walks away from the Urchins to a scruffy housing block. It is Trent's view; his rosary beads dangle on the mirror.

CUT TO:

Max presses an intercom buzzer. After a few moments....

FEMALE VOICE (INTERCOM)
Who's there?

MAX
Max Leary.

A lull. The door buzzes open.

21 INT. HALLWAY - DAY 21

Max approaches an apartment in the dingy hallway. The door is ajar and he enters....

22 INT. MELISSA'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS 22

A large open apartment, nicely decorated with all mod cons. It contradicts the exterior and hall. Max is surprised by the comfortable surroundings.

Melissa sits on a large leather sofa. She's in her dressing gown; her hair is damp, face bruised and her hand bandaged.

Her four-year-old child, MARY looks at Max; she has beautiful dark hair and her blue eyes are fixed on him.

Melissa's mother, JUDE; a hardened woman in her fifties, takes the child from Melissa.

JUDE
C'mon. You come to your Nana's
for a while.

Max watches Jude put a jacket on Mary. Mary's eyes never budge from Max.

JUDE (cont'd)
Call me later.

MELISSA (O.C.)
I will, Mammy.

Mary continues to look at Max as she leaves with Jude. The door closes and Max stands with his back to Melissa.

Max's attention shifts to a framed photograph of Melissa with her two kids on the sideboard.

Melissa rises from the sofa and Max turns to face her.

MELISSA (cont'd)
Did you come to act like that other cunt?

MAX
I thought you knew me better than that.

Max continues to scan the plush apartment.

MAX (cont'd)
Dexter must be giving you nice house keeping incentives.

MELISSA
I don't see him no more....

She steps over to him, her gown loose enough to show a shrewd amount of cleavage.

MELISSA (cont'd)
....we're clear of each other.

MAX
You'll be needing him now though.

Max reaches up to touch her bruised face. She blocks his hand forcefully.

MELISSA
I'll take whatever help I can get.

MAX
Any clue?

Melissa shakes her head. Max looks at her exposed skin.

MAX (cont'd)
Where can I find Dexter?

MELISSA
I don't know.

Max frowns and looks deep into her eyes - Trying to read her mixed signals.

He clasps the two trims of her dressing gown and pulls them closed. He then tightens the belt.

MAX

I want to find Carl. I might be the only one in the department who does.

Melissa stares at Max - She's perplexed.

She breaks their tight proximity and returns to perch on the sofa.

MELISSA

Dexter works better when he's not distracted. You'll help by keeping your lot away from him.

MAX

That'll be a trick.
(pause)
Do you have a picture of Carl?

Melissa points at the side-board.

Max sees the framed photograph he looked at earlier. He crosses to it and removes it from the frame.

He turns the picture to her.

MAX (cont'd)

You look happy there.

She wont look at it. Max approaches and pushes it closer to her face.

She finally registers it and softens.

Max puts his hand out to her face. This time she puts up no resistance. He cups her bruised cheek and wipes a tear away with his thumb.

Max lets go just as she tries to touch his hand with her own. He reassures her with a glimmer of a smile and then he leaves.

23 INT. TRENT'S CAR - DAY 23

Trent watches in his rear view mirror as Max exits the building and approaches his car.

24 EXT. STREET - DAY 24

Max is about to unlock the door of his car when two MEN grab him. One of the men pulls a black bag over his head.

Max struggles and slips one of the men, but he is disabled with a punch to the stomach and an elbow to the head.

The two men drag him across the street and bundle him into the boot of a car.

The car speeds off.

25 INT. TRENT'S CAR - DAY 25

Trent starts the engine of his car but another car screeches in behind him and blocks him in, the DRIVER gets out and runs off down an alleyway.

TRENT
Fuckin' joking me.

In a rage, Trent tries to manoeuvre his car out of the space. He can't.

He bangs his fists on the steering wheel.

CUT TO:

26 INSIDE A BLACK BAG. 26

A few PIGEONS can be heard FLUTTERING; some vague light shapes can be seen.

WHITE OUT:

FADE IN:

27 INT. DERELICT CHURCH - DAY 27

Max screws his eyes up as light from a stained glass window cascades down into his face.

Shadows creep around behind dusty pews in the tumble-down interior, Max has been planted on one of those pews.

Max's P.O.V. - A silhouetted figure stands over him. He steps out of the light and can now be seen properly....

He is DEXTER GRANT; attractive and rugged, with serious eyes - an unknown quantity. His wife-beater shirt exposes a collage of body art.

Within a couple of feet is one of Dexter's associates, RAY; a beast of a man adorned with a map of scars that affirm his long criminal past.

Max's face is marked and blood trickles from his eye-brow.

MAX
What's with the fucking bag? I
know exactly where I am.

Dexter looks at Ray, waiting for his response.

RAY
Hell. Like I give two fucks.

Ray leaves to help STEVE; a skinnier thug and Max's other assailant. He packs guns into a crate by the altar.

Dexter pulls out his gun and lets it hang by his side.

DEXTER
 You go to Melissa to find me?

MAX
 I could have led them here ten times over.

DEXTER
 Why haven't you?

MAX
 Right now, I've no idea.

Max curses as he dabs his burst eyebrow.

DEXTER
 (off his wound)
 I thought you'd need that when they question you.

MAX
 When who questions me?

DEXTER
 The big man was tailing you.

Max sinks at his blunder.

DEXTER (cont'd)
 You walk about like a child.
 Don't underestimate that goon.

MAX
 If he nails you I'll have less to worry about.

Dexter puts his gun away. Max relaxes....

MAX (cont'd)
 What do you know about Carl?

DEXTER
 I know he's better off with his mammy. Do you see me changing nappies?

MAX

It does seem a bit convenient to blame you.

DEXTER

We're on the same page.

Dexter looks at his old friend suspiciously.

DEXTER (cont'd)

You got anything?

MAX

Nothing. I've been warned off this.

DEXTER

Yet here you are.

Max thinks for a moment.

MAX

My life will be shit if I'm caught looking into this.

DEXTER

You'll still be eight years up on me.

Max is not impressed.

DEXTER (cont'd)

I can help you.

Max is curious to hear this.

DEXTER (cont'd)

You make moves in the Whitton case and they won't realise you're looking for Carl.

MAX

You know what case I'm on?

DEXTER

Sure. Geraldine Whitton, Awol copper, stroke junkie.

MAX

Is nothing sacred?

DEXTER

Not in your house.

Max raises an eyebrow. Ray returns to Dexter's side.

RAY

We're done.

DEXTER
 (to Max)
 I'll try to dig up Whitton.

MAX
 Fine. I'll keep on with Carl.

RAY
 He's fucking dying to find the kid.

Dexter looks at Max proudly.

DEXTER
 For once, Ray, I think you're right.

Dexter gets ready to leave.

MAX
 One thing.

Dexter hesitates.

MAX (cont'd)
 Those heroin packs? Is it you?

DEXTER
 I'm trying to find out who.

Max eyes him intensely.

DEXTER (cont'd)
 I want the boy back with his mother, Max. You owe me.

MAX
 I haven't forgotten.

DEXTER
 Find Carl and we'll forget.

A look between them.

DEXTER (cont'd)
 Give it a couple of days.
 Wednesday at one - I'll see you with my old man.
 (pause)
 And stay the fuck away from Melissa.

Dexter and Ray walk away from Max down the aisle of the church. Max watches on. The light in the church brightens...

FLASHBACK:

28 INT. DERELICT CHURCH - DAY 28

YOUNG MAX'S P.O.V. Twelve and full of mischief, Young Dexter looks over his shoulder and grins. He is being ushered out forcefully by a priest.

YOUNG MAX; cheeky and bright eyed, his size diminutive for twelve, sits on a pew. He is turned in his seat and watches Dexter being manhandled.

END FLASHBACK.

CUT TO:

29 INT. DERELICT CHURCH - CONTINUOUS 29

Max watches adult Dexter's silhouette exit.

DISSOLVE TO:

30 EXT. CITY-SCAPE - DAY 30

Twilight transitions to night. A SIREN in the distance.

31 INT. POLICE HQ (KERR'S OFFICE) - NIGHT 31

The overheard light seems concentrated on Max. His eye now stitched and Trent is in close proximity.

Kerr paces.

KERR

You didn't want the promotion, is that it? You were happy out there padding the beat.

MAX

That's nothing to do with it.

TRENT

Where did they take you?

MAX

I had a bag over my head.

TRENT

You striking up a little deal, huh?

MAX

Piss off.

TRENT

(right in Max's face)
The guy is selling drugs to primary schoolers. I get a whiff of you being in bed with him and I'll cut your throat.

Kerr separates them.

KERR
(to Trent)
Go stand outside.

Trent gladly does so. Kerr closes the door behind him, but Trent can still see them through the glass of the door.

MAX
Why is he on this? He's not even interested in the kid.

KERR
You don't know him.

Kerr looks at Trent.

KERR (cont'd)
You're not the only one who grew up on the South-side. And you're too young to remember what it was like before.

MAX
I remember.

KERR
Not the community - kids playing football in the streets and mothers free to stand around and gossip. It was a gradual change for most....but not for him.
(lowering his voice)
He was leaving for work one day and opened his door to find his fourteen-year-old sister on the doorstep. She'd been off her face and had made her way to his place instead of going home. He didn't hear her and by the morning she was frozen solid.

31A QUICK FLASH: A door opens from the inside and light cascades in. 31A

31 Max looks at Trent through the glass - A first flash of empathy for his colleague. 31

KERR (cont'd)
His motives are clear, Max. Are yours?

MAX
Dexter just grabbed me....

Kerr shakes his head.

KERR

Try not to disappoint me.

Max leaves. Trent stares at him as he does.

32

INT. MAX'S APARTMENT (LIVING AREA) - NIGHT

32

Lisa sits at the dimly lit kitchen table. She has a laptop open in front of her, the screen illuminates her face.

Max enters. He's tired and he grabs a beer from the fridge.

MAX

What you doing?

LISA

Nothing that would particularly interest you.

MAX

You okay?

LISA

Why wouldn't I be?

Max sits down in the seat next to her and starts to eat some left over pasta in the plate in front of him.

Lisa stops for a moment and rises. She sees his bruises.

LISA (cont'd)

What the hell happened?

MAX

It's work. I had a bit of a run in with Dexter Grant.

LISA

Jesus, Max.

MAX

Someone snatched his kid.

LISA

I saw the paper. You shouldn't mix with that guy.

MAX

Please. I've had this from Kerr.

She examines the wound.

Max grabs her and pulls her onto his knee.

She softens and takes the fork from him. She starts to feed him.

LISA
He beat you?

MAX
He just wants his kid back.

LISA
I'm not sure he deserves a kid.

Max looks at Lisa curiously - Sometimes he feels like he doesn't know her at all.

His attention is caught by some letters on the table. He spreads them and at the bottom of the pile....

An A4 size letter. The bold print on it reads: 'BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR ADOPTION AND FOSTERING'.

MAX
You should have said this arrived.

Max picks it up.

MAX (cont'd)
We can fill these out tonight.

LISA
It's late, Max. Let's do them in the morning?

MAX
But I'll be out the door early.

LISA
No. We're both off tomorrow.

Max takes a moment.

MAX
Off? I've got this case....

Lisa drops the fork in the plate and rises. Her demeanour has shifted.

LISA
I'm not sure you fully appreciate how difficult it is for me to take a day off. You better have a re-think.

Lisa goes back to her laptop and re-engages with her work.

Max turns and looks at a calender on the fridge.

INSERT: 'TUES 25th: HOUSE VIEWING, 11am'

He smarts and scratches his head - He's been an idiot.

He takes a long swig from his beer. Then he exits into....

33 INT. MAX'S APARTMENT (BATHROOM) - CONTINUOUS 33

The light comes on as Max enters. He looks closely at his face in the big mirror above the sink. He raises a hand up and tugs at one of the stitches above his eye.

33A FLASHBACK: 33A

Max's P.O.V. - A black bag is pulled over and a sickening THUMP. Very brief BLACK OUT....

Dexter stands over Max

DEXTER
Find Carl and we'll forget.

END FLASHBACK.

34 INT. MAX'S APARTMENT (BATHROOM) - NIGHT 34

Max looks in the mirror.

35 INT. MAX'S APARTMENT (LIVING AREA) - NIGHT 35

Lisa still works as Max re-enters.

MAX
I'm just going out for a bit.
(pause)
Lisa?

LISA
It's fine. I need to do this.

Max exits.

36 INT. 'ALL NIGHT NEEDS' - NIGHT 36

Max is mid-conversation with the Owner at the cash desk. He has a new pack of cigarettes in hand.

OWNER
....I dunno. It happened so fast.

MAX
Where?

OWNER
Just in the aisle there. By the wine. After he left, I helped her up and called you lot.

MAX
Mind if I look around?

OWNER
Help yourself.

Max walks over to the place where the incident happened.
He sees a wine stain on the floor.

He crouches at the stain.

After a moment the LIGHTS DIM.

FLASHBACK:

37 INT. A DIFFERENT FOOD MART (20 YEARS EARLIER) - NIGHT. 37

Max's P.O.V. - A shelf full of groceries.

SHOPKEEPER (O.C.)
You little fucking bastard.

Moving along the grocery aisle....

Twelve-year-old Max has two bottles of alcohol in his hands. He sets them down gently and peeks around the end of the aisle.

Young Max's P.O.V. - Young Dexter has been pinned violently to the floor by an angry SHOPKEEPER; a gun shoved into the back of his neck. His face is bleeding.

The shopkeeper rises and stamps on Dexter's hand; Dexter screams in agony.

The shopkeeper sets his gun on the counter, then takes out a set of hand-cuffs from a shelf underneath. He clips one on Dexter and drags him to a shelf fixture; he cuffs Dexter to the metal frame of then starts to kick him repeatedly.

Max watches on in the background.

SHOPKEEPER (cont'd)
How fucking proud your parents
must be.

The Shopkeeper is becoming more violent; he takes pleasure in the beating he administers.

Max moves from his vantage point behind the aisle and grabs the gun off the counter. He points it at the Shopkeeper.

The shopkeeper catches a glimpse of Max out of the corner of his eye and turns to face him.

YOUNG MAX
We didn't mean it.

The DOOR OPEN BUZZER sounds and Max comes to himself....

END FLASHBACK.

38 INT. 'ALL NIGHT NEEDS' - NIGHT

38

Max rises up in the aisle, he can see that a Hooded figure has entered 'All Night Needs'; it's the 'Hoody' that Melissa passed the previous night. His name is WARREN; An imposing presence for a 17 year-old - A born leader.

Warren gives Max a 'once over' and picks up a pack of beer.

Max suspiciously watches him as he returns to the cash desk, pays for the beer and leaves.

Max approaches the desk.

MAX

You get any hassle from him?

OWNER

He's got money. No trouble with him at all.

Max pulls the cellophane from his new pack of cigarettes. He nods to the owner and leaves.

39 EXT. 'ALL NIGHT NEEDS - CONTINUOUS

39

Max exits the store and opens his cigarettes. Sitting in his squad car with the window down is David; the uniformed officer from the crime-scene.

DAVID

If it isn't, Mr. Detective.

MAX

Just getting some cigarettes.

A playful nod from David.

Max offers David a cigarette but he declines. Max lights up his own - He savours the nicotine hit.

MAX (cont'd)

You down here the other night?

DAVID

What night was that?

MAX

Nothing from the eyes either, huh?

DAVID

Time to go home, Max. Your car wont sit out here much longer.

MAX

Strange that someone would snatch Dexter's kid.

DAVID
Word is, he did it himself.

MAX
You're with Trent's philosophy?

DAVID
Nah. Going with my own. I've
been on these streets a long
time.
(pause)
Get yourself out of here.

Max walks back to his car and climbs in.

The headlights of David's squad car dazzle him as it
leaves....

40 INT. SUBURBAN SHOW-HOUSE - DAY 40

Max shields his eyes from the bright sun that cascades in a
large window. He stares out at the garden.

Lisa is being shown around a beautiful living space by TOM;
a sales agent.

TOM
Of course the master bedroom is
en-suite and there are two other
ample bedrooms. This wonderful
living space is perfect for a
young family. A real wood-
burning stove....

Tom continues his speech as he strolls around.

Lisa crosses to Max and pulls him into the tour.

LISA
(whispering)
It's gorgeous.

Max tries to look enthusiastic.

TOM
....and then through the French
doors is this beautiful garden.

Tom swings open the doors like a courtier.

They all step into....

41 EXT. GARDEN - DAY 41

The sun beats down on them as they stand and admire the
lush grass and flowers.

MAX
 The garden is nice.
 (pause)
 Could you excuse us for a moment?

TOM
 Certainly.

Tom gives them a little space, but hovers nearby.

MAX
 We can't afford this.

LISA
 We can.
 (she smiles)
 A wood-burning stove.

Lisa's enthusiasm fails to rub off on Max.

MAX
 We could get a place in the
 country.

LISA
 The commute would be terrible and
 these places so rarely come up.

MAX
 I just think it's too much of a
 stretch.

LISA
 We'll manage. I'll make up the
 difference.

MAX
 No. We agreed fifty, fifty.

Max's MOBILE PHONE sounds. He CURSES under his breath then he answers. Lisa is exasperated.

MAX (cont'd)
 Max here....As soon as I can.

Lisa sinks. Max hangs up - His mind immediately elsewhere.

LISA
 Let's have another quick look
 around.

MAX
 I've got to go.

Lisa places a hand on Max's chest in a stop gesture....

LISA
 I wont be adopting while we're
 living in the south-side. You
 want a family, this has to happen
 first.

Tom tries to look nonchalant - Max knows he's listening.

MAX
 Can we discuss this later?

LISA
 It's just been discussed. You
 need to get your head in order.

Max has got the point - no question.

LISA (cont'd)
 You can go. I'm not finished
 looking around.

Max is glad to leave his public scolding. Tom rocks on his
 heels a little as Max passes him.

42 INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS (KERR'S OFFICE) - DAY 42

Lit only by his desk lamp, Kerr's office seems half of it's
 normal size.

Max despondently knocks and enters - Lisa's words still
 roll in his head.

KERR
 Shut the door.

Max does.

KERR (cont'd)
 Anything to report on Whitton?

MAX
 Nope.

A moment.

KERR
 Why have you been to Trent's
 crime scene?

Max puffs his cheeks. Kerr clocks his apathy.

KERR (cont'd)
 I made you a detective because
 you're a smart kid.

MAX
 I'm grateful.

KERR

Then stay smart for heaven's sake.

(pause)

What do you think your parents would say if I failed to steer you in the right direction?

MAX

(petulantly)

They're dead. You're not responsible for taking their place.

KERR

(angrily)

They were my friends. I've worked things out for you.

MAX

And where does all of that leave me? Trapped in your ample fucking shadow, right?

Kerr sucks in some air; he taps his desk, visibly dismayed.

He waves Max out of his office, but Max hesitates.

KERR

Get out.

Max gladly leaves.

DISSOLVE TO:

43

INT. BAR - DAY

43

A shady place with neon lights and a mirror behind the bar; there's a lack of a smoking ban in this joint.

Warren plays pool with his accomplice, DEV. Two of their friends sit in a booth opposite.

Dexter, Ray and Steve enter. Steve sits in a booth by the door and Dexter and Ray approach the pool table. Dexter acknowledges the barman with a nod.

Warren doesn't flinch and pots a difficult shot as Dexter and Ray stand over him.

DEXTER

You missed your pick up.

WARREN

My bad, Dex.

DEXTER

Where the fuck were you?

Warren pots a difficult black and then looks up at Dexter.

WARREN

Had to take my kid for ice cream.

Dev sniggers uncontrollably.

Dexter grabs the cue out of Warren's hand and wraps it around Dev's face.

Dev drops to the floor clutching his nose - blood pulses from behind his hand.

Ray pulls his gun out and points it at the two friends in the booth to deter their movements.

Dexter grabs Warren by the throat and pins him to the wall. He shoves the left-over, dagger-like stump of cue up under Warren's crotch.

Warren does his best to relieve his situation by going up on his tip-toes.

WARREN (cont'd)

Stay cool, Man.

DEXTER

You miss another meet with me you little prick and you won't be playing any more trick shots.

Dexter pushes the shard of cue further, it tears through Warren's 'trackies' and he squeals.

DEXTER (cont'd)

What you know about playground sales?

WARREN

Not me. I fucking swear it.

DEXTER

Then find out who. Otherwise I'll make you eat that fucking eight ball.

Dexter twists the cue and pulls it away from Warren's crotch.

Warren sinks down - overwhelming relief.

Dexter discards the cue. He helps to smooth out Warren's dishevelled top, then he pulls the hood up....

DEXTER (cont'd)

Something else....

Dexter pulls the draw-string on Warren's hoody and restricts his face....

DEXTER (cont'd)
I'm looking for someone.

DISSOLVE TO:

44 INT. POLICE HQ (MAX'S DESK) - NIGHT 44

Max works off his monitor. He types 'Geraldine Whitton'
'189 files match your search criteria'

MAX
Shit.

Max leaves his desk.

45 INT. RECORDS ROOM - NIGHT 45

Max approaches a desk in the basement.

JOE; A pithy uniform behind the desk, plays solitaire on his computer to pass the time.

MAX
Hey, Joe. Need to grab some things.

JOE
You're a big boy now. You need to learn how to use that expensive waste of equipment on your desk.

MAX
I.T. haven't set me up properly yet. I can't access everything.

Joe laughs.

JOE
Doesn't surprise me. They laid off another two last week. I'm glad I'm retiring soon.
(pause)
Sign here.

MAX
Maybe you can help me a bit.

Joe shrugs - Maybe he can.

MAX (cont'd)
Geraldine Whitton. Can you find me what she was working on?

JOE
I can find anything.

MAX
Last ten she worked?

Joe uses a wireless mouse and types on a keyboard.

MAX (cont'd)
How come you still got those?

JOE
Old man privileges.
(pause)
Here we are. Last ten she worked
or last ten she accessed?

MAX
(curious)
Both.

Joe clicks and then sighs.

MAX (cont'd)
What is it?

JOE
Some aren't electronic. Take me
a few minutes to find them. Want
me to forward the others to you?

MAX
Print them for me would you?

The printer starts up. Joe rises out of his seat.

MAX (cont'd)
While I'm here you got a file for
Carl Grant?

JOE
You want these other files or
what?

MAX
Course.

JOE
Then we'll just forget about that
one then, huh?

Max smirks. The printer starts spewing out paper.

46

INT. MAX'S APARTMENT - DAY

46

Max looks tired as he enters with a box of files and a
computer console. He sets them down.

Lisa is ready to leave for work. She takes one look at him and shakes her head.

She hands him her coffee.

LISA
Did you give some thought to the house?

He looks at her and nods.

MAX
You are right. We ought to move out of here.

She smiles.

LISA
Finally.

She kisses him enthusiastically and he manages a glimmer of a reassuring smile.

LISA (cont'd)
I'll get the ball rolling and we'll talk later.

MAX
For sure.

Delighted, she leaves.

Max exhales - a refocus of his energy. He sits down at the table. The apartment is dull and the blinds shut out the world. Max sips the coffee and manoeuvres the computer to where he wants it.

MONTAGE:

Max reads off a file on his monitor.

Screen page: 'Internal Investigation'. 'Geraldine Whitton'. 'Suspended for Heroin abuse'

Max picks up one of the printed files and reads it.

FILE PAGE: Mug-shot of a man - 'Suspected murder....'

Max lights a cigarette and pulls out another printed file.

FILE PAGE: 'Investigating Officer; Det. Geraldine Whitton'. Her signature is at the bottom of the page.

Words come off the pages of the files: 'Witness didn't get a clear view....', 'south side', 'Single Gun shot'....

Max puffs his cheeks.

He takes the first of the 'older' files out of the box; they are in card manila folders.

Max stares intently at the pages.

FILE PAGE: Photograph of child.

Max is mesmerised by the photo. His eyes flick back and forth.

He scrolls under certain words with a pen point....

FILE PAGE: 'Nicholas Arcane - Child abduction'. 'Mother's statement'. '....but then he was gone....my back was turned for two seconds.'

The pen point stops--

'Investigating officer; Det. Trent Daltry'. Trent's signature is at the bottom of the page.

Max ponders for a moment - Why was she looking into Trent's case?

The pen nib creates a blotch on the file beside Trent's signature.

END MONTAGE.

Max checks the clock on his computer screen.

It reads: '12.43'.

He gets ready to leave.

Geraldine's face is staring out of the computer monitor.

47

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

47

Max looks down at a gravestone: 'Harold Grant beloved husband and father'; the years blocked by the long grass.

DEXTER (O.C.)
Fifty-One ain't old.

Dexter joins Max. He drops some flowers on the grave.

MAX
He was the man.

DEXTER
'Til he got a bullet in the back
of his head.

MAX
You didn't have to take over.

Dexter eyes Max.

DEXTER
 What the fuck else was I gonna
 do?

Dexter looks at Max's bruises.

DEXTER (cont'd)
 Ray really hurt you. Doesn't
 know his own strength.

Max looks around himself and scans the graveyard.

DEXTER (cont'd)
 I found Whitton.

MAX
 Fuck off.

DEXTER
 Didn't take much, she gets her
 shit from one of my boys.

Max eyes Dexter - He's in awe of his old friend.

MAX
 Maybe you should be the
 detective.

DEXTER
 You'll find her at 55 Borde
 Street. I don't know which flat,
 but it's on the top floor. Be
 careful down there man, it's a
 fucking dive.

MAX
 I might need to sit on that for a
 while. How could I be that good?

Dexter laughs.

CUT TO:

48 ACROSS THE GRAVEYARD.

48

Trent with shot-gun and body armour takes up a position
 behind a tombstone. He signals to Jones and another
 policeman to stay where they are.

CUT TO:

49 MAX AND DEXTER.

49

DEXTER
 You found anything on my boy?

MAX
 I'm trying.

DEXTER
I'm starting to look weak, Max.

MAX
Carl's file is restricted.

DEXTER
He's gone isn't he?

Max is surprised - A rare show of defeat from Dexter.

MAX
Don't give up.

They look at each other.

MAX (cont'd)
You should go to Melissa.

DEXTER
She doesn't want me around.

Dexter eyes Max - Not since they were kids has he felt such a moment of affinity with him.

DEXTER (cont'd)
I fucked you over with her, huh?

A moment.

Dexter's softness evaporates; he has spotted something - Someone's arm protrudes slightly from behind a tombstone.

Max is puzzled by Dexter.

Dexter turns to Max, and slips a handgun from the back of his trousers.

DEXTER (cont'd)
Don't even fucking sway, Max.

Dexter slowly edges away.

Jones peeks around a tombstone. Dexter squeezes off a ROUND and it CRACKS off the stone; Jones dives for cover.

Dexter spins around and bolts. A policeman advances on him from the opposite direction, gun pointed.

Dexter FIRES off two rounds and hits the policeman in the leg - He crumples in agony.

Chaos as SHOTS ring out from policemen who hide in many places around the graveyard. Dexter flees, dodging both bullets and tombstones.

Max regains himself and chases Dexter; bullets WHIZZ by.

Trent pursues with his shotgun.

Dexter continues to run. He leaps the graveyard wall.

A car appears which Steve drives. Dexter jumps in.

TYRES SCREECH as they drive off.

More TYRES SQUEAL as a police car gives pursuit.

Max runs to help the shot policeman, it is David. He squats down to try and help. Blood pumps from David's leg.

MAX

Try not to move.

David winces as Max applies pressure to his wound.

DAVID

Think I'll get that desk now?

MAX

It's a definite.

Max looks up and sees that a few police have now emerged from their shelter.

MAX (cont'd)

Get a paramedic!

An officer acknowledges him.

MAX (cont'd)

I need your car.

David nods.

50 INT. CAR - DAY.

50

Max drives through the streets. He listens to the police radio....

RADIO (V.O.)

All units to Hope Primary School.

Max puts his foot down.

51 EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

51

Max gets out of the car. Jones is already there.

A section of the school wall and railing has been smashed through. There are two crashed cars nestled on the side of the school. Smoke rising from the engine blocks.

MAX

What's the update?

JONES

We've got Trent in a two car
smash with the suspects. I saw
Dexter enter the school.

Max starts towards the crashed cars.

JONES (cont'd)

Orders are to wait for A.R.U.

Max ignores him and approaches the two car wrecks.

In Dexter's car, Steve is dead at the wheel. A large piece
of railing has speared him through the throat.

Dexter is missing.

Max looks in Trent's car. Trent is slightly stunned in his
seat and dizzily tries to get his door open. It won't
open; it has been mashed against the building.

He and Max look at each other and Trent tries more
furiously to get his door open.

52 INT. SCHOOL (CORRIDOR) - DAY 52

SCREAMS fill the corridor as Max runs.

A group of kids are being ushered in the other direction by
a TEACHER who points out to Max where he needs to be.

53 INT. SCHOOL (CLASSROOM) - DAY 53

Dexter is bloodied from the crash and he has his back to
the wall. He holds a CHILD into his body; his arm across
the boy's chest.

A young teacher, ASHLEY is frantic. She pleads with
Dexter.

ASHLEY

Please don't.

DEXTER

What's your name?

ASHLEY

Let him go!

DEXTER

Stay calm. What is your name?

She takes a little reassurance from Dexter's eyes.

ASHLEY

It's Ashley.

DEXTER

Okay, Ashley. I won't hurt
either of you.

54 INT. SCHOOL (CORRIDOR) - CONTINUOUS 54

Max peeks through a large glass panel which looks into the classroom from the corridor. He sees Dexter with the child in his grasp.

Max enters the classroom; ruffled and out of breath....

55 INT. SCHOOL (CLASSROOM) - CONTINUOUS 55

Dexter points his gun at Max.

MAX

I've no idea how they got there.

A long look from Dexter before he lowers his gun.

DEXTER

Okay. Chill out.

Max breathes; giving himself time to wind down.

DEXTER (cont'd)

Bit of a sticky situ' we're in.

MAX

I have to take you in. Otherwise
we're both fucked.

Dexter looks down at the petrified kid.

MAX (cont'd)

Come on, Dex. You're not taking
no hostage.

DEXTER

I'll take the fall again, yeah?

Dexter looks up and smiles at Max.

DEXTER (cont'd)

They'll call it love.

Max grins.

Dexter starts to release the kid.

Max carefully takes his cuffs out.

Ashley watches on, hardly able to breathe.

Max sees Trent out of the corner of his eye through the glass panel at the door.

Dexter sees him too and flinches with his gun--

MAX

No!

Trent's gun RINGS out.

The bullet passes cleanly through the glass and hits Dexter in the chest.

The kid runs to Ashley. She shields him on the floor.

Dexter staggers back into the wall.

Max is astonished.

Trent's gun arm drops, he looks at Max briefly then turns his back and walks away.

Max turns back to Dexter, just in time to catch him as he crumples. They collapse on the floor together.

Dexter gasps for a breath - His eyes wait for Max's.

Max looks at him, their eyes connect for a brief moment.

Dexter's mouth fills up with blood and he expires - His mind finally free from torment.

Max pulls him close; a long devastated embrace.

AUDIO FADE:

The sound of a CAR driving....

DISSOLVE TO:

56 INT. MAX'S CAR - NIGHT 56

A mournful Max drives through the streets. He stares blankly at the road in front of him.

FLASHBACK:

57 INT. A DIFFERENT FOOD MART (20 YEARS EARLIER) - NIGHT. 57

Max moves from his vantage point behind the aisle and grabs the gun off the counter. He points it at the Shopkeeper.

The shopkeeper catches a glimpse of Max out of the corner of his eye and turns to face him.

YOUNG MAX

We didn't mean it.

The shopkeeper smiles at Max and moves towards him.

BANG - The gun is fired.

Young Max is startled as he sees the shopkeeper's expression change.

The shopkeeper falls backwards and lands on the floor beside Young Dexter. He gasps for a breath and clutches his lower ribs as blood seeps between his fingers.

Young Dexter quickly extends himself as far as the handcuffs will allow and starts to search the pockets of the dying shopkeeper.

A DISTANT SIREN APPROACHES.

Dexter looks up....

YOUNG DEXTER

Max!

Young Max is frozen to the spot, the gun now drooped in his hands towards the floor. He stares at the blood that oozes from under the shopkeepers hand.

YOUNG DEXTER (cont'd)

Max. You've got to run.

END FLASHBACK.

58 INT. MAX'S CAR - DAY 58

Max has stopped. He looks up at Melissa's flat.

59 INT. MELISSA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 59

Melissa's apartment is dim and moody. She sits on the sofa in pants and a vest. There are a couple of empty beer bottles on the table and some pills.

The TV is on, but it is muted. The pictures on screen show Hope Primary School and the police activity there. Kerr is being interviewed.

The BUZZER sounds.

Melissa sits for a moment and ponders. She then gets up quickly and crosses to the intercom.

MELISSA

Max?

MAX (INTERCOM)

Yeah.

She buzzes him in.

She undoes the chain and peers out as Max approaches.

Max enters and Melissa grabs and hugs him; a lingering hug.

Max looks over her shoulder at the room behind her. He sees the muted news story on television.

MAX (cont'd)

You know.

Melissa brings her hands up and clasps his face. A tear rolls down her cheek.

MELISSA

I didn't love him.

She ushers him away from the door and closes it. She then leads him over and sits on the sofa. Patting the seat next to her for Max to sit.

He does.

MAX

Getting Carl back is slim with
Dex gone--

Melissa puts her hand to his mouth - She has heard enough.

She then reaches over, picks up a half bottle of beer and puts one of the pills from the table in her mouth. She kisses Max and passes the pill to him.

She hands him the beer. He swigs it to wash the pill down.

MAX (cont'd)

What is it?

MELISSA

It'll make you feel better.

Max looks at her breasts; her shape is conspicuous in her underwear.

She puts her hand on his knee.

MELISSA (cont'd)

We haven't changed so much, have
we?

He looks down between her legs. Then back to her face.

MAX

I need to go.

His initial movement is immediately curtailed as she puts a hand on his forearm and holds it.

MELISSA

And do what?

MAX

I've made a mess of things.

Melissa puts a hand to his face.

MELISSA

You have to find Carl for me.
For Dexter.

Max grabs her and kisses her forcefully. Pushing her back on the sofa. She doesn't resist. Max pushes his hand up under her vest and grabs at her.

QUICK FLASHBACK: Dexter looks at Max as he expires.

Max stops kissing Melissa.

He climbs off her and stands up. She's confused.

Max looks down at Melissa. Her vest has ridden up enough to reveal her navel and belly, her legs are still apart.

Max shuts his eyes.

59A A JUMBLED DRUG INDUCED MONTAGE OF DISSOLVING FLASHBACK & 59A
FLASHFORWARD:

Silhouetted by the sun, a figure appears in a doorway.

FILE PAGE: 'Investigating Officer, Geraldine Whitton'

Max's eyes flick from side to side as he reads files.

P.O.V. Lisa stands in the garden of the suburban home.

A photo of a child.

P.O.V. Melissa writhes as she has sex.

FILE PAGE: 'Child abduction'.

FILE PAGE: 'Mother's statement....but then he was gone.'

Max watches the shopkeeper gasp for a breath and clutch his lower ribs as blood seeps between his fingers.

Dexter dies in Max's arms.

Max ponders over a file for a moment.

Max and Melissa in a heated moment on the sofa.

A SCRAP OF PAPER as '55 Borde Street' is written down.

Trent's gun RINGS out - The bullet passes cleanly through the glass and hits Dexter in the chest.

Trent adjusts Max's tie to straighten it.

TRENT (V.O.)
 But remember that's my gig.
 Straight to me if you catch even
 a sniff of where she is.

A pen stops at 'Investigating officer; Det. Trent Daltry'.
 Trent's signature is at the bottom of the page. The pen
 nib creates a blotch on the file beside Trent's signature.

END MONTAGE.

60

INT. MAX'S APARTMENT - DAY

60

Max looks intensely at Trent's signature. His ashtray is
 full and there are a few empty beer bottles.

His eyes are sunken.

INSERT BIG CLOSE-UP ON FILE: '....but he was gone.'

Max dips into his for another one of the old files, he
 opens it quickly scanning down to the signature....

FILE PAGE: 'Investigating Officer; Trent Daltry'

JUMP CUT TO:

FILE PAGE: Trent's Signature.

JUMP CUT TO:

Another file opens....

FILE PAGE: Trent's Signature.

JUMP CUT TO:

Max has noticed something amiss with a file. The page
 numbers are not consecutive. Max looks closely at the hole
 punch clip and pulls a small shard of paper from the clip -
 A page has been torn out.

Lisa enters the apartment....

LISA
 Oh, you're here.

MAX
 (still engrossed)
 I've got something. Whitton was
 looking back at some of Trent's
 old cases.

LISA
 (completely lost)
 Okay....

Max looks at her, visibly upset....

LISA (cont'd)
 Whatever is going on with you,
 Max. It has to stop.

MAX
 (gesticulating to the
 files)
 I can't stop. Dexter was killed.

Lisa takes a breath.

LISA
 Better him than you.

Max puts his head in his hand.

Lisa moves closer to him and crouches beside him.

LISA (cont'd)
 You're too involved in this thing
 because it's a kid.

Max deflects with a frown.

LISA (cont'd)
 We live in this shit-hole and you
 drive yourself into the ground.
 You're always punishing yourself.

Max studies her face a moment - She'll never understand.

MAX
 I owe this to Dexter.

LISA
 You owe him nothing. He made his
 money pumping drugs into this
 city.

The BUZZER sounds.

Max stands and steps away from her.

MAX
 The baby is innocent.

Lisa is stumped.

The BUZZER goes again.

Max crosses to the video-com. JONES appears on the small
 screen.

JONES (COM SCREEN)
 You have to come with me.

Max turns to Lisa.

LISA
What do they want?

Max picks up his jacket.

MAX
They're gonna give me a medal.

61 EXT. STREET - NIGHT 61

Max exits his building to meet Jones. Across the street he sees Trent leaning on the squad car.

Max stops. Trent smiles and gives Max a wee wave.

MAX
What's he doing here?

JONES
C'mon. Don't be childish.

Max continues towards the car. Trent opens the door....

TRENT
Step into my office, Lappy.

Max seethes as he gets in.

62 INT. POLICE HQ (VIEWING AREA) - NIGHT 62

Through a one way mirror Kerr and Trent observe Max at an interview desk.

In front of Max is WENDY, a suited officer.

An interview is in progress. An audio wave appears on a sound device--

63 INT. POLICE HQ (INTERVIEW ROOM) - CONTINUOUS 63

Max turns to look at the mirror; he sees only himself.

DEXTER (AUDIO)
Fifty-one ain't old.

MAX (AUDIO)
He was the man.

DEXTER (AUDIO)
'Til he got a bullet in the back of his head.

MAX (AUDIO)
You didn't have to take over.

DEXTER (AUDIO)
What the fuck else was I gonna do?.....

The conversation from the graveyard rolls on....

WENDY
Sounds cosy doesn't it?

DEXTER (AUDIO)
I found Whitton.

MAX
Okay. Stop this shit.

Wendy signals to stop the playback.

MAX (cont'd)
I wanted to find the kid.
(pause)
He also....I used him to find
Whitton.

WENDY
What information were you giving
him?

MAX
Nothing. None.

WENDY
You told him which case you were
on and we have you admitting that
you intended to sit on
information regarding Whitton.

MAX
I'm not saying any more.

WENDY
Well then guess what? We're
starting a little investigation
of our own. You're suspended.
(pause)
Identification and fire arm.

MAX
(grinding his teeth)
Take pride in your job do you?

Wendy looks on impassively.

Max takes out his ID. He drops it on the table.

MAX (cont'd)
My gun has never left my desk.

WENDY
You do have some funny methods.

Max stands up and leaves.

64 INT. POLICE HQ (KERR'S OFFICE) - NIGHT

64

Kerr's face is stormy.

MAX
Trent has used me.

KERR
You've screwed yourself, Max.

MAX
Your foreman's got away from you.

KERR
You're the one that's getting
away from me. Everything Trent
is, is down to me and he'll wrap
up Dexter and Whitton today
thanks to your exploits.

MAX
Whitton?

KERR
He'll be chasing up your intel as
soon as he's done carving you up
next door.

Max bolts out of Kerr's office.

KERR (cont'd)
Where the hell are you going?
Max get back here!

Kerr reaches for his phone.

Max runs down the corridor and out of the building.

65 INT/EXT. MAX'S CAR - NIGHT

65

Max drives through the streets - Dexter was right, this
place is a dive. He slows to look up at a street sign....

'BORDE STREET'

Max continues and parks outside 'Number 55'.

He checks out the building, it is dilapidated, dank and
uninviting.

He quietly slips around the back and enters through a door
that is practically off its hinges....

66 INT. FLATS - CONTINUOUS

66

Max takes the stairs, the building is quiet with the
exception of the faint noise of a BABY CRYING.

Max reverts to his training and visually covers all corners before moving on.

He gets to the top floor.

He sees a light from under a door and he crosses to it and gently TAPS.

Nervously he waits.

The door gently clicks open on its chain. A young woman stares back at him.

MAX
(whispering)
Geraldine Whitton?

The woman holds up three fingers and points down the hall.

Max exhales.

He moves warily down the hall until he reaches door '3'.

Max presses his ear up against it. He can hear a muffled TELEVISION.

He KNOCKS. No answer.

He tries the door. It's open.

Max peers into the blackness as he enters the hall.

The TELEVISION is now louder. Max hones in on its source and enters the living room. In the light of the TV he can see the back of someone's head protruding above the top of a chair in front of him. He gropes for the light switch.

MAX (cont'd)
Geraldine! Don't move!

His finger connects with the switch....

LIGHTS ON.

Max gasps at the sight before him.

Geraldine is dead; a large piece of the back of her skull is missing. Fresh blood runs from the unnatural orifice.

As Max swings around to her front, he can see that she has been shot through the eye. He puts his sleeve to his mouth.

A needle still sticks in her arm and a belt hangs loose.

Max grabs a hand towel from the kitchenette. He doesn't cast his eyes on Geraldine again.

He looks across at a desk in the corner, a drawer in the desk lies open and its contents are disturbed; some paper work lies scattered.

As he leaves the room, he wipes his fingerprints from the light switch and the door handle.

He exits the way he came in, still with the towel in hand.

67 EXT. 'BORDE STREET' - NIGHT 67

Max hurries across to his car and gets in....

68 INT. MAX'S CAR - CONTINUOUS 68

Max drops the hand towel and starts the engine.

He pauses - Something doesn't feel quite right.

A gun is pressed into the back of his neck. rosary beads are wrapped around the gun hand.

Max freezes.

TRENT (O.C.)
Switch it off.

Trent is in the back seat behind him.

TRENT (cont'd)
Don't turn around.

Trent reaches forward and pats Max to check for a gun.

MAX
Did you get what you needed?

TRENT
And much more.

Trent drops a gun with a fixed silencer in the front seat.

TRENT (cont'd)
Not in your desk as advertised.

Max looks at the gun and frowns.

MAX
I know what it was.

Trent is amused.

TRENT
Save your juice. You'll be going through the wringer shortly.

MAX
A missing file page.

Trent's demeanour quickly changes; He thinks for a moment.
 DISTANT SIRENS are heard approaching.

MAX (cont'd)
 What was in the file, Trent?

Trent has come to a new decision. He cocks his gun and raises it towards the back of Max's head....

WHAM.

Trent is clattered as Max pulls the seat release lever and the driver seat crunches back into him.

BLAST. Trent's gun goes off, the shot passes out through the windscreen.

Max opens the door and rolls out of the car.

Trent's legs are pinned in a tight position, he wriggles, and can see Max running away.

Trent lets off another SHOT through the side window. The window obliterates and glass blows back into his face.

He is momentarily stunned. He wrestles the door open and falls out into the street.

He fires another SHOT at Max who disappears into the shadows.

Trent rolls over onto his back, his knee is bloodied and the left side of his face is prickled with glass cuts. He doesn't even attempt to give chase.

TRENT
 Astounding.

Trent is illuminated with the red and blue lights of arriving police cars. He doesn't even bother to get up.

69 INT. ARCHITECT OFFICE - NIGHT

69

An expensively furnished area in a minimal open-plan style.

Lisa's space is the only illuminated area. She works on building plans with her interactive design software.

She looks at her watch.

70 INT/EXT. UNDERGROUND CAR PARK - NIGHT

70

Lisa enters the carpark; a small overhead, oval security 'eye' turns with her. Her heels ECHO on the floor. She gets in her car.

She drives out to the barricade and presses a finger against a glass sensor. The bollard opens. She drives up the ramp and out of the building....

A CLATTER on the passenger side window.

Lisa jumps as Max peers in the window at her.

LISA
Christ, Max!

She unlocks the door for him. He climbs in....

LISA (cont'd)
You scared the shit out of me.

MAX
Drive.

She's puzzled, but she does.

Lisa looks at him briefly as she drives.

LISA
Come out with it.

MAX
I need you to do something.
(pause)
Can you get me one of the files I was working on at home.

LISA
Why can't you get it?

The car enters the tunnel under the river.

MAX
I'm in trouble. Trent's framing me.

LISA
What? Talk to Kerr - right away.

MAX
I'll get to Kerr, but I've got to get that file.

LISA
What is he framing you for?

They look at each other - Only the truth will do.

MAX
Murder and criminal conspiracy.
That's if he doesn't kill me first.

Lisa gasps - A squeamish feeling rises in her throat.

MAX (cont'd)
I've been suspended, but none of
it is true.

Lisa drives out of the tunnel and she pulls over at the side of the road. She closes her eyes to let it sink in.

The 'WELCOME TO THE BELLY' graffiti can be partially seen behind Max.

After a moment, Lisa opens her eyes and stares out of the windscreen. He moves to take her hand. She retracts it quickly....

MAX (cont'd)
I didn't do it, Lisa.

Lisa turns to Max - Her damp serious eyes are terrified, but there is a softness in them.

MAX (cont'd)
The file I need is a child
abduction case - it is missing
page seven. Trent will be coming
for all of the files, but you
mustn't let him take that one.

Lisa nods.

MAX (cont'd)
Bring it to your sister's house
on Saturday night. And make sure
you're not followed.

LISA
(musters)
What are you going to do?

MAX
Some freelance detective work I
guess.

Lisa picks up her hand bag and rummages through it.

She retrieves some cash and gives it to Max.

LISA
What will I tell them?

MAX
Just act normal
(pause)
Try not to worry.

Max opens the door.

LISA

Max....

He stops and kisses her.

MAX

I will, baby.

Max disappears into the shadows. Lisa is left alone.

DISSOLVE TO:

DREAM SEQUENCE:

71 INT. WHITTON'S FLAT - NIGHT. 71

Whitton sits in her chair, needle hanging from her arm.

Her eye twitches under it's lid and then flicks open.

CUT TO BLACK:

A SUPPRESSED GUN-SHOT.

END DREAM SEQUENCE.

72 INT. CONFESSION BOOTH (DERELICT CHURCH) - DAY 72

Max wakes up with a start....

He has been sleeping in the confession booth.

A CLATTER nearby....

73 INT. DERELICT CHURCH - CONTINUOUS 73

Early morning sun filters through broken stained glass windows and shines down on the old confession booth.

Max peeks out and sees Ray in the main hall of the church. Ray packs up guns at the altar.

Max exits the booth and hides behind one of the pews. Ray hears him and spins around bolt upright, gun at the ready.

Max shuffles closer to Ray but still out of his sight.

RAY

Fuckin' out where I can see you!

Max peeks out to see Ray still with gun pointed.

MAX

Ray. It's Max.

Ray, begins to shift and look down the aisles of pews one at a time.

Max realises what Ray is doing and moves.

Ray fires a couple of SHOTS at him and Max dives to the floor as a few splinters.

The shots ECHO.

MAX (cont'd)

Hold it!

Ray strides over to Max and points his gun at him.

Max tries to roll over but Ray boots him in the stomach.

MAX (cont'd)

(gasping)

Jesus!

RAY

Fuck do you want?!

Ray tries to kick him again. Max grabs his foot....

MAX

I need help.

A comedy struggle as Max refuses to let Ray's foot go. Ray finally kneels down and straddles Max; he pushes his gun under Max's chin.

RAY

This is nice.

MAX

Trent is fucking me over.

Ray's intrigued.

MAX (cont'd)

I've been suspended.

RAY

You're still a pig.

MAX

C'mon, Ray. Help me find the kid.

Ray considers it for a moment; and finally gets up.

Max carefully gets to his feet and catches his breath.

RAY

What do you need?

MAX

I thought I might need a gun.

Ray grins. He leads Max over to the altar.

He opens the case he was loading. Inside is an assortment of assault rifles and fully automatic machine guns.

Max looks inside.

RAY
Take your pick.

MAX
Don't you have something a little
more subtle?

Ray looks disappointed. He offers Max the massive chrome hand-gun in his hand. Max smirks - He might regret this little alliance.

74 INT. SUBURBAN BATHROOM - DAY

74

Trent puts a fresh bandage on his knee.

Trent's wife DOROTHY enters; still in her morning gown.

DOROTHY
How is it?

TRENT
It's much better. I'll need some
new trousers.

Trent finishes up and pulls up his trousers.

Dorothy tenderly touches his face and lightly kisses the scar spattered side of Trent's face.

DOROTHY
Be more careful.

He kisses her forehead.

Trent walks through to the....

75 INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

75

Dorothy follows him in. His two kids - RACHEL; fourteen and JAMIE; a few years younger, are dressed for school and are at breakfast.

Trent puts his jacket on and grabs a mouthful of coffee.

RACHEL
I need some money for a thing
tonight--

TRENT
Nope.

RACHEL

What?

Trent makes a joint smoking gesture at her.

RACHEL (cont'd)

Mum.

TRENT

You've still got a few more days
on the leash.

RACHEL

That's horse-shit.

Rachel moves to leave the room. Trent grabs her arm.

She tries to tug herself free but is futile against Trent's strength. Angered to tears, she kicks him.

RACHEL (cont'd)

Get off me.

She tries to slap him but he blocks it. He pulls her in and hugs her tight. She wriggles but Trent refuses to let go. She stops struggling. He kisses the top of her head and lets her go.

She struts out of the room.

RACHEL (cont'd)

Prick.

Trent crosses and puts his hand on the top of Jamie's head.

TRENT

Fight the hormones for a bit,
will you?

Trent makes him nod and Jamie laughs.

Trent turns and kisses Dorothy.

TRENT (cont'd)

Good luck.

He moves towards the door.

76

INT/EXT. RAY'S CAR - DAY

76

Max and Ray sit and watch a small suburban house.

The house is much like the others around it with a nice garden and driveway. There is a netball hoop over the garage door.

Trent emerges from back door and crosses to his car.

Ray yawns.

RAY
This really is what you guys do?

Max looks at him.

RAY (cont'd)
Sit in a fucking car and spy on folk.

MAX
Or sit at a desk.

RAY
Shit. I'm glad I'm a crook.

Trent's car leaves and Ray starts the engine.

77 INT. DETECTIVES OFFICE - DAY 77

Trent arrives at his desk. No other detectives are present. He looks at Max's desk, then he fires up his computer and sits.

78 INT. RAY'S CAR - DAY 78

Max and Ray are parked opposite police headquarters. The outside of the building is a shabby 1960s monolith.

Ray looks a bit nervous.

MAX
So where's the action now
Dexter's gone?

RAY
I ain't gonna tell you.

MAX
Fair enough. Ever thought about
going straight?

Ray raises an eyebrow.

RAY
Dex told me you was close when
you were kids. Otherwise you're
already fucking dead.

MAX
We made a little money stealing
timber when we were young.

RAY
No shit?

MAX

Dexter was scared of my Pop. Me and him used to go down and steal the wood from the docks when my old man worked the saw-mill down there. He used to say to us that if he ever caught those responsible for the missing stuff, he would hang them up by their Buster Browns. Dex used to shit himself. Pop was a big fella and he had these massive arms from lifting batons of wood all day.

RAY

What happened to you?

MAX

I take after my mammy I guess.

(pause)

Yep, I think my Pop was the only guy Dexter was ever afraid of.

RAY

I never saw him flinch. Shot a guy when he was just a kid for fuck sake.

Max's smile fades. He looks blankly out of the window.

MAX

He stole some cigarettes and the guy beat the hell out of him.

RAY

You were there?

MAX

He built his rep on that story.

RAY

Guy must've deserved it. Dex coulda buried me back in the day. Fuckin' took me on instead.

MAX

Had his ways.

Ray nods appreciatively.

79

INT. DETECTIVES OFFICE - DAY

79

A MAIL-BOY drops a large brown envelope into Trent's tray and moves on.

Trent picks it up. He looks around to check he is alone, then he removes a folded piece of paper from his pocket; He slides it into the envelope.

He rises and heads out, envelope in hand.

80 INT. KERR'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 80

Kerr sits at his desk. He types with one hand at his computer. His chin rests in his other hand.

He sees Trent in the corridor through his door. He shifts to get a better view and sees the envelope in Trent's hand.

81 INT. RAY'S CAR - DAY 81

MAX

Did Dexter find out anything about the heroin packs?

Ray looks at Max.

RAY

Go fuck yourself.

Ray looks a little put out and looks out of the window.

RAY (cont'd)

Head's up.

Max turns and sees Trent leaving the building.

Ray starts the engine.

82 INT/EXT. CAR & RIVER DOCKS - DAY 82

The tyre of Ray's car creeps over the ground and crunches to a halt on the head of a discarded, old teddy-bear.

Max and Ray watch from a distance as Trent walks along the front of a Quay. There is a mess of boats and yachts.

Max sees the envelope in his hand. Trent is met by an ELDERLY MAN and they head up the jetty, board a yacht and disappear out of sight.

RAY

What's he doing?

MAX

Dunno.

RAY

Well he best hurry up. I'm fucking starving here.

Max reaches in his pocket and pulls out a chocolate bar. He holds it out to Ray.

RAY (cont'd)
Oh ya fucker.

He tries to take it, but Max pulls it away.

RAY (cont'd)
I'll break your fucking arm.

Max smirks.

MAX
Heroin Packs?

Ray curiously eyes him.

MAX (cont'd)
He's dead. What difference will
it make?

RAY
Someone was ripping off the stuff
from his stash.

MAX
Any ideas?

Ray shakes his head, then snatches the chocolate bar.

Ray rips the wrapper open and demolishes half in one go.

MAX (cont'd)
Jesus.
(pause)
What about the kid?

RAY
(with mouth full)
No clue. Could have been another
gang, but no-one turned out to
ask for fuck all.

Trent now returns along the jetty towards his car.

RAY (cont'd)
What now?

Max considers his next move.

DISSOLVE TO:

83 INT. YACHT (KITCHENETTE) - NIGHT

83

A traditional steam kettle WHISTLES on the gas. The interior of the yacht is well-used and lived in.

The man who was just seen with Trent, drops a tea-bag into a cup. CRAVEN is pushing seventy and is a bit unsteady;

dressed down in a cardigan and slippers, he has a ban-the-bomb ear stud - a remnant of a conscientious past.

Craven turns the gas off. He hears a quiet THUD from the next room as the kettle WHISTLE dies away.

He stops momentarily to listen; something CREAKS.

A moment of thought....

Craven reaches for a tea-pot. He lifts the tea-bag out of his cup and pops it in the pot instead. He then adds another from a caddy, and proceeds to pour the boiling water in.

84 INT. YACHT (LIVING SPACE) - NIGHT

84

Craven emerges from the kitchenette slowly; momentarily backlit until he switches the light off. He carries the tea-tray in front of him into his work-space which, lit by his desk-lamp, is furnished with a work-desk, computer hardware and various types of printing paraphernalia.

CRAVEN

I made tea.

Craven sets the tray on his desk over the manila envelope.

Max and Ray step in from the outer deck.

Ray props himself against a side-unit to Craven's left and Max stands opposite him at the other side of his desk.

CRAVEN (cont'd)

May I sit? The legs are not what they were.

Max nods.

Craven sits and claps his hands, then rubs them together in a 'ready for business' manner.

CRAVEN (cont'd)

What can I do for you, gentlemen?

MAX

You spoke to Trent Daltry earlier.

Craven takes his time. He clocks Ray eyeing up the small plate of biscuits on the tea-tray. He picks up the tea-pot and swirls it.

CRAVEN

Help yourself.

(to Max)

Forgive me. I like mine weak.

He proceeds to pour his tea. Ray steps in and takes two biscuits off of the plate with his left hand. Then he steps back and places them on his right side atop the side-board he stands at.

MAX

My guess is you are fixing up
some paper work for him.

Craven turns to Ray and offers him a little smile.

CRAVEN

He talks like police....

Craven pours tea into two cups and sets the tea-pot down.

CRAVEN (cont'd)

....but I'm at a loss with you.

RAY

I like milk and two sugars.

Craven enjoys Ray's response. He spoons the sugar in....

CRAVEN

(to Max)

What's the cut?

....then adds milk.

MAX

You misunderstand me. I'm not
buying your info.

Craven hands the cup to Ray. He takes it in his left hand.

CRAVEN

Come now. This isn't how this
goes at all.

Ray settles back to his perch at the side, with his tea in hand. He takes a sip and looks down to the two biscuits he set by his side.

MAX

You're willing to sell it out?

CRAVEN

We all sell out, Son. Life
becomes impossible otherwise.

Ray picks up a biscuit with his right hand and puts it to his mouth.

THIS IS CRAVEN'S MOMENT....

Craven's right hand swings towards Ray, gun pointed.

Two LOUD SHOTS - almost simultaneously....

A picture by Ray's head smashes and Craven falls backwards out of his chair; his chest punctured.

Max practically jumps out of his skin; he staggers back and falls on the floor away from both of them.

Ray stands with his smouldering gun; biscuit still protruding from his mouth.

The picture by Ray's head slips and smashes on the floor. Ray takes in and crunches up the biscuit in his mouth.

MAX
Fucking Christ!

Max scrambles to his feet. He darts around the desk in time to see Craven's shocked expression soften and his punctured heart give out; gun still in his hand.

Max rubs his forehead ruefully. He looks up at Ray who has now slouched on the side-board.

Max quickly starts to rummage around Craven's work area and in the desk drawers.

Ray drinks what's left of the tea he didn't spill.

MAX (cont'd)
Are you drinking tea!?

RAY
It's calming! Fucking Popeye here just about took my head off.

Max shakes his head and continues to rummage.

RAY (cont'd)
Under the tray.

Max looks at Ray briefly. He pushes the tea-tray out of the way. The envelope is revealed and he grabs it.

There are a few sheets of paper inside.

Max eye's the first tattered page, it is page number 7; the missing file page. He scans down and there is a small pen mark next to the name in the report.

Max is perplexed.

RAY (cont'd)
What is it?

Max flicks curiously through the rest of the pages.

Craven lies dead on the floor.

85 INT/EXT. RAY'S CAR - DAY 85

The sun rises over the car; Ray sleeps in his seat.

Max stares at the photograph he has of Carl.

His eyes move from the picture and stare at the pages from the envelope....

INSERT PAPER:

'Surname: Rankin. Name(s): Jacob Peter.'

'Mother's Name(s): Louise Rankin.'

'Mother's usual residence: 62 Park View'

Ray wakes up and begins to remember where he is.

MAX

You know where Park View is?

Ray shakes his head.

MAX (cont'd)

Head under the river and into the suburbs.

Ray starts the car.

86 EXT. STREET/CAR - DAY 86

As Ray's car enters the arch of a suburban community, the overhead 'eye' takes a snapshot of the number-plate.

Max looks up at the cameras as they pass through.

MAX

That's us clocked. We'll only have fifteen minutes or so.

CUT TO:

87 EXT. GRASS PARK - DAY 87

The sun now shines brightly overhead.

Max and Ray look across the park. Many kids play happily. There are mothers gathered together in sociable groups.

Ray's black surplus trousers and tats are out of place in the park. A MAN who kicks a ball with his child has 'clocked' him.

Max checks his watch and starts to walk across the open grassy area of the park. Ray follows....

RAY
No bull-shit for these kids, man.

Max looks at the kids in the park. They are smiling and having a great time. He also takes in the tranquil trees around them, the sun glinting through them.

MAX
My wife wants a house around here.

Max points off....

MAX (cont'd)
Just over there somewhere.

RAY
She pretty?

Max nods.

RAY (cont'd)
Course she is. A regular honey I bet. You'll fit right in.

MAX
(off the gathered parents)
Look at them. They've got nothing better to do than fall out with their neighbours.

Ray looks at the parents gathered. They all appear to be griping about something.

RAY
They don't live in fear.

Max checks his watch.

MAX
Sure they do. It's a different kind of fear, that's all.

Ray looks at Max curiously.

Agitated, Max stops by an empty bench seat that overlooks a row of houses. He sits for a moment and stares at a particular house.

Ray remains standing; he takes in the park surroundings.

Max watches as a young woman exits the door of the house; she is in her late twenties and she pushes a stroller.

He immediately makes his way towards her.

Ray watches the park, he doesn't see Max get up.

overwhelming and continual emotional basis of the author's state of mind, it was the case with *City* that it was precisely those feelings that produced the thematic kernel that became the screenplay. Film noir seemed, on the surface of my creative quandary, a most fitting genre choice because as the consensus of criticism agrees, it traditionally elicits the perfect thematic and narrative structures that are mandatory to successfully represent a pessimistic cinematic vision.

As discussed in the introduction to this thesis, practice leads the process of this research, and therefore it was through writing the first draft of the screenplay, and the subsequent collaboration with the producers, that the decision of re-writing it under a more specialised genre definition was decided. Although the screenplay had been developed under the banner of the thriller genre initially, the screenplay was now to be considered under a new guise as a film noir and there was an immediate concern with finding a level of justification for that choice. It is generally agreed amongst screenwriting commentators that genre is a key consideration for any screenwriter, and I was initially influenced by British screenwriting developer, Phil Parker (1999), who suggests that the screenwriter ought to work from four basic genre distinctions: *Romance, Thriller, Horror and Personal Drama*. Parker's model, like many others who write in the field of 'How To' screenwriting manuals, is based on an ideological method whereby the screenwriter takes control of their own craft; certainly an attractive proposition for the screenwriter. Parker's method of using four core genres is initially beneficial to the writer, but it can become difficult to apply to the marketplace and film industry external to the craft of writing the screenplay. Parker's core genres do not ultimately correlate with what the screenwriter is often asked to do under a more market savvy approach to selling a film. So while the first draft and structural elements of *City* were indeed constructed as a thriller under Parker's model, a new, more fundamental need to impose a more tangible and specific genre form became the priority from the producers' point of view. It was a key research agenda for me to explore the "film noir phenomenon" (Silver, 1996) and to find justification for why critics like Hirsch, Damico and Kaplan et al. believe that there are "substantial reasons" (Damico, 1978: 104) why film noir may be regarded as a 'self-sufficient' genre. The progression of my writing inspired me to gain a greater personal understanding of the term film noir, and how it could be applied to the creation of my screenplay. As a result, developing the

been given due attention in the noir debate. An analysis of his essay reveals that he agrees with Alain Silver that, Borde and Chaumeton's original thesis describing film noir as a tangible entity does remain unchallenged. However, he goes on to suggest that subsequent American theories have been, in remaining close to Borde and Chaumeton's position, completely reliant and shaped by an initial thesis relevant only to the French spectators who didn't have access to Hollywood films during the war. After backing up his claims by delivering the justifiable argument that, "numerous films are swept under the rug in order to attempt to maintain an artificial purity and isolation of film noir..." (Vernet, 1993: 14), Vernet clutters his argument by suggesting a list of definitive "French cultural conditions", much in the same way that Schrader pointed out certain Hollywood conditions, to attempt to pin down the cultural constraints of film noir. Silver has attempted to dismantle Vernet's argument as, "unembarrassed Eurocentric bias" (Silver, 1997: 4), but two of Vernet's film noir conditions, taken apart from the others, arguably hold some significance over why film noir is often hemmed in to a culturally specific period.

The first of Vernet's conditions is part fact, part supposition; "... the break caused by war for the European public, particularly in Paris, which allowed pre-war American production to be forgotten ..." (Vernet, 1993: 25). There is no doubt that film noir was a phrase used retrospectively by Nino Frank et al. and that he and other French theorists, in essence, encountered a jolt to the senses after having missed American cinema for five or six years during the war. Or, as they described it: "It was during the summer of 1946 that the French public experienced the revelation of a new kind of American film." (Borde & Chaumeton 1955, Trans. Hammond, 2002: 1). Upon catching up with these films, these critics reacted to what they perceived as a significant change in the sensibility of Hollywood films. Whether they had actually forgotten that pre-war American cinema had already shown signs of a darker, more challenging ethos is impossible to prove, but it seems conceivable, especially if we consider the 'see it once' viewing habits of the 1940s, a time when critics were not afforded the luxury of the multiple DVD film revisits of today's critic. For a French critic to notice a considerable change in the sensibility of Hollywood films after a five or six year absence was arguably a natural reaction, comparable perhaps to the astonishment of seeing a child after a five-year interval and commenting – "you've changed", when the actual facts are that the change in the child would very much have been a gradual one, or a natural progression for those with an uninterrupted familiarity. For the Americans and the British,

CHAPTER THREE

WRITING THE FILM NOIR GENRE SCREENPLAY.



“This isn’t going to have a happy ending.”

Figure 3.1: *William Somerset* (Morgan Freeman), *Se7en* (1995)

Introduction: Recognising the Unconscious

Film noir was built on a truer cinematic account of the world according to Sanders, who sees it as driven by “the problematic fabric of life itself,” (Sanders, 2006: 93). Conard adds that it also represents, “the loss of value and meaning in our lives” (Conard, 2006: 19). Invariably noir films were traditionally dark with no chance of the happy ending, and that essence was always my intention for *City*. That search to create a screenplay that brings a dark fictional version of a suggested future reality is discussed throughout this chapter and it will become clear from the screenplay and the pilot film that my intention is not to make a classically mannered film noir or a piece of ‘realist’ cinema, I am simply borrowing the elements that I think are appropriate to the development of a contemporary noir film. Several indicators of film noir are used in the screenplay, but as Kaplan (1998) points out, often the most recognised films in the noir mould deviate from the culturally discussed ‘norms’ of the genre (Kaplan, 1996: 50). Certain narrative elements from early noirs must be approached with caution because they are essentially dated. Black and white photography, voice-over and the classic trilby and raincoat for example have become dated and re-used in the genre to the extent of parody. Sanders’s (2006) ideal about maintaining the truer cinematic account of the

keep the setting non-specific because our production could be filmed in any urban environment and that opens up more options for financing the film.

Prakash (2010) emotes this writer's creative reasoning for the *City* setting in the screenplay when he comments that "the dystopic imagination places us directly in a terrifying world to alert us of the danger that the future holds if we do not recognise its symptoms in the present," going on to note that, "In this sense, a utopian desire animates dystopic texts," (Prakash, 2010: 2). In order to create a sense of this future unnamed city in the screenplay, I drew a map of the imagined locations.¹³

¹³ See figure 3.2 (p.146)

like any other, does create certain narrative restrictions, but even coupled with the expectancy placed upon the screenplay form by the marketplace, there is a sense from my own experience of developing *City* that the industry, and those in it, understand that the film noir genre offers the writer an opportunity to write something seated in a hypothetical reality—something that can be inventive and grotesque, and something, that is probably just that little bit dark and different.

Individuals in the marketplace and industry of film have always seemed happy enough to accept my creative vision as a writer, and I have had an extremely positive experience developing my script with three extremely passionate producers, several other practitioners, and actors that have given up their time based on their enthusiasm for my project. The big stumbling block for getting *City* into production is not necessarily a lack of quality in the writing, disinterest in the project, or certain elements of ‘overwriting’ as discussed by Schmidt²¹, but rather a marketplace that has limited investment and funding opportunities. The business side of the industry is focused on overcoming difficult profit margins and is constantly on the lookout for the next ‘sure thing’ or project with a pre-existing market interest, and it is those pressures that have the most definitive effect for the screenwriter and director who aspire to get a film into production. Chapter four therefore focuses on my research into the financial and market pressures that govern the development and writing process for *City* and better explains how my project is situated in the marketplace for film in the UK.

²¹ See email: Appendix H (p.261)

they choose to make a film in the UK. That system ought to be changed so that the government hold back some of that percentage and reinvest it into our independent film sector. Or perhaps they could work out a different system whereby films that are shot in the UK have to reinvest a percentage of any profit to aid the development of independent film in the UK, without reducing the incentive significantly enough to scare Hollywood off.

The widespread production of adaptations, sequels and remakes in the UK are a clear representation of both Hollywood's exploitation of the TAX rebate, and their understanding of box-office success with these pre-engaged audience products. Without doubt these franchise films with pre-invested markets do have a better chance of financial success in the market place because Hollywood also has the finance required for a marketing strategy that enables success beyond any poor critical response. Independent filmmakers in the UK are also making use of adaptations from existing successful material (as discussed previously in this chapter), but there are still filmmakers like myself who want to step into the business by making original films on low budgets for more exclusive markets. The 'package' obsessed mentality in independent UK cinema is still painfully apparent however, and that is a direct affect of the need to justify why a film should be financed or green-lit in the first place. The high financial retention percentage that exhibitors and distributors impose in the UK is the reason why the attractive 'package' is so vital. The tradition of strong independent UK films being exhibited in our cinemas is under considerable threat moving forward because the high financial percentages being withheld by distributors and exhibitors makes low and micro budget film ventures an unrealistic financial venture for the filmmakers. The UK government, the UK film industry and the BFI need to act now to change this if they believe that a cinema release for our independent films is culturally important in the UK for the future. If they believe that it is, then that needs to be a core focus for support in the UK independent film sector. The percentage of box-office revenue that is channeled back to the production companies and investors needs to be increased in this sector to encourage investment in independent film, otherwise UK Independent films will continue to disappear from our cinema screens. It is very difficult to find a simple answer for how the UK independent film sector can overcome this problem because it could be argued that video-on-demand is fast becoming the natural outlet for independent film—Curzon cinemas, for example, now have an on-demand service that allows audiences to watch independent films on the first day of release. If, as I suspect, filmmakers across the UK still want to have an opportunity to screen

their original low and micro budget films at the cinema, then the UK government needs to develop a policy to withhold some of the 20% TAX credit for reinvestment in these films. Or they need to create a system to give better TAX incentives to exhibitors and distributors that are committed to screening British independent films so that there is a reduction on the percentage of the profit that they take from these films. Otherwise video-on-demand is likely to be the future for exhibiting independent films that do not meet the increasing demands of having a sellable industry package.

CHAPTER FIVE (a)
PILOT FILM for CITY

CITY (2015) – Pilot Film
9 mins - Colour



City Pilot Vimeo Link:

<https://vimeo.com/120055903>

password: citylights

Witness (1985) d. Peter Weir. w. Earl W. Wallace/William Kelley.
USA; Paramount [DVD]

Wrong Turn (2003) d. Rob Schmidt. w. Alan B. McElroy.
USA; Twentieth Century Fox [DVD]

there is way more chance of making your money back on that than a 250 million dollar movie and you can afford to be truer to the story and the characters. I think that is the same thing for us. We are looking for a million pounds, we can go for someone like Cillian Murphy who we think would be amazing for it – we get him and that is incredible for us. He’s not the biggest star, but in terms of what we can make the film for, he could be a real asset. Instead of making 2 million dollars in sales he could make us 3 or 4 million dollars. It’s all about cost/benefit, making a product that on the one hand is a good product because it maintains its artistic integrity, and people respond really well to that, it maintains its focus on story and character, all of that kind of stuff at the same time as making a product that you understand is made for the right value, and is made for people to want to actually go and watch, to consume. An interesting balance of business and art, which is why film is awesome.

MM: It’s going to be a good film.

NA-C: I really think that’s the key. Honestly, when you are working with a million pounds. When you are working with 100 million, it can be a great film and not make its money back. But with a million pounds the key is just making it good.

MM: Is the key, getting a good critical response?

NA-C: Yes. Then worldwide you are going to make your money. If it is a shit film, which is what most of them are at a million pounds, it’s not going to make its money. It’s not that hard...

MM: But it’s strange how at the top end of the budget scale you can make a shit film and still make money.

NA-C: Yes. That’s a completely different market.

few and far between. You've got to make Spielberg films for that. And noir is not Spielberg, which is why he doesn't do noir (laughs). The type of people who were responding, and responding really well to the film, were just being really frustrated by the complexity of the plot and so we pulled back on that. Subsequently I did a lot of road-showing with it and I traveled around the UK doing Q & As and it was to a lot of people who aren't really familiar with that format who were coming, and they were really pleasantly surprised by the twists and turns, which they felt they could grapple with and that they hadn't seen before. So you are constantly re-adjusting the film you think you are making, the film you want to make, and the film you have made; three very different things. I met Kevin Spacey who has directed a couple of films and I told him I was about to embark on doing this film, and he said, it won't be the film you think it is going to be – once you have shot the film it will be another film, and once you have edited it will be yet another film. That's very true and I think that hopefully through experience you get closer to what you think it is you are starting off with. I don't think as a filmmaker that you really start to look at yourself from the outside until you start to produce stuff.

and distribute it. I think that would be a fair way and in the remit of what these arts bodies should be doing because in the past that was why they were set up; to support community art. They were not set up to support elite art and yet these days the arts councils generally support elite art. There is a question about why they are putting half a million in to one film that isn't going to make any money, and they are not going to get paid back, instead of half a million into ten films having had some input into the quality of the film. What is the greatest cultural value? But then I would say that wouldn't I?

APPENDIX H

EMAIL: From Tore Schmidt – 1st August, 2015.

Mikey

Tore Schmidt
01/08/2015

To: Mikey Murray



Hey Mikey,



Since you've written, I've received the notes from Naysun, so I will compile them now and send to you soon. As part of that, I'll be looking at the screenplay again, so if there's no pressure, I'll respond to the first and last questions and specifics about CITY after that, as it'll be more present on my mind. If you need it urgently, let me know.

Generally speaking, here's what I would say is generally considered standards within the industry on the second and third question:

By standards of the US film industry, prosaic or extensively descriptive writing is part of what's usually referred to as "overwritten" (other parts being an overly explanatory or expositional plot, getting into scenes too early and leaving them too late etc.). It is generally considered to be something to avoid in the "ideal" screenplay, with the goal being to keep the description to a minimum. (A notable exception are extensive action sequences, which can sometimes lead to long paragraphs or even entire pages of description/action.)

In my experience, overwriting is generally more common (and thus perhaps acceptable) in European screenplays. As part of non-action sequences, writers also tend to overwrite more in certain genres such as drama. It also seems to be more common among screenwriters who feel less secure in their craft, possibly in early stages of their career, as they either don't trust that their characters' action and dialogue reflect their intentions, or don't know how to integrate them into them and thus resort to description to emphasize, explain or repeat those.

It can also often be found in screenplays written by directors. In these cases, it is often less so prosaic writing than the inclusion of visual notes and camera directions. Few exceptions aside, strict conventions would require for those to be almost entirely absent from the screenplay, the idea being that the screenplay's task is solely to reflect the story of the film; with nothing to distract from it or the evaluation of its quality. Some writer/directors seem to compartmentalize the two parts more clearly as they advance in their career.

All this being said, it is also my experiences that certain aspects of overwriting (especially visual directions and/or more detailed descriptions - not unnecessarily long scenes) don't have to stand in the way of the positive reception of a screenplay, provided that the quality of story, dialogue and character holds up. One of the most well-received screenplays I've worked on, which has since been made into a highly regarded feature, could have been argued to contain some elements of overwriting. Some (especially European) feedback even pointed out the "beautifully prosaic writing."

Cheers,

Tore

DATE 2013

APPENDIX I

- 1. HAPHAZARD MEDIA LTD**
- 2. MIKEY MURRAY**

OPTION AGREEMENT

“CITY”

DRAFT (1)

employment relationship by or between the parties to this Agreement or to make either of the parties the agent of the other.

- 9.8 The failure at any time to require performance of any provision of this Agreement shall not affect the full right to require such performance at any later time. The waiver of a breach of any provision shall not constitute a waiver of the provision of any succeeding breach. Should any provision of this Agreement be held invalid, the remainder of the Agreement shall be effective as though such invalid provision has not been contained in this Agreement.
- 9.9 This Agreement shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of Scotland and the parties submit to the non-exclusive jurisdiction of the Courts of Scotland.

this Agreement.

- 9.4 This Agreement constitutes the entire agreement between the parties, supersedes all previous agreements, deal memos and negotiations between the parties and their representatives, and may not be modified except by written agreement of the parties.
- 9.5 This Agreement does not create or infer any rights under the Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999 enforceable by any person who is not a party to the agreement.
- 9.6 The sole remedy of the Writer for any breach or alleged breach of this Agreement by the Producer shall be limited to the right, if any, to the recovery of money damages at law, and the Writer will have no right by reason of any such breach or alleged breach to rescind this Agreement or to any equitable or injunctive relief, and the rights and waivers granted by the Writer under this Agreement shall not terminate by reason of such breach.
- 9.7 Nothing herein contained shall be construed to create a partnership or joint venture or employment relationship by or between the parties to this Agreement or to make either of the parties the agent of the other.
- 9.8 The failure at any time to require performance of any provision of this Agreement shall not affect the full right to require such performance at any later time. The waiver of a breach of any provision shall not constitute a waiver of the provision of any succeeding breach. Should any provision of this Agreement be held invalid, the remainder of the Agreement shall be effective as though such invalid provision has not been contained in this Agreement.
- 9.9 This Agreement shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of Scotland and the parties submit to the non-exclusive jurisdiction of the Courts of Scotland.

Producer

In the presence of

Witness

Name

Address

APPENDIX K

CITY PILOT
by
Mikey Murray

30th November, 2012

FADE IN:

EXT. CITY SCAPE - NIGHT

Corporate glass super-structures rise out of the dark haze. Some of the windows are lit up pixels, the face of one particular building a giant advertising screen that bursts out of the night sky.

A riverside apartment complex stands near by, seemingly animated by the reflection of the gigantic advertising screen.

EXT. RIVERSIDE APARTMENT BALCONY - NIGHT

Hunched over the balcony railing and intermittently illuminated by the light spilling from the adverts is DAVIS; mid-thirties and pensive - he sucks on a cigarette.

A holster strap clings to him over his jumper.

A distant SIREN.

Davis peers across the river at the south-side. By contrast, shadows appear to win the battle over the dim lights there.

Behind Davis and on the other side of open patio doors, LAURA enters the room; light cascades into the room with her. She holds a CHILD in a blanket.

Davis is unaware of her presence behind him until she speaks....

LAURA

He's bathed. Think I'll put him
to bed.

DAVIS

Whatever you think.

LAURA

Are you heading out?

He jettisons his cigarette butt off the balcony.

RADIO REPORTER

An independent report on the drug
and gang turf war in the south
side of the city has finally been
released today....

INT/EXT. CAR - NIGHT

Davis drives. He peers out of the windscreen. A set of rosary beads and a crucifix swing from his rear view mirror.

The news report plays on the radio as he drives....

RADIO REPORTER

....The report from The Independent Centre for Social Justice has assessed that arresting ring-leaders causes fundamental problems, but also that political commitment to the cause is waning in the face of ever increasing austerity measures....

....Tom Reeves from the I.C.S.J. had this to say--

TOM (RADIO REPORT)

If you just take out the people at the tops of gangs you create a power struggle. Younger members start to compete for supremacy and other gangs see that their rivals are weakened. This leads to street wars.

Davis drives through an area of high rise office glass. It's clean and impressive, but deserted and soulless; a demarcation-zone by night.

The buildings dwarf Davis's car as he drives between them.

A huge billboard advertises new build homes in 'North Hills'.

The car approaches the mouth of a tunnel; the sign above exclaims....

'SOUTH SIDE'

Someone has spray-painted sharp snarling teeth as graffiti around the top edge of the tunnel entrance.

RADIO STATIC and ECHO as the car enters the tunnel and starts to descend on the downward camber.

In the rear view mirror, Davis watches the mouth of the tunnel shrink into the distance.

The flicker of the tunnel lights coming through the windscreen intermittently light up his face.

The radio kicks back in as the car approaches the tunnel exit.

TOM (RADIO REPORT) (CONT'D)

--and I have worked with gang members as young as eight who are brought up with their own set of principles. It is hard to change but we try to give these kids more positive alternatives....

The car exits the tunnel and the ECHO stops.

The south side is dark - misty showers of light from sporadic working street-lamps toil to illuminate rain splashed, deserted pavements. Concrete buildings are sloped with a clutter of hopeful corporate adverts, and the smashed and boarded windows reveal the truth....

RADIO REPORTER

In a statement from the council today, a spokesman said: "Our strategy for ending gang and drug related youth violence makes clear that the problem cannot be tackled through police enforcement alone - that's why we continue to fund projects to help stop the next generation being drawn into gang culture".....

Davis drives through a near-derelict shopping area.

One shop remains open. A fortified pawn-shop offering 'Cash for Gold'. Idle, rust-ridden shutters confirm the demise of the other shop units.

RADIO REPORTER (CONT'D)

The independent report also states that the City's decision to arm the police was a necessary measure in combating these problems....

Davis stops at a red light. He looks at Graffiti on a wall. It reads....

'Welcome to the Belly'.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Davis gets out of his car. He steps across towards a crime scene.

Above a shop that has been cordoned off, a dimly illuminated sign reads 'ALL NIGHT NEEDS'.

A body in a hooded tracksuit lies on the pavement outside of the shop and Davis takes in the scene.

A 'beat officer' approaches Davis.

BEAT OFFICER
Nothing from the store camera.
The guy said the recording drive
is bust.

Davis looks up at a street camera that looms overhead in the blackness.

DAVIS
You check the eyes?

BEAT OFFICER
Like the rest around here - a
long time blind.

Davis looks across at a woman who is being attended to by a medic. She is MELISSA; blonde, thirty-something and heady in a trashy way.

BEAT OFFICER (CONT'D)
I got her statement.

Davis takes the officer's notebook and starts to read.

He stops momentarily to squint into the dark street that surrounds him.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

On the street by 'All Night Needs', A YOUNG LAD in a hooded tracksuit hangs on the street.

His attention is caught by Melissa as she approaches with a stroller....

She isn't fazed as she advances on him.

In the buggy is CARL; a one-year-old baby with soft red hair - without his mother, he'd be a picture of innocence.

The 'HOODY' steps over to Melissa and she stops to meet him.

He passes her a fat bundle of cash and then makes himself scarce.

END FLASHBACK

CUT TO:

INT. 'ALL NIGHT NEEDS' - NIGHT

A DOOR-OPENING-BUZZER sounds as Davis enters.

He strolls through the store. He looks at some scattered beer cans, and a pool of milk from a broken milk bottle.

There is also an empty stroller.

Milk drips from the half broken bottle

A FORENSICS guy scans the area for prints with a scanner.

CUT TO:

INT. 'ALL NIGHT NEEDS' - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Melissa shops around the aisles; milk and bread.

As she stops to consider a bottle of wine, The DOOR-BUZZER interrupts the hum of the refrigeration units.

A DARK FIGURE, all in black and wearing a balaclava mask, steps into the store.

The CLERK turns to see who has entered, but scuttles under the counter as the intruder points a gun at him.

Melissa is momentarily confused as the ominous figure approaches her. Confronted by the masked man, she stands frozen to the spot; bottle of milk in hand.

MELISSA

What do you want?

He cracks her across the face with his elbow. She clatters into a grocery shelf and plunges to the floor among a pile of beer cans. The milk bottle smashes.

Carl GIGGLE's as he is lifted from his stroller by the man.

Melissa scrambles and clutches at the kidnapper's ankle.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

You're so fucked.

The man struggles to free himself but Melissa has a tight grip and is being dragged.

He directs his gun at her face. Blood has started to run from her nose.

She stares up the barrel before it is pressed into her swollen cheek. A tear rolls from her eye and her powerful grip weakens.

The man breaks free. The BUZZER sounds again as he exits....

EXT. 'ALL NIGHT NEEDS' - CONTINUOUS

Now outside, he pauses momentarily....

A Bullet CRACKS off the wall an inch from his head.

Instinctively, he manages to both hold the child and squeeze off a SHOT of his own that 'wings' the hooded assailant that advances on him.

Carl is now crying uncontrollably as the masked man steps over to the Hooded Dealer who writhes on the ground.

The dealer looks up at the masked man with fear in his eyes - he isn't much older than fourteen.

Under the ever watchful eye of The Belly streets, the masked man hesitates only fleetingly - he levels his assailant with a fatal head shot.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Davis looks down at the Hoody's body.

A BUZZER sounds....

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT.

Laura answers the door.

Revealed as she opens the door is KERR; he is the epitome of calm, but something deep in his soul drives him.

He strolls into the apartment and waits as Laura exits into another room. Kerr scans the minimalist apartment, he has a paper file in his hand.

Laura re-enters with the sleeping Carl in her arms and passes him to Kerr. Kerr affectionately takes Carl; his cool exterior now warmed as he allows himself to fuss over the baby.

KERR

A couple of problems I gather?

LAURA
Nothing massive.

KERR
Tell him to give it a week before
this one.

Kerr passes her the file.

Carl is content in Kerr's arms - oblivious to his upheaval.

CUT TO:

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Davis is stopped at a set of traffic lights on a deserted road. The red traffic light reflects on his windscreen.

RADIO PRESENTER
....the report concludes that
more resources and alternative
new measures will ultimately be
required to prevent children from
being drawn into drugs and gang
violence.

Davis looks ahead out of the windscreen, he taps his finger impatiently on the steering wheel.

The traffic light turns to red and amber....

CUT TO BLACK.

PROJECT: CITY PILOT NAME: MIKEY MURRAY DATE: 8th Feb 2013 PAGE: 1



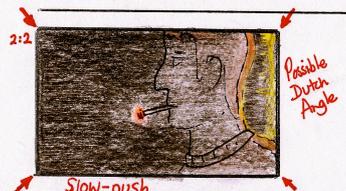
1:1
ELS: Establishing North-side. Wide/Flat. Cut from Black with Audio sting (Timpany)



1:3
ELS: Slow trajectory looking up apartment block.



2:1
MS: Davis looking out to SouthSide.



2:2
CU: Wide angle / flat space. profile of Davis.

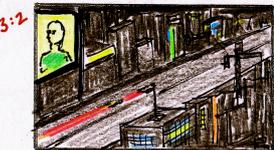


2:3
ECU/MLS:
Flat space. Davis in foreground. Laura out of focus in background. Dialogue exchange.



3:1
MS: Interior Car looking out of windscreen. Davis eyes in mirror.

PROJECT: CITY NAME: MIKEY MURRAY DATE: 8th Feb 2013 PAGE: 2



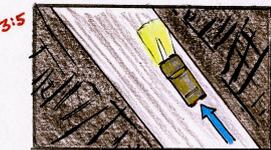
3:2
ELS: High angle - low shutter speed of road. (Possible time-lapse)



3:3
CU: Davis in mirror - streets out of focus.



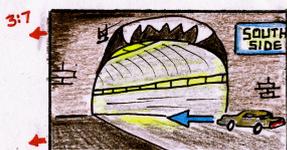
3:4
MCU: Profile of Davis driving



3:5
ELS: High vertical static of car.



3:6
LS: Flat space. Car passes through frame then tilt to advertising screen.



3:7
PAN with car as it enters tunnel.

3:8



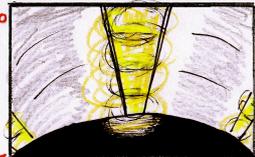
MS/ELS: Inside car. Tunnel entrance shrinks in Rear view mirror.

3:9



CU: Dutch angle of Davis driving. Throw background out of focus.

3:10



MOVING SHOT.

MCU: Tunnel lights (filtered). Moving shot - into night blackness. From Sunroof(?).

3:11



TROMBONE / PUSH

LS: Dolly into 'All Night Needs'

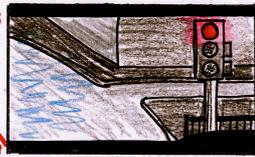
3:12



TRACK FROM CAR

LS: Coverage of Belly streets from car.

3:13



MOVE & STOP

LS: Move and stop for 'Red Light'.

3:14



MCU/LS: Static through passenger side. Car leaves to create LS Static of 'Welcome to the Belly'.

4:1



DOLLY / HAND HELD

VARIOUS: Dolly / Hand-Held with Davis as he exits car and surveys scene & interacts with Beat Officer.

4:1/1



4:2

Continuous...

Continued...
Roving camera follows actors. Consider any additional cutaway pick ups.

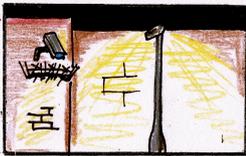
4:3



Moving?

MLS: P.O.V. Cutaway of dead Hoody.

4:4



LS: P.O.V. Security Camera. Low trajectory.

4:5



LS/MLS: P.O.V. of Melissa + Medic. Melissa Looks over.

PROJECT: CITY

NAME: MIKEY MUFFAY

DATE: 13th Feb 2013

PAGE: 5



4:4 LS: P.O.V. Overview of street.



5:1 LS: Flat Space Master
Hoody hangs on the street.



5:2 TILT + TRACK
MLS -> Dirty of Melissa
approaching with buggy.

Tilt and track with Carl until
buggy stops



5:2 Cont-
-> Into MCU of Carl in buggy



5:3 MS: Money exchange between
Melissa + Hoody



5:4 LS: Back to Master for
conclusion of money exchange

PROJECT: CITY

NAME: MIKEY MUFFAY

DATE: 14th Feb 2013

PAGE: 6



6:1 MS: Davis enters shop and stops
at Mark.



6:2 HAND HELD
VARIOUS: Roving on Davis's
Shoulder to take in crime
scene. Forensic guy - spill
milk - empty stroller.
* Pick-up required for transition.



7:1 TRACK - WHIP OUT
MLS: Dolly across aisles with
Melissa
-- Door buzzer sounds --
Whip out.



7:2 WHIP IN - DOLLY
Whip into MS: Over clerks
Shoulder as Masked Man enters.
Reverse dolly with him.



7:3 HAND HELD....
VARIOUS: On shoulder of Masked
Man until he stops in front
of Melissa
"What do you want?"
Camera moves left into....



7:3 HAND HELD....
MS: Two shot as he smacks
her.



HAND HELD

CU: Melissa crashes to floor



CU: Cutaway of milk scattering



MCU: On shoulder as Carl is lifted from the stroller.



MCU: On Melissa as she grabs & holds kidnappers ankle.



ECU: P.O.V. Shallow focus on end of gun barrel.



MCU: Melissa's reaction and 'letting go'.



LS: Masked man exits with Carl. P.O.V. Melissa.



MS: Masked Man pauses as he exits - Bullet cracks off wall beside his head. He takes action ...



MLS: Hoody fires shot and is then winged by Masked Man.



PUSH

MS to MCU: P.O.V. push on Hoody's reaction.



ELS: Flat Space - Masked man kills hooded.



DOLLY

MS: Reverse dolly with Davis as he exits All Night Needs. He stops to look at the body.

9:2



MS: Cutaway of dead hoody from pavement level.

10:1



Dolly

VARIOUS: Dolly with Laura as she answers door and lets Kerr in. Dolly back into apartment with them - staying with Kerr.

Continuous...

10:1



Dolly

Continuous...

Continuous...

10:1



Dolly

Continuous: Kerr reacts when Laura enters with the baby behind him.
* Possible cutaway required depending on what Kerr does. Look OUT OF WINDOW? # coverage.

10:2



MS: Lisa (dirty) for dialogue exchange & baby hand-over

10:3



MS: Kerr (dirty) for dialogue exchange & baby hand-over

10:4



CU: Dutch angle on Carl.

Dissolve to...

11:1



MCU: Through the windscreen, Davis waits at a red light - it reflects on the glass.

11:2



MS: The lights turn to Red & Amber!

- CUT TO BLACK.

~~APPENDIX M~~

Haphazard Media
info@haphazardmedia.co.uk

CITY

CALL SHEET: 1
Fri 8th March 2013

Prod: Nic Crum
Prod: Naysun Alae-
Assoc: Carew
Prod: Lauren Lamarr
Director: Mikey Murray

No plan survives first contact...

-Field Marshall Rommel (attr.)

Breakfast from 1800
First Costume 1830
Call
First Make Up 1900
Call
UNIT CALL: 1830
Estimated Lunch 2330
Estimated Wrap: 0530

SUNRISE: 0650 SUNSET: 1806 WEATHER:
OVERCAST

TOILETS ARE AVAILABLE AT WATERROW UNIT BASE
PARKING IS AVAILABLE AT WATERROW UNIT BASE

PLEASE NOTE: We will shoot out cast first. See shot list for shooting order.

Unit Base	7 Water Row, Govan, G51 3UW
Location 1:	Riverside at Tradeston
Location 2:	Clyde Arc bridge- South side
Location 3:	Maxim Business Park, Motherwell ML1 4WR
Location 4:	Glasgow Harbour Apartments – Meadowside Quay Walk, G11 6EE
Location 5:	Anniesland Cross/Great Western Road
Location 6:	Clyde Tunnel (A739)
Location 7:	Underpass at Tradeston
Location 8(a):	Skypark 1, 8 Elliot Square, Glasgow G3 8EP (a) from building
Location 9:	Govan Road G51 – by Unit Base

LOC	SC	VE	SET/ SYNOPSIS	D/N	PGs	CAST	NOTE S
1, 2	1pt	EXT	Cityscape Establishers	N	1/8	-	
3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 8a, 9	3pt	INT/EXT	Car Davis drives to the South Side	N	1 7/8	1	
5	11	INT/EXT	Car Davis is stopped at a red light	N	3/8	1	
				TOTAL	2 3/8		
				L			

SHOT LIST

LOC	SHOT	EXT/INT	DESCRIPTION	CAST
1	1.1	Ext	ELS establishing North Side. Wide/Flat	
2	1.2	Ext	Additional establisher	
—SHOOT OUT DAVIS—				
3	3.3b	Int	CU Davis in mirror, streets out of focus	1
3	3.4b	Int	MCU profile of Davis driving	1
3	3.6	Ext	LS flat space, car passes through frame frame then tilt to advertising screen	
8	3.3a	Int	CU Davis in mirror, streets out of focus	1
8	3.4a	Int	MCU profile of Davis driving	1
4	3.1	Int	Car leaving Underground car park at Glasgow Harbour and heading past New Concert Hall: MS interior car, windscreen, eyes in rear view mirror	1
5	11.1	Ext/int	MCU through windscreen, Davis waits at red light – it reflects on glass	1
5	11.2	Ext	MS lights turn from red to amber	
6	3.8	Int	MS/ELS inside car, tunnel shrinks in rear view mirror	1
6	3.9	Int	CU dutch angle Davis, throw background out of focus	1

7	3.14	Ext	MCU/LS static through passenger side window, car leaves to create LS static "Welcome to The Belly"	1
---DAVIS/MAKE UP/COSTUME WRAP---				
8a	3.2	Ext	ELS High angle, city streets, low shutter speed of road, poss time lapse	
8a	3.5	Ext	High vertical static of car	
4	1.3	Ext	ELS low trajectory looking up apartment block	
6	3.7	Ext	Pan with car as it enters tunnel	
6	3.10	Ext	MCU tunnel lights (filtered) moving shot – into night blackness (from windscreen?)	
9	3.13	Int	Traffic lights from backseat of car	
9	3.12	Int	LS coverage of Belly streets from car (with coverage of 4.4 camera cutaway)	

ID	ARTISTE	CHARACTER	CALL	COSTUME	MAKE-UP	PICK UP	ON SET
1	Andrew John Tait	DAVIS	1830	1830	1900	O/T	As req

ART DEPT As per the instructions of Ryan Clachrie
CAMERA As per the instructions of David Lee
LIGHTING As per the instructions of Eamonn Jones
SOUND As per the instructions of Alex Ashcroft
LOCATIONS As per the instructions of Lauren Lamarr
MAKE UP As per the instructions of Kayleigh Sutherland
COSTUME As per the instructions of Sarah Michaels
RUSHES To Naysun on wrap
CATERING c/o Angela Waddell
HEALTH & SAFETY First Aider Lauren Lamarr
HOSPITAL Southern General, 1345 Govan Road, G51 4TF 0141 201 1100
POLICE Govan Station, 923 Helen Street, G52 1EE 0141 532 5400

ADVANCE SCHEDULE 9th March 2013
Location – Nithdale Place, Glasgow, G41

SC	I/E	SET/ SYNOPSIS	D/N	PGs	CAST	NOTE S
5	EXT	All Night Needs (Flashback) Hoodie gives Melissa some cash	N	3/8	3, 6, 101	
8	EXT	All Night Needs (Flashback) – continuous Davis shoots the hoodie	N	3/8	1, 6, 101	
7pt	INT	All Night Needs (Flashback) p/u Davis snatching Carl (shoot out Carl)	N	1/8	1, 3, 101	
4	EXT	All Night Needs Davis arrives at the crime scene Shoot sc. 9 whilst shooting sc. 4	N	6/8	1, 3, 5, 6, 9	
9	EXT	All Night Needs Davis looks at the hoodie's body	N	1/8	1, 6	
3pt	EXT	All Night Needs Trombone dolly into All Night Needs	N	1/8	1	
7pt	INT	All Night Needs (Flashback) Davis snatches Carl	N	6/8	1, 3, 7	Carl dummy
6	INT	All Night Needs Davis enters All Night Needs, Forensics Guy scans	N	3/8	1, 8	
				Total	3 pgs	

CONTACTS

God Lauren Lamarr
1st AD The Almighty KK
3rd AD Heather Winship
Driver William Barbour

CITY

Prod: Nic Crum
Prod: Naysun Alae-Carew
Assoc Prod: Lauren Lamarr
Director: Mikey Murray

Time is an illusion, lunchtime doubly do

-Douglas Adams

Breakfast from 1700
First Costume Call 1730
First Make Up Call 1750
UNIT CALL: 1800
Estimated Lunch 2330
Estimated Wrap: 0530

SUNSET: SUNRISE: WEATHER: OVERCAST

TOILETS ARE AVAILABLE AT UNIT BASE
PARKING IS AVAILABLE AT UNIT BASE AND LOCATION

Unit Base:
Church of
Scotland –
Church Hall,
513 Sheilds
Road,
G41

Location 1:
General Store,
157 Nithdale
Place, G41

SC	I/E	SET/ SYNOPSIS	D/N	PGs	CAST	NOTES
5	EXT	All Night Needs (Flashback) Hoodie gives Melissa some cash	N	3/8	3, 6, 101	
8	EXT	All Night Needs (Flashback) – continuous Davis shoots the hoodie	N	3/8	1, 6, 101	
7pt	INT	All Night Needs (Flashback) p/u Davis snatching Carl (shoot out Carl)	N	1/8	1, 3, 101	
4	EXT	All Night Needs Davis arrives at the crime scene	N	6/8	1, 3, 5, 6, 9	
Shoot sc. 9 whilst shooting sc. 4						
9	EXT	All Night Needs Davis looks at the hoodie's body	N	1/8	1, 6	
3pt	EXT	All Night Needs Trombone dolly into All Night Needs	N	1/8	1	
7pt	INT	All Night Needs (Flashback) Davis snatches Carl	N	6/8	1, 3, 7	Carl dummy
6	INT	All Night Needs Davis enters All Night Needs, Forensics Guy scans	N	3/8	1, 8	
				Total	3 pgs	

ID	ARTISTE	CHARACTER	CALL	COSTUME	MAKE-UP	PICK UP	ON SET
1	Andrew John Tait	DAVIS	1800	1810	1830		1845
3	Nicola Roy	MELISSA	1730	1730	1750		1845
5	Nicky Elliot	BEAT OFFICER	2100	2100	2120		2220
6	Scott Reid	HOODIE	1745	1750	1810		1845
7	Dave Clarke	CLERK	2100	2140	2200		2220
8	Andrew Murray	FORENSICS	2100	2200	2140		2220

9	Fiona Gunn	MEDIC	2100	2120	2100	2220
101	James Lowe	CARL	1845	1845	1900	1915

ART DEPT As per the instructions of Ryan Clachrie
CAMERA As per the instructions of David Lee
LIGHTING As per the instructions of Eamonn Jones
SOUND As per the instructions of Alex Ashcroft
LOCATIONS As per the instructions of Lauren Lamarr
MAKE UP As per the instructions of Kayleigh Sutherland
COSTUME As per the instructions of Sarah Michaels
RUSHES To Naysun on wrap
CATERING c/o Angela Waddell
HEALTH & SAFETY First Aider Lauren Lamarr
HOSPITAL Southern General, 1345 Govan Road, G51 4TF 0141 201 1100
POLICE POLICE ON SET TODAY Govan Station, 923 Helen Street, G52 1EE 0141 532 5400

ADVANCE SCHEDULE 10th March 2013

Location –Glasgow Harbour

SC	I/E	SET/ SYNOPSIS	D/N	PGs	CAST	NOTES
10	Int	Riverside Apartment Laura gives Carl to Kerr	N	4/8	2, 4, 101	
2	Ext	Riverside Apartment Balcony Davis is on the balcony, Laura speaks to him	N	6/8	1, 2	

CONTACTS

God Lauren Lamarr
1st AD The Almighty KK
3rd AD Heather Winship
Driver William Barbour

CITY

Prod: Nic Crum
Prod: Naysun Alae-Carew
Assoc Prod: Lauren Lamarr
Director: Mikey Murray

"If something cannot go on forever, it will stop!"

- Herbert Stein

Breakfast from 1600
First Costume Call 1640
First Make Up Call 1700
UNIT CALL: 1700
Estimated Wrap: 2300

SUNRISE: 0643 SUNSET: 1813 WEATHER: SNOW!

PLEASE NOTE THIS IS A HALF DAY! WOO!
SADLY THIS ALSO MEANS THERE WILL BE NO LUNCH – BUT SNACKS WILL BE PROVIDED THROUGHOUT
TOILETS ARE AVAILABLE AT UNIT BASE AND LOCATION
PARKING IS AVAILABLE AT UNIT BASE AND LOCATION

MIKEY, THE PRODUCERS AND ALL OF HAPHAZARD MEDIA WOULD LIKE TO SAY HOW MASSIVELY GRATEFUL WE ARE FOR ALL THE HARD WORK YOU ALL PUT IN THAT HAS MADE THIS FILM POSSIBLE. THANK YOU!

Unit Base: Flat 1/1, 122 Beith Street, Glasgow, G11 6HD

Location 1: Flat 3/3 334 Meadowside Quay Walk, Glasgow, G11 6AW (ENTRANCE ON RIVERSIDE)

	SC	I/E	SET/ SYNOPSIS	D/N	PGs	CAST	NOTES
1	10	Int	Riverside Apartment Laura gives Carl to Kerr	N	4/8	2, 4, 101	
1	2	Ext	Riverside Apartment Balcony Davis is on the balcony, Laura speaks to him	N	6/8	1, 2	
Total					1 2/8 pgs		

ID	ARTISTE	CHARACTER	CALL	COSTUME	MAKE-UP	PICK UP	ON SET
1	Andrew John Tait	DAVIS	1900	1900	1920		2000
2	Lisa Nicoll	LAURA	1640	1640	1700		1800
4	David Hayman	KERR	1700	1700	1720		1800
101	James Lowe	CARL	1730	1730	1745		1800

ART DEPT As per the instructions of Ryan Clachrie
CAMERA As per the instructions of David Lee
LIGHTING As per the instructions of Eamonn Jones
SOUND As per the instructions of Alex Ashcroft
LOCATIONS As per the instructions of Lauren Lamarr
MAKE UP As per the instructions of Kayleigh Sutherland
COSTUME As per the instructions of Sarah Michaels
RUSHES To Naysun on wrap
CATERING c/o Angela Waddell
HEALTH & SAFETY First Aider Lauren Lamarr
HOSPITAL Southern General, 1345 Govan Road, G51 4TF 0141 201 1100
POLICE Partick Police Station, 609-611 Dumbarton Rd, Glasgow G11 6HY 0141 532 3500

CONTACTS

God Lauren Lamarr
1st AD The Almighty KK
3rd AD Heather Winship
Driver William Barbour
Producer Naysun Alae-Carew

APPENDIX N

CITY



**A Noir, Crime Thriller.
Written and to be Directed by Mikey Murray**



Contact:
Nicholas Crum & Naysun Alae-Carew
Haphazard Media

CITY GREEN-LIGHT PACK

Logline

A stoic, young detective's hunt for a stolen baby becomes personal after the father, a childhood friend and now dangerous, wanted criminal, comes to him for help.



Genre:	Noir
Estimated Budget:	£800,000
Writer/Director:	Mikey Murray
Producers:	Nicholas Crum & Naysun Alae-Carew
Executive Producer:	Sarah Radclyffe

One-Page Synopsis

In a city divided by class and the decaying effects of financial crisis, Max Leary, a stoic, working-class detective, moonlights to hunt for a stolen baby after the father, Dexter, a childhood friend and now dangerous criminal, comes to him for help.

Defying the strict instructions of his chief and mentor, Kerr, Max's investigation draws him further from the legal blanket of his job and deeper into the dark underworld. His partner Trent, an irresistible and deadly force has a different agenda however; he is fixed on bringing Dexter to justice and exposing Max's corroboration with a known criminal, regardless of any collateral damage.

Max inadvertently leads Trent to Dexter and a confrontation between all three escalates out of control and Trent's cunning and determination sees him execute Dexter in clinical fashion. Irked by Max's association with criminals, Trent also frames Max by leading 'Internal investigations' to believe that he was an informant for Dexter and responsible for the murder of a fellow police officer. Max begins to suspect that Trent has a bigger agenda for framing him however, and he now believes that his headway into the missing child case parallels Trent's need to undermine him.

Now suspended from his post as a detective, Max investigates off his own back, searching deeper through past missing child cases, and many pieces of the puzzle seemingly have Trent as their common link. Max needs solid proof of Trent's involvement however, and he eventually discovers it upon finding Dexter's child in an up-market suburb of the city; adopted by a young couple who cannot have children of their own. Max snatches the child back and returns him to his real mother, Melissa, before approaching Kerr with the damning information that Trent was the kidnapper all along; Trent's outrageous brand of changing the future. Kerr finally reveals himself as the elder of Trent's philosophy however, and Max's resistance to fall-in with Kerr and Trent leads to a showdown between Max and Trent. Max ultimately escaping death by sheer chance and finally overcoming the seemingly undefeatable Trent.

Finally, Max is left to face Kerr having put the physical battle with Trent behind him. His father figure, Kerr, is an altogether different prospect though and Max is ultimately forced to face his past, his future and his own morality; finally succumbing to Kerr's utilitarian philosophy.

Treatment

Act 1

In a city divided by class and the decaying effects of financial crisis, MAX LEARY, a stoic, working-class detective moonlights to begin the hunt for a baby that has been stolen from his neighbourhood. His investigation is personal because the baby's father, DEXTER who is a wanted criminal, is one of Max's childhood friends. Max is also drawn to the case because he is unable to have children himself; he and his career-focused wife LISA have a strained relationship that teeters on the brink of collapse, a tension fuelled by Max's self-depreciation because of his troubled past, his desire to adopt a child, and his inability to be the main 'bread-winner' in their relationship.

Through investigating the child's kidnapping, Max defies the strict instructions of his chief and mentor, KERR, who doesn't want Max drudging up a childhood association with the boy's father and mother. But Max's continued investigation draws him to the child's mother MELISSA, with whom he has a romantic past. Max's naivety in his new role as a detective means that he is completely unaware that he is being tailed by his partner TRENT, a detective who is an urban legend of deadly force, and who has a completely different agenda; he is fixed on bringing Dexter to justice and exposing Max's corroboration with known criminals, regardless of any collateral damage.

Max is no match for Trent, but Dexter who manages to foil Trent and set up a covert meeting with Max in a derelict church. At that meeting, Max agrees to join forces with Dexter in the hunt for the baby, and Max has now entered into an altogether different avenue of detective work having been drawn further from the legal blanket of his job and deeper into the dark underworld of 'The Belly'; a dark area of urban squalor in the City.

Act 2

Max is now caught between a rock and a hard place, entering into an agreement with Dexter and being warned by his chief, Kerr to remain focused on investigating the assignment he has been given to track down a missing detective. He continues to treat the missing child as his primary focus however, but during his investigation a series of flashbacks begin to reveal that something in his past is the potential source of a deep internal conflict that only shows itself on the surface as a deep loyalty to Dexter and the defiance of his seniors, Kerr and Trent.

Max's personal and professional life is tested further as his investigation into the missing child continues. Max, in order to keep his relationship with Lisa intact, is forced to relent and allow her to start proceedings on the purchase of an extravagant house that he doesn't really want. He also continues to 'pull the wool' over Kerr and Trent's eyes by asking Dexter to help him find information on the case of the missing detective he is supposed to be investigating.

Trent is too clever for both Max and Dexter however and Max inadvertently leads Trent to the allusive Dexter and an action-packed confrontation between all three escalates out of control, with Dexter forced to flee into a school and attempt to take a hostage. Dexter's guile proves no match for Trent's cunning though and while Max does his utmost to intervene, Trent is always ahead of the game and he executes Dexter in clinical fashion.

In the aftermath of Dexter's death, a flashback reveals the extent of Max's obligation to Dexter; Dexter had taken the blame for the killing of a shopkeeper they were both involved in as teenagers. Max visits Melissa to inform her of Dexter's death and it becomes clear that Melissa now sees Max as her only hope of recovering her child. Using Max's deep regret for the death of Dexter, she seduces him and he vows to continue searching for the baby at all cost.

Now suspended from duty and under investigation himself, Max is forced to continue looking for the child from an increasingly precarious position. He now has a vital clue that he received from Dexter before he died however; a piece of information that helps him realise that the missing detective case that he was allocated is potentially linked to the missing baby. The missing detective was also investigating child abduction cases and Max now knows where to find her. He returns to 'The Belly' to seek out the missing detective, but upon entering her darkened apartment he finds her murdered. Trent has managed to get there first, having been privy to the same clue to her whereabouts after Dexter's demise.

Trent corners Max at the apartment in an attempt to frame him for the missing detective's murder, but Max is now able to reveal that he knows that Trent is not only the one behind the child's disappearance, but it is only one in a series of child kidnappings that he has engineered. Trent now decides it is time to eradicate Max as a material witness, but Max is able to narrowly avoid Trent's attempt on his life and escape into the shadows of 'The Belly'. Max is now officially in hiding

and badly needs proof to both clear himself of murder and to finger Trent for the child abductions.

Max turns to RAY, one of Dexter's hot headed associates for help. Now with Ray as his muscle, Max proceeds to use the shadows of 'The Belly' and non-legal means as a way to tail Trent. This reversal of dynamic between Trent and Max works perfectly for Max and he manages to gain a lead that will ultimately bring him to the suburban north of the City, where he finds that Melissa and Dexter's missing child has been rehomed with a middle class family. Instinctively, Max steals the baby back, but his actions raise the alarm of both the baby's new mother and nearby police and in the ensuing chase, Ray is mortally wounded and forced to sacrifice himself in order to help Max escape with the baby.

Now with his proof, Max turns to his wife for help, but Laura betrays his moral position by admitting that she understands Trent's philosophy of giving these children better lives. Left devastated by this admission, Max turns to his mentor and father figure, Kerr for help. He gets a message to Kerr that he is in the process of returning the baby to his mother Melissa and that he should meet him at her house. Max finds that Melissa has upped and left the City however, and he has to travel beyond 'The Belly' and the city limits into the country-side in order to find her.

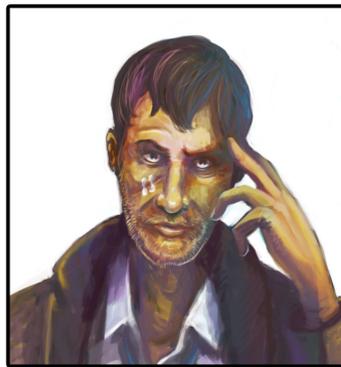
Act 3

Max reaches Melissa and re-unites her with her baby. Max questions Melissa's decision to move to the country, but when she explains that she had to get "Away from the City", it is clear that Max has also found his ideal and he is enchanted by the picture-book setting and the potential of becoming a permanent fixture in Melissa and the baby's lives.

The approach of a car marks the arrival of Kerr and Max tells him the damning information that Trent was the kidnapper all along; his outrageous brand of changing the future. Kerr has however brought his right-hand man Trent with him and he finally reveals himself as the elder of Trent's philosophy. Max flees with Melissa and her children, but in a moment of revelation, Melissa is also uncovered as a heinous criminal herself, someone who supplies drugs to children. In that moment, any lingering faith that Max had in humanity is shattered. Trent kills Melissa and finally Max's inevitable show down with Trent arrives. Max is on the brink of death himself, when a moment of sheer luck finally affords him the chance to overcome the seemingly undefeatable Trent.

Finally, Max is left to face Kerr having put the physical battle with Trent behind him. His father figure, Kerr is an altogether different prospect though and Max is ultimately forced to face his past, his future and his own morality when Kerr informs him that he was actually the first baby that he re-homed: "It was you, Max. That baby was you".

Now a broken man, Max finally succumbs to Kerr's utilitarian philosophy. Now back in a working relationship with Laura, he is also now the new father to Dexter's baby and set up in the comfort of an extravagant new suburban home. Max has replaced Trent by Kerr's side, and he is now the one stealing children from the dark urban squalor of 'The Belly'.



CHARACTER BIOG:

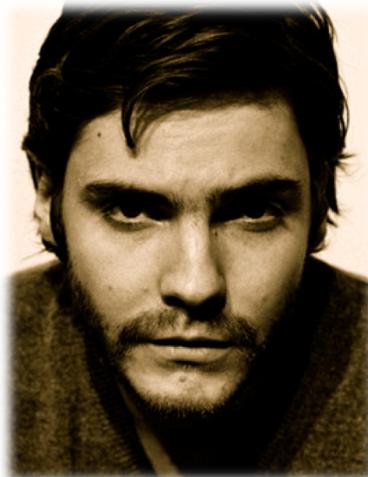
MAX

A stoic, newly promoted detective in his thirties; his shirt and tie look like they have never been a partnership. Max is deeply affected by his inability to have children and a criminal past that has been covered up by his friend. He is self-depreciating and emotionally very fragile. Everything that Max thinks he knows about his life is missing the key information that he was taken away from his criminal and hugely troubled parents and adopted into the care of the parents from whom he inherited his strong moral compass. Max loved his wife Lisa once, but recently it has become clear that they both want entirely different things. He longs to be a dependable man, live in the country and have a child of his own – all the things that he can't have.

CAST?



James McAvoy



Daniel Brühl



Emun Elliott

OTHER CHARACTERS & POTENTIAL CASTING:

TRENT

An irrepressible detective and urban legend; something deep down in his soul drives him. Trent is haunted by the memory of finding his younger sister lying dead on the doorstep of his house one morning when he was still a young policeman. Having found out that she over-dosed on a cocktail of drugs, he made it his personal mission to 'clean up the city' by whatever means possible.



Kevin McKidd



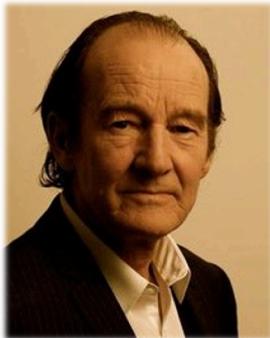
Tony Curran



Douglas Henshall

KERR

The epitome of elder style and sophistication, Detective Chief Constable, Kerr's philosophy on life has leveled off at an unconventional utilitarian method by which to reduce crime in the city. Close to retirement, he feels he must make a bold play in order to bring fresh blood into his master plan.



David Hayman



Timothy Dalton



Ciarán Hinds

LISA

A refined, and career driven woman that wants to climb the social ladder. Her parents believed that she married beneath herself with Max, but Lisa is strongly devoted to him despite what others may think.



Andrea Riseborough



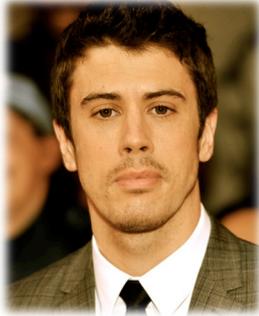
Sophia Myles



Elaine Cassidy

DEXTER

Born into an infamous criminal family, he took the fall for his best friend Max when they were teenagers and has had a infamous criminal reputation ever since. His street-wise sensibility made him a born leader from a young age.



Tobey Kebell



Richard Madden



Richard Coyle

MELISSA

As Dexter's wife she was provided for and had security for their children. Now estranged from him, she turned to selling drugs from her in-built desire to provide for her children and maintain her status as untouchable.



MyAnna Buring



Joanna Vanderham



Sonya Cassidy

MIKEY MURRAY: WRITER / DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The idea for *CITY* was initiated by the experience of witnessing a ten-year-old boy assault a disabled man in the street, for no other reason than 'for kicks'. The effect of witnessing such an assault, was such to inspire a genuinely pessimistic outpour of initial screenplay ideas, and while I do live under a certain optimistic hope that people will take the right path when they stop at a moral cross-roads, the real world shows us time and again that: the privileged are few, that the bad guy doesn't always get his comeuppance, and that we all, for the most part, live our lives in fear of our own mortality. *CITY* began as a representation of those cynical feelings, and of the guilt I felt for doing nothing when I witnessed the assault. My confused thoughts at the time are what drive the core ethical questions of intervention that are explored in *CITY*.

The *CITY* is an unnamed British city made up of 'The Belly', a rundown, crime-ridden area that lacks public money, and the suburban haven across the river, a juxtaposition that instinctively creates a geographical and functional dynamic for the film. To truly emphasise the difference, I intend to use concrete 60's architecture as the introverted backdrop for the 'belly', showing it dilapidated and unreplaced and contrast that with the neighbourhood watch plaques and irrigated grassy play-parks of middle-class suburbia.

Film Noir traditionally elicits the perfect thematic and narrative structures with which to represent the city setting with a pessimistic cinematic vision. Noir has proven ripe for a long tradition of British films from *THE THIRD MAN* (1949) through to *CHILDREN OF MEN* (2006) and these films have also frequently explored the ethical and masculine competence of their characters; a thematic that I have developed through from my Scottish BAFTA award winning short film, *BREAKING*. Film Noir offers me, the first time feature filmmaker; "an aroma, an essence, that is 'cool', chic, and a little dangerous" (Hirsch on Film Noir, 1981) because visually there is an expectation of dark and affecting images. *CITY* will maintain a thematic and visual aura that can appeal to both critics and audiences in equal part because of its rich critical and industrial genre context.

My overall aim for *CITY* is to build a character driven film that uses a Noir style traditionally associated with a socially conscious underlying thematic; a film that will leave the viewer to think about the same moral questions that filled my head after I witnessed that mindless assault by a child in the street.