

FADE IN:

INT. CRESCENT BAR - NEW YORK - NIGHT

It's late, but not New-York-City-late. The bar is a jumble of bodies, ban-defying smoke, and indiscernible walla.

The feeds on two hanging television screens bleed through the haze. Sports on mute. Typical stuff.

One man sits on the outskirts of the crowd, tipping the last vestiges of a vodka tonic down the inside of his glass.

BARTENDER (O.S.)  
Your number's up, Vic.

VIKTOR REVITCH (mid-50s) looks up into the BARTENDER's hovering face.

VIKTOR  
(Russian accent)  
What?

The bartender nods toward the TV screens.

BARTENDER  
Fifth race. Lucky thirteen.

With one hand the Bartender pushes a spread of twenty-dollar-bills across the counter. With the other he reaches for Viktor's empty drink.

Viktor stares off for a moment. Waves his hand over the glass.

VIKTOR  
I did not play this week.

BARTENDER  
You didn't play?

VIKTOR  
I must have forgot.

BARTENDER  
Whadda you mean you forgot?

Viktor shrugs.

The bartender leans back, withdrawing the cash with a slow whistle. He shakes his head.

BARTENDER

Whatever you say. I'll just keep  
the tab open.

Viktor scowls and removes a twenty from his own wallet.  
Drops it into the empty glass.

VIKTOR

Yeah, yeah. Keep it.

He waves the bartender off and rises. Edges his way toward  
the door and elbows it open, letting in a rush of air.

He blows to see if it's cold enough to see his breath. It's  
not.

He pockets his hands anyway.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - SAME NEW YORK - SAME NIGHT

A pair of high-heels navigates the worn, uneven stairs of a  
standard Alphabet City walk-up.

Eyes cast downward as manicured hands cycle through a fresh  
stack of mail.

An argument floats down from above.

NEIGHBOR'S VOICE (O.S.)

I know I'm late on the bill, but  
you can't just shut off the heat  
without any warning. I got three  
kids in there.

SOPHIE WILSON, well-dressed, 30-ish, reaches the top of the  
landing where a NEIGHBOR is having it out with the LANDLADY.

LANDLADY

I gave you warning. I told you  
last month when you couldn't pay  
that next time they'd cut it off.  
It's not me, it's Con Ed. There's  
nothing I can do.

Sophie empties the full capacity of her lungs and sucks in  
her stomach, just squeezing past the two women before turning  
up the next flight.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - SEWARD PARK - NIGHT

Viktor strolls down the darkened edge of the park. In no particular hurry. It's a nice night. Windless.

Only a few others in sight. A couple huddled together laughs their way down the other side of the street. A GUY IN A HOODED SWEATSHIRT slumps on a bench up ahead, possibly asleep, hard to tell.

The couple and their laughter disappear around a corner. When Viktor's just about even, Sweatshirt Guy lifts his hooded head and thrusts out a crushed cup with a gloved hand.

Can't see his face for the darkness. Can barely make out his voice.

SWEATSHIRT GUY  
Spare a dollar? Cigarette?

CUT TO:

INT. SOPHIE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Sophie climbs, the argument fading behind her, until she finds her path obstructed.

A YOUNG GIRL (10) sitting on a step slides over, making room.

YOUNG GIRL  
Sorry.

Sophie smiles softly.

SOPHIE  
No worries. Is that your mom down there?

The girl nods.

YOUNG GIRL  
(whispering loudly)  
I'm supposed to be watching my little brothers. Devon's got a cold.

SOPHIE  
Is she going to get mad if she sees you up here?

YOUNG GIRL  
It's ok. He's asleep.

Sophie tucks the mail under her arm and opens her purse. She digs out her wallet and pulls out all the cash she has inside. Maybe \$100.

She rolls the bills tight and offers them to the girl.

SOPHIE

Take this and put it on your mom's nightstand. Don't tell her where you got it, alright?

YOUNG GIRL

But what if she asks?

SOPHIE

Say you found it in the laundry.

YOUNG GIRL

Don't you need it? They'll shut off your heat, too.

Sophie shakes her head.

SOPHIE

I'll be okay. Friday is payday.

After thinking about it a little harder, the girl takes the money.

YOUNG GIRL

As long as you don't need it.

SOPHIE

What's your name?

YOUNG GIRL

Eva.

SOPHIE

Nice to meet you, Eva. I'm Sophie.

The little girl smiles.

YOUNG GIRL

Thank you.

Sophie nods.

INT. SOPHIE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Sophie enters, flips the deadbolt, and locks the doorchain.

She passes down the narrow hallway into the main room studio.

It is a tiny, dingy place dimly lit by only a single yellowed overhead fixture.

Most of the limited floorspace is overcrowded with stacks of boxes, open and in various stages of unpacked.

Very little furniture. Not even a bed.

Sophie kicks off the high-heels and nudges them against the side of the twin-sized air mattress in the corner.

Drops her purse and resumes browsing through the mail.

CUT TO:

EXT. SEWARD PARK - CONTINUOUS

Viktor's hands remain in his pockets. He keeps walking. Sweatshirt Guy jingles the cup a little, but it makes no noise 'cause it's empty.

SWEATSHIRT GUY

Hey!

Viktor turns back around, lifts his shoulders. His tone is almost grandfatherly.

VIKTOR

Sorry, I do not smoke.

Sweatshirt Guy is on his feet. He's even with Viktor, but bigger.

He reaches into his wide front sweatshirt pocket. Slides out a handgun.

Viktor eyes it with curious caution.

SWEATSHIRT GUY

Don't be stupid, man.

The mugger steps closer. Viktor flinches, but does not back away. Does not move his hands.

The mugger leans close, breathing hurried, unintelligible threats into Viktor's ear.

The barrel of the gun grazes the coat fabric around his belly.

Viktor's jaw tightens. He trembles.

CUT TO:

INT. SOPHIE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Sophie paces, staring down at a single envelope in her hand while discarding the rest of the mail.

After a moment, she sets it down -- unopened -- on top of a box.

Ducks into the bathroom at the end of the hall and reemerges a moment later with a toothbrush protruding from her lips.

Brushes her teeth with one hand while straightening up with the other.

Suddenly, there is a knock on her door.

NEIGHBOR'S VOICE  
(through the door)  
Hello? Is anybody home?

Sophie slows the stroke of her brushing. Eyes the door.

NEIGHBOR'S VOICE  
Did you give money to my daughter?

Sophie stands dead still.

NEIGHBOR'S VOICE  
She shouldn't have took it. We  
don't need your money. Hello? Are  
you there?

A MUFFLED BANG.

CUT TO:

EXT. SEWARD PARK - CONTINUOUS

The mugger takes off at a run. He hastily grabs a handful of bills and credit cards before tossing the wallet at the trash can on the corner. Misses. Leaves it.

Viktor is on the ground, holding his middle. He breathes hard, watching his assailant disappear from the reach of the nearest street lamp. He fixes on where the wallet has landed.

Tries to pull himself up using a nearby railing. Hisses in shock at the sudden pain of trying to support an upright position with his abdominal muscles in shreds.

So he crawls, smearing dark blood on the sidewalk. Reaches the wallet with his fingertips and rolls onto his side.

He fishes around, pulls out a bent piece of paper. The other hand reaches inside his coat and grasps a stained cell phone.

He spits, refers to the paper, and shakily dials. It rings once. Twice.

CUT TO:

INT. SOPHIE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

The knocking persists.

Sophie stays just where she is, mouth clamped over the stilled toothbrush.

A PIERCING RING makes her jump.

She looks up. The telephone is across the room. She listens, not for the ring, but for the voice. It has stopped.

The shrill ring continues at regular intervals. Sophie makes no move to answer it.

Suddenly the pounding continues. Not from the door, but from the side. Her next-door neighbor's apoplectic. The walls in this place are so thin they're almost translucent.

Sophie glances to the clock. 11:47pm.

She marches across the room.

Hooks a finger under receiver and pops it from the cradle.

Slams it back down.

With a tinny echo the ringing stops.

CUT TO:

EXT. SEWARD PARK - CONTINUOUS

Same position, eyes closed. Viktor listens to the connection cut out. Drops the phone. Breathes. Bleeds.

Doesn't move.

CUT TO:

INT. SOPHIE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Sophie listens once more. Nothing.

She tiptoes down the narrow hall and peers through her peephole. No one.

Resumes brushing her teeth.

Returns to the main room and retrieves the unopened envelope.

She stares down at its front.

ON THE ENVELOPE

It is addressed to Sophie Wilson, 163 Rancho Park Drive, Kansas City, MO. The large letters stamped on the left say "Forwarded." The return address is also Missouri.

Sophie takes two steps back, silhouetted against the window and its unmistakable view of the Brooklyn Bridge.

She eviscerates the envelope with one swift slice of her fingernail. Turns it over and spills its contents.

Catches the pages composing the letter, but misses a solid object that drops to the floor with a hard 'ding'.

Sophie squats down and picks it up. It is a ring with a gold band and a sizable single diamond.

An engagement ring.

For a moment she strokes it sentimentally. Then turns her attention to the letter, skimming it quickly.

She stands. Tosses the ring back in the envelope and folds it up, setting it on the window sill.

Strides back toward the bathroom, letter in hand.

INT. SOPHIE'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sophie bends over the sink and spits out her toothpaste. Rinses the brush and lays it on the edge of the porcelain.

Lingers on her reflection in the mirror for one long moment before wiping the excess foam from her lips with the back of her hand.

Glances down and stuffs the pages in her other hand into the wastebasket next to the toilet.

A dozen such letters fill it to the brim.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SOPHIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Nighttime's artificial glow is gone, replaced by late morning sun.

Sophie, asleep on the air mattress, is awoken by the sound of loud knocking. She glances at the walls and turns over, closing her eyes.

The rapping grows louder and more punctuated, and comes with identification.

OFFICER (O.S.)  
Ma'am? NYPD!

Sophie opens her eyes again and groans.

Gets up. Pads down the small hallway and peeks through the eyehole.

Twists the bolt. Removes the chain. Comes face to face with TWO STREET COPS.

OFFICER  
Sorry for the wake up call. This is  
Officer Gibbs and I'm Officer  
Taylor with the New York Police  
Department. Are you Ms. Sophie  
Wilson?

She nods. The silent cop tilts his upper body, trying to peer past her down the narrow apartment hall.

OFFICER  
You live alone?

SOPHIE  
Yeah...

OFFICER  
Can we come in?

SOPHIE  
I'm not dressed.  
(reconsidering)  
Um, sure. Go ahead.

The officers step just inside, filling the entryway in a single stride.

Sophie peeks up and down the external corridor before shutting the door behind them.

OFFICER

Were you at home last night, around  
midnight? Awake?

SOPHIE

I might have been.

OFFICER

Do you remember getting a phone  
call?

SOPHIE

Am I in trouble for something?

OFFICER

Are you acquainted with a man named  
Viktor Revitch?

SOPHIE

Viktor Revitch?

She exhales, relieved.

Chews on the name.

SOPHIE

God, years and years ago. What's  
going on?

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Typical precinct HQ. Plenty of uniforms milling about.  
Low ceilings. Fluorescent lights so oppressive they turn  
white walls blue.

Fresh red ink on the massive dry erase board spells out  
Viktor Revitch's name, just under the names of the other poor  
saps unfortunate enough to die in this part of this city this  
month.

Lined up on the adjacent column is a single moniker: Sommer.

DETECTIVE DANIEL SOMMER (early-to-mid 40s), doesn't totally  
look the part in his plainclothes. But the stubble on his  
chin is a dead giveaway for a sleepless night or two.

He flips methodically through the contents of the crisp  
manila case folder. Passes a few pages to the SECRETARY  
behind the wraparound desk.

DANIEL

Two copies.