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FADE IN

EXT. BORDEAUX, FRANCE - WINE STORE - EVENING - 2009

A quaint but ageing wine shop. Wood shutters with potted planters outside, a large glass window with a curved sign: VINS ANTIQUES

INT. VINS ANTIQUES WINE SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Bottles displayed neatly on old wooden shelves, row on row. Some standing upright, tucked neatly in their boxes. A BELL RINGS above the door. The STOREOWNER, older, is adding receipts behind the counter. He barely glances up through thick glasses.

STORE OWNER
(in French)
We are closing. Please be quick.

SERGE, a rough, stocky man in his 50s, flips the OUVERT sign to FERME.

SERGE
(in French)
Closing? Yes, you are.

A bottle SMASHES on the floor. Then another. Serge walks towards the alarmed Storeowner, tipping bottles behind him as he goes.

STORE OWNER
(in French)
What are you doing??

SMASH. Another bottle.

SERGE
(in French)
Exacting revenge, my friend. You steal from us, we steal from you.

STORE OWNER
(realizing; in French)
I know who you are. You are Armeé du vin français.

SERGE
(in French)
Where are the imports?

The Storeowner points a shaky finger to his right. There, on the wall, bottles with numerous country labels under a sign: VINS IMPORTE.

STORE OWNER
(in French)
Please. I need to make a living.

SERGE
(in French)
As do we.
(glancing to the rear)
Do you have a back door?

STORE OWNER
(in French)
Yes...

With the flip of his wrist, Serge produces a grenade.

SERGE
(in French)
Leave at once.

Plucking the pin, Serge tosses the grenade at the imported section. The Storeowner GASPS, then runs towards the back.

EXT. VINS ANTIQUES WINE SHOP - MOMENTS LATER

Just as he exits the door, BELL JINGLING, the store is rocked by an EXPLOSION. The front window SHATTERS.

Serge barely flinches. Behind him, wine floods the walk.

EXT. BORDEAUX PUB - EVENING

Old, historic. Brick covered in ivy. Bicycles and scooters parked outside. Rolling vineyards in the background.

INT. PUB - CONTINUOUS

A BARTENDER hands DION two glasses of red wine. Dion is baby-faced, somewhat gangly, and dressed like a tourist...because he is.

He snakes through the crowd back to a large table where--

ETIENNE, PHILLIPE, and MARIE are talking. Etienne is laid back, long wavy hair. Phillipe, business-like, thin. Both men are American, late 20s. Marie is cute, simply dressed.

She is a local. Dion snuggles up next to Marie, hands her a wine glass.

PHILLIPE

...and it's the glut of these new world grapes coming into the region. Bordeaux is heading into dangerous territory, Marie.

MARIE

(accented)
How so, Phillipe?

PHILLIPE

Foreign wine is an insult. These new wines make a mockery of everything we stand for. Wine was perfected here, but it took centuries.

MARIE

Perhaps the harvest was not so good. Bad weather, pests. I think if the winery can make better wine from grapes outside France, then why not?

ETIENNE

Because it will sell cheaper and undermine other wine producers.

DION

The price point on these cheap wines will dictate the market in the region.

MARIE

I disagree. People's palates will allow them to choose which way they want to go.

ETIENNE

For better or worse.

MARIE

And what is wrong with that, Etienne?

ETIENNE

It's the way we were raised.

MARIE

And what of sales? What if the vineyard is having trouble paying their bills? Why not allow them to find cheaper grapes if they can still make wine the way they do? Mother Nature, sometimes, does not cooperate.

PHILLIPE

Ooh, she's a lively one, Dion.

DION

But the market will become confused. Which wine is it? Which grapes? You're crying wolf.

MARIE

Crying wolf? What does this mean?

Etienne and Phillipe stifle a laugh.

DION

It means, no one will believe which wine you are selling if you diversify. Who's to tell if you are using a grape grown locally over one grown in, say, Greece?

ETIENNE

Does the wine become French or Greek?

MARIE

So, wine producers cannot be told what to do?

DION

For the good of the region, yes.

ETIENNE

Well, there's always the Chinese. They don't listen to anyone.

PHILLIPE

That market is growing fast, by the way.

DION

Don't get me started.

MARIE

Enough of this talk. No more arguments. Excuse me.

Somewhat huffy, she gets up to leave and heads for the WC.

ETIENNE

So, Dion. You fucked her yet?

DION

Guys, come on.

ETIENNE

(to Phillipe)

He hasn't.

DION

I have two days left before we fly home.

ETIENNE

You met her a week ago. Don't tell me you're holding out for marriage.

PHILLIPE

Maybe that isn't so bad. You can marry into her father's vineyard.

ETIENNE

And leave us to run Dad's.

DION

You guys would run it into the ground.

Looking back at the WC, Dion rises.

DION

I need some alone time.

PHILLIPE

Don't wander far, bro.
(looks at Etienne)
We got business.

EXT. ALLEY - LATER

Dion and Marie kissing passionately. Slightly distracted, he comes up for air but Marie pulls him back.

DION

I need to check on...

MARIE
Embrasse moi.

DION
But my brothers.

MARIE
Kiss me.

DION
You're right. Screw them.

The continue to make out.

INT. PUB - CONTINUOUS

Phillipe flashes two fingers up to the bartender as he walks up to the bar. A HAND from behind SLAPS Phillipe on the shoulder, startling him. The hand belongs to ROMBARDE. In his 60s, rigid, serious.

A paper bag is thrust at Phillipe.

ROMBARDE
(French accent)
Tonight, you become men. Yes?

Rombarde LAUGHS and leaves.

Sneaking a peek inside, Phillipe pulls out a ski mask, then quickly stuffs it back in.

EXT. PUB - MOMENTS LATER

Phillipe and Etienne hovering over Dion as he continues to make out.

ETIENNE
Looks like its all tongue.

PHILLIPE
We need to leave, loverboy.

DION
(incensed)
What? Now?

MARIE
That is fine. I need to go home.
I have a class tomorrow early.

DION
Give me a sec, guys.

ETIENNE
I have to piss anyway.

Etienne finds a nearby bush. Phillipe lights a cigarette.

Marie walks to a nearby scooter and grabs her coat wrapped in the basket. A butterfly broach on the outside lapel.

MARIE
When do you leave for the States?

DION
Saturday.

MARIE
Will you remember me?

DION
Of course. How can I not?

MARIE
Perhaps, I think I am a fling.

DION
I'll try to come back soon.

MARIE
Maybe I can visit you in
California. See your winery.

She removes her butterfly broach and pins it on him.

DION
What is this?

MARIE
My father gave this to me. I shall
come to collect. Meet me here
tomorrow. Otherwise, I call
police. Say to them you stole it.

She kisses his cheek, starts her scooter, and PUT-PUTTS away. Wandering over, Phillipe blows smoke in Dion's face.

DION
Are we really going to do this?

PHILLIPE
Why? You have reservations?

DION
The Antique Wine Shop attack last
month.

PHILLIPE
No one was hurt. Sometimes, you
have to be decisive. You of all
people should know that.

EXT. STREETCORNER - LATER

Storefronts closed, the area quiet. Dion, Etienne, and
Phillipe play hackysack on cobblestones.

HEADLIGHTS swerve towards them, coming from a van.

ETIENNE
Do you think it's finally them?

PHILLIPE
I think so.

ETIENNE
I don't know about this.

PHILLIPE
It's too late now.

DION
What's the guy's name?

PHILLIPE
Serge. We know nothing more. Got
it?

It's an older model van, dented. It BRAKES next to them.
Smoke billows out as the driver's side window rolls down.

Serge, from the Antiques Wine Shop, sizes them up.

SERGE
(not impressed)
Entrez par le petite porte.

DION
I don't speak French.

SERGE
Get in the back, idiot.

Serge flicks his cigarette at Dion.

SERGE
And move your ass.

All three walk to the rear. As Dion opens the door, SIX MASKED MEN glare back. They hold baseball bats and axes. Jugs of bleach at their feet.

The brothers climb in. A THIN MASKED MAN shakes his head.

THIN MASKED MAN
Put your masks on, idiots!

Doors SHUT, the van takes off as they fumble for the bag.

INT. VAN - MOMENTS LATER

A rough ride; shocks bouncing, gears GRINDING. A HUSKY MASKED MAN taps his bat across from Dion. Dion nudges Etienne next to him.

DION
(whispers)
Dude's got a baseball bat.

ETIENNE
I don't think we're going to hit
any grounders.

The Husky Masked Man flicks at Dion's butterfly broach.

DION
Flair.

HUSKY MASKED MAN
Off with it!

Hesitating, Dion then pockets it.

FLASHING blue lights fill the interior. The van slows to a stop. The Masked Men tense up.

DION
What is it?

PHILLIPE
Cops.

They are instantly SHUSHED by the others.

FOOTSTEPS outside...walking up to Serge's window. Muffled, rapid French. A LAUGH from an unseen officer.

FOOTSTEPS going back.

The van continues on.

EXT. WINERY FRONT GATE - LATER

Passing locked gates, the van stops near a fence.

SERGE

Vite!

The rear doors fly open. The Masked Men spill out carrying their axes, bats, and bleach.

As Dion jumps out, a winery sign catches his attention.

CHATEAU GIRARD

Dion stops Phillipe as he exits.

DION

This is Girard's winery.

PHILLIPE

Who cares? Let's get the fucker.

DION

We can't do this! This is Marie's property!

PHILLIPE

Then they are guilty like the rest!

DION

But they have bats! I thought we were only going to open the vats! You know, just spill the wine!

The masked men hope the fence and vanish into the grapevines. Dion then tries to stop Etienne.

DION

Etienne!

ETIENNE

Let's get this over with.

Etienne hops the fence. He, too, disappears. Phillipe is next. Last to follow is Dion, who reluctantly follows.

EXT. GIRARD WINERY - MOMENTS LATER

The Masked Men arrive at the door. One WHACK with a bat and the lock SNAPS. They storm inside.

Serge stops Dion at the door. Hands him a small bat.

SERGE
Guard this door.

DION
What? Why?

SERGE
Keep your eyes open, eh?

Serge rushes inside.

INT. GIRARD WINERY - MOMENTS LATER

Wine GUSHES on the floor. Taps are opened on a row of vats. Two masked men on ladders dump bleach inside open bung holes.

Dion nervously watches from the doorway.

A dog BARKS outside. The Masked Men freeze momentarily, then speed up the effort by SMASHING wine barrels with their bats and axes. Precious wine begins to cascade towards Dion.

The dog's BARKING continues.

DION'S POV

A large labrador BARKS on the porch. A light comes on. GIRARD, an older man, opens his door and marches outside in his robe.

INT. GIRARD WINERY - CONTINUOUS

Dion WHISTLES to the masked men.

DION
Company! Girard!

Serge nods to the small bat.

SERGE
Take care of it.

Serge two hands a barrel with his own bat, CRACKING it. Dion does a double-take outside, sees Girard closing in. Serge notices Dion pacing, unsure what to do.

SERGE
Hit him!

DION
No.

Girard sees him from outside.

GIRARD
Qu'est-ce que vous faites ici?

DION
AVF!

GIRARD
AVF? No!

Girard suddenly lifts a shotgun from under his robe and FIRES a blast. KNOCKS a hole in the wall.

The masked men scatter towards the rear of the winery. Etienne and Phillipe hightail it as well.

EXT. GIRARD WINERY - REAR - MOMENTS LATER

The masked men storm out of the building and blend into the grapevines. Close behind, Etienne and Phillipe stop when they realize they're missing one of them.

ETIENNE
Dion? Where is he?

PHILLIPE
He's not out here?

A CRY from inside. Someone hurt. Moments pass, and nothing. Then -- rear door opens.

Dion exits, followed seconds later by Serge.

INT. GIRARD WINERY - CONTINUOUS

A pool of blood spills from Girard. A head wound. Blood and wine mixing together on the floor. Two shades of red.

EXT. GIRARD WINERY - VINEYARD - MOMENTS LATER

The Masked Men pile into the parked van. Except for Dion, Etienne and Phillipe. They run off to the side.

Away from the road.

HUFFING and PUFFING, scrambling over stumps and vines. But not before Dion glances back.

Sees Marie in the window, trying to see what's happening.

EXT. CLEARING - LATER

All three brothers nearly collapse atop a small hill. Dion looks glumly over his shoulder at the Girard Winery below.

DION

That was fucked up. Why did we do that?

PHILLIPE

I need to quit smoking.

Etienne grabs Dion.

ETIENNE

What the fuck happened in there?

DION

The Van Driver hit Girard. Pretty badly too.

PHILLIPE

Serge? He did that?

ETIENNE

What do you mean? I saw you with the bat.

DION

I don't have it. He has it.

ETIENNE

Who?

DION

The Driver! Serge!

PHILLIPE

What if Girard dies?

DION
Don't say that.

ETIENNE
Dad is gonna be so pissed.

Flashing lights in the distance. Coming their way.

ETIENNE
Oh God!

DION
What?

ETIENNE
Look! Police!

Headlights winding their way to the front gates.

DION
We need to get out of here!

ETIENNE
Out of the country more like!

PHILLIPE
Our flights don't leave until
Saturday!

DION
Let's go to the hotel, grab our
shit, and check out early! Take
the train to Spain and fly out!

PHILLIPE
Fly out from Spain?

DION
We can't stay here.

PHILLIPE
What city?

DION
Barcelona? Madrid? Shit, I don't
know? Portugal maybe?

ETIENNE
We can never talk about this.
Ever. Agreed?

DION
Agreed.

PHILLIPE

Fuck, yeah. I don't even want to know what happened. Agreed.

All three bolt down the side of the hill.

EXT. PASO ROBLES - CHATEAU BRODEUR - FRONT GATE - PRESENT

An older model BMW turns off the main road and pulls into a set of elegant gates. A sign on the front.

CHATEAU BRODEUR

INT. BMW - CONTINUOUS

Rubbing his stubble-filled chin, an older Dion slows for the front gates to open. A large BOOM goes off as he waits, startling him.

DION

I never get used to that.

Once opened, Dion cruises through. Coming the opposite way, however, is a newer model Mercedes.

Dion tries for a glance at the driver, sees a PRETTY WOMAN smiling at the wheel.

EXT. CHATEAU BRODEUR - MOMENTS LATER

A long dirt road, surrounded by lush, full growth grapevines. The road leads to a large winery surrounded by a warehouse, equipment storage, and a manor.

MIGRANT WORKERS harvesting grapes on his left.

EXT. VINEYARD - CONTINUOUS

A zon cannon on a rotating tripod between rows of grape vines. Looks like a telescope. Suddenly, it swivels.

BOOM! The cannon shakes. Birds in the nearby field scatter.

Phillipe, early 30s now, longer hair but still cleaner cut, holds a transmitter. Etienne fumbles the instructions. He's heavier now, a bit messily dressed.

Parking his car, Dion admires their new toy.

DION
Is that a new zon cannon?

ETIENNE
Dad insisted. Waste of time.
Birds will just come back.

DION
So, who was the chick?

ETIENNE
What chick?

DION
Mercedes, you moron.

PHILLIPE
Realtor. From San Francisco. Name
is Abby. She's cute.

DION
Realtor? What for?

PHILLIPE
Just asking questions.

DION
About our winery?

ETIENNE
That, and other local ones.

DION
Did you tell her we're not
interested?

ETIENNE
Doesn't hurt to hear what she had
to say.

DION
I'm not hearing you. Where's Dad?
He called me.

ETIENNE
Where he always is.

PHILLIPE
I'll move the zon to the other side
and do it again.

Phillipe walks to the zon cannon and picks it up. All three
men begin to walk in-between rows.

ETIENNE

Chateau Solennel was sold to the Chinese. They paid big bucks for it too.

DION

That's the fifteenth one this year.

PHILLIPE

The entire Bordeaux region is turning into Chateau Beijing.

ETIENNE

Not that its a bad thing.

DION

Not a bad thing?

ETIENNE

Come on, Dion. Phillipe and I, we see change as a good thing.

PHILLIPE

Sales have dropped. Too much debt.

ETIENNE

Dad doesn't realize how bad business is. We're struggling.

DION

We'll turn it around.

PHILLIPE

What does Dad want with you, anyway?

DION

I'm not sure. Probably talk about our distributor.

ETIENNE

His lawyer was here yesterday.

DION

Why?

Etienne shrugs.

JEAN-CLAUDE pokes up from a row. Old, thin, holds a cane.

JEAN-CLAUDE

Place the cannon over here, si vous plait.

DION
Good morning.

JEAN-CLAUDE
Eleven months of the year, the bird
is a good ally. But in August, it
then turns on us and eats the
grapes. They peel the skin, this
causes them to rot.

DION
And rot leads to ants, yellow
jackets, and fruit flies.

JEAN-CLAUDE
Pests in the vineyard. Always a
nuisance. Walk with me, Dion.

Dion eyes his brothers, shrugs a "no idea."

EXT. VINEYARDS - MOMENTS LATER

Tenderly, Jean-Claude touches the grape leaves as he strolls.
Dion plucks a grape, squishes it, then pops it in his mouth.

JEAN-CLAUDE
How is the distributor?

DION
Not good. They want to make some
concessions. She's coming by
tomorrow.

JEAN-CLAUDE
You mean drop the price?

DION
Prices. Plural.

JEAN-CLAUDE
A travesty, is it not? Wine
coolers, candy flavored wines. My
God, I even heard there is a
chocolate wine now.

DION
These are all gimmicks. People
will wake up.

JEAN-CLAUDE

I hope you are correct. But even in France, they are rethinking their strategy. Margins are thin.

Jean-Claude frowns at a massive billboard across the street.

TWO FOR ONE WINE TASTING. LARKWOOD WINERY. 300 FEET AHEAD. TUESDAY IS KARAOKE NIGHT!

JEAN-CLAUDE

Phillipe and Etienne want me to sell the winery.

DION

They can't be serious.

JEAN-CLAUDE

I am not stupid. I see changes.

Jean-Claude plucks a grape.

JEAN-CLAUDE

I love this land. This country. Planting vines from my homeland here and watching them grow and mature was one of my best accomplishments. After raising the three of you, of course.

DION

Mom was right to bring you here.

JEAN-CLAUDE

I miss her dearly.

DION

We all do.

JEAN-CLAUDE

Sometimes you fight hard to protect the vineyard and you lose sight of family.

DION

Dad, come on. Her cancer came up suddenly. You could do nothing.

JEAN-CLAUDE

I feel her spirit inside you. More than your brothers, I'm afraid.

Dion doesn't respond.

JEAN-CLAUDE
Spirit that I hope continues for
the success of this winery.

DION
This is all you. You made this
excellent wine possible.

JEAN-CLAUDE
I can trust you to make good
judgements. Like running the
winery.

DION
That's your job, Dad. I can't do
what you do.

JEAN-CLAUDE
It's hard work. But not so hard.

Jean-Claude stops, places both hands on Dion.

JEAN-CLAUDE
Never sell it, Dion.

DION
Don't talk like that.

JEAN-CLAUDE
It must stay in the family.

DION
It always will.

JEAN-CLAUDE
Bien. All is well then. Now, if
you could do me a favor.

DION
Yes?

JEAN-CLAUDE
The California Coast Wine
Competition is coming up. My
senses are not so good. I want you
there in my place. You would
represent the winery. Will you do
it for a drooling, nasally old man?

DION
I'd be honored.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO - RESTAURANT - EVENING

A VALET hands Dion a ticket.

INT. RESTAURANT - LATER

Busy inside. Lots of PATRONS milling in the bar area. Dion straightens his shirt in a mirror.

The RESTAURANT OWNER sees Dion and parts a crowd.

RESTAURANT OWNER
Dion! Jean-Claude called me. Is he okay?

Nearby, Rombarde, the same man from the pub in Bordeaux, is there. He turns his head as if hearing the name. A SEXY YOUNG WOMAN hangs on his arm.

DION
He couldn't make it. He asked me to fill in. He is not well.

RESTAURANT OWNER
Well, you are in the very least a sommelier. One of the best Bordeaux experts I know. I trust your judgment. Let's go.

DION
What am I tasting?

RESTAURANT OWNER
Two thousand five Bordeaux. Blind.

DION
Oh-five? But they are too early to open. And highly tannic right now.

RESTAURANT OWNER
The Oh-fives are highly prized. They sell well. Most people can't tell the difference, anyway.

Quite smug, the Restaurant Owner walks off. Dion is grabbed immediately by Rombarde.

ROMBARDE
Dion. Good to see you again.

It takes a moment, then Dion recognizes him.

DION
Monsieur Rombarde. Good to see you
again as well. What bring you here
to the good ole USA?

ROMBARDE
I own a small winery in Sonoma.
For a few years now. Did you know
this?

DION
No, I didn't.

ROMBARDE
The wine is brilliant. It is in
the competition.

DION
Oh, really?

ROMBARDE
(leans over)
A blowjob from this pretty girl.
Nice, eh?

Surprised, Dion takes in the beauty, who is all smiles.

SEXY YOUNG WOMAN
(French accent)
The bottle has a slight green hue.

INT. BACKROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A long table in the middle. White clothed. JUDGES on the
panel. All waiting. **Dion** at one end. A card in front:
CHATEAU BRODEUR.

SALES REPS, DISTRIBUTOR REPS and WINERY OWNERS sit on chairs.
As well as Abby, the girl in the Mercedes. Watching closely.
Dion spots her, tries to think where he knows her...

RESTAURANT OWNER
Judges. We'll begin.

A WAITER hoists the first covered bottle and pours.

CUT TO:

INT. BACK ROOM - LATER

DRAKE pumps Dion's hand. He's wearing a badge that says GOLD MEDAL WINNER.

DRAKE
Thank you for choosing my wine!

DION
It's a wonderful wine, Mr. Drake.
I think it deserved first place.

Drake walks down the line shaking the hands of the judges. Suddenly, Dion comes face to face with Rombarde and the girl. Rombarde throws a BRONZE MEDAL badge at him.

ROMBARDE
Drake's wine is piss!

DION
Monsieur Rombarde. I enjoyed yours
very much too.

ROMBARDE
Your palate is shit!

DION
Your Bordeaux will benefit from
another year of ageing. It will be
incredible then.

ROMBARDE
Idiot!

The Sexy Young Woman grabs Rombarde by the arm.

SEXY YOUNG WOMAN
Uncle. Please, let us go.

With a cold sneer, Rombarde and his companion leave.

Abby satchets up to Dion with a glass of wine. She holds up the Bronze Medal Rombarde cast aside.

ABBY
Not a good way to influence a
judge. For future considerations,
of course.

DION
I actually know Rombarde. From
years ago.

(MORE)

DION(cont'd)

My father was good friends with him
at one time. He makes great wine.

ABBY

But not tonight.

DION

It's too young. Most of the wines
here tonight are. This was a tough
call.

ABBY

I'm Abby. You're Dion, right?

Dion looks at Abby and then he realizes...

DION

You're the realtor.

ABBY

Yes. I love the area. I have
quite a few clients that are
interested in wineries.

DION

Ours is not for sale.

ABBY

Dion. Short for Dionysis? God of
wine?

DION

Yes. Wow. Not many people get it.
Mom's idea.

ABBY

Maybe I did my homework.

DION

Okay...

ABBY

Tell me, God of wine...what exactly
is in this glass?

EXT. RESTAURANT PATIO - EVENING

Half busy, few tables. Small fire. Abby swirls her glass.

DION

Now take a sniff.

She does.

ABBY
Fruity. Um, plums? A bit
of...smoke?

DION
Now take a sip.

She does.

ABBY
Raisins, plums maybe. That's it.
Sorry, I can't tell anymore.

DION
The finish is incredible, isn't it?
The after taste lingers forever.
It makes you want another sip.

ABBY
Yes!

Dion pours her another glass.

ABBY
I'll need a cab after this.

DION
I know a good one. Red ripe
fruits, really bold...

ABBY
I meant taxi.

Smirking, Dion tops off his glass.

DION
So, you said you have clients
looking at wineries in our area.

ABBY
Yes. A few. We bought a couple in
Napa and now some are looking down
here. Some are struggling.

DION
The economy hit a lot of wineries
hard. It's been a slow rebuild.

ABBY
My clients are aware of that. They
want to keep wineries producing.
No slow down.

DION

That's what they all say. Whenever a winery changes hands, it tries to reinvent itself. Grow modern. It takes years to adjust. And by then, it's too late.

ABBY

Too late for what?

DION

Itself. The winery will be sold. Change hands again. Pretty soon, all that is left is for the boars.

ABBY

Boars?

DION

Big, nasty wild pigs that eat and destroy everything in sight.

ABBY

Gross. They're wild out here?

DION

Everywhere. And they love grapes.

ABBY

Oink, oink.

She checks her watch and downs her glass.

ABBY

I'm sorry. I have to go.
(kisses him on the cheek)
This was nice. I would like to learn more. Can I swing by your winery sometime?

DION

Sure. Just ask for me.

ABBY

I will.

As she leaves, his eyes follow her every step.

EXT. WINERY - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Dion follows a SALES REP to her car. She walks with her laptop. Behind them, Etienne drives a forklift carrying a large container of picked grapes.

SALES REP

So, that's one hundred cases of the Cab Reserve, one hundred of the Bordeaux Blend...

DION

Syrah-grenache?

SALES REP

How about forty? Chardonnay, I'll put down for fifty.

DION

So, one hundred, another hundred, forty and fifty. That's barely four pallets this time.

SALES REP

Your product is not moving like it used to, Dion. I still have oh-sixes and oh-eights on our shelves. They are way past peaking. In another month, they will be put out on close out.

DION

No way. Our wines will never be discounted.

SALES REP

Tell that to the retailers. They are already doing it.

DION

Who? Which ones?

SALES REP

Look, Dion. Your wine is incredible. No one disputes that. It's just priced too high in this economy.

DION

The economy is picking up.

SALES REP

But the price point per bottle
dropped in the last few years.
Consumers want the cheaper wines.
Blame the millenials.

DION

So, what do we do? Make raspberry
wine? Vanilla chocolate swirl?

SALES REP

Someone already does. Bye!

With a casual wave, she jumps in her car and drives off.

EXT. WINERY - FRONT GATE - DAY

A limousine waist at the front gate. Dion pulls up behind it
and HONKS. The car stays put, blocking the entrance.

DION

Come on.

Not getting the hint, Dion exits his car and walks over.
TAPS on the driver's tinted window.

DION

Sorry, we don't offer wine tasting.
You'll have to move, please.

The driver's side door flings open. Out emerges Serge, from
France years ago, and he walks to the rear door. His is
grayer now, still holding a strong frame, however.

DION

Do I know...you?

Rombarde exits the limo.

DION

Monsieur Rombarde?

ROMBARDE

You made a mockery of me, Dion.

Serge captures Dion's attention.

DION

(realizing)

Wait. You're Serge. From
Bordeaux. What are you doing here?

A SNARLING Rottweiler jumps out of the limo.

SERGE
Attacquez!

It charges. BARKING, SNARLING, teeth frothing.

Dion jumps up quickly on the limo's hood. The Rottweiler tries to jump up but can't. It BARKS and SNARLS.

Rombarde strolls to some grapes growing nearby.

ROMBARDE
What are we growing here, Dion?

DION
Get this dog away from me!

ROMBARDE
Petite Syrah?

He RIPS a cluster off the branch and squashes it.

ROMBARDE
Who would buy such plonk? Where's your better grapes?

DION
Stay away!

The Rottweiler continues to SNARL, drool and pace.

DION
I am sorry I did not choose your wine, Rombarde! I thought it was excellent! It was a very close call!

ROMBARDE
Celebrities, politicians...they will all assume Drake's Bordeaux is the finest! And it's not!

Dion reaches into his pocket and pulls out a buck knife.

DION
Call off the fucking dog!

Dion swipes at the Rottweiler. Incensed at first, Serge sees Migrant Workers down the road beginning to take notice.

SERGE
Monsieur?

ROMBARDE

Enough.

SERGE

Veins ici!

The Rottweiler instantly stops, allows Serge to leash it.

ROMBARDE

Let us be civilized about this,
Dion. Put the weapon down.

DION

Not until you leave.

ROMBARDE

Come down. I shall not release the
dog again.

Dion slowly drops down on the other side.

ROMBARDE

To succeed in the wine business,
you have to stay current. I plan
to market a new wine. Colorful,
light, flavorful, and affordable.

DION

I would call that a sell out.

Rombarde digs his hand into the earth. Scoops up a handful.

ROMBARDE

But there are riches to be made
down here. Areas much like
Bordeaux. The climate, closeness
to ocean, the soil. Agreeable.

Rombarde carefully layers the dirt.

ROMBARDE

Thankfully, there is no wine
terrorism here. No terror groups
to influence the wineries. Not
like France.

DION

No there isn't.

ROMBARDE

Do you recognize my friend with the
dog?

DION
Girard Winery. The Driver.

ROMBARDE
His name is Serge. He is also a
French policeman.

SERGE
I remember this boy and his idiot
brothers well.

DION
What do you want, Rombarde?

ROMBARDE
I want to make great wine.

DION
You already do.

ROMBARDE
Take good care of these plants.

Rombarde nods to Serge. They climb into the limo and leave.

INT. CHATEAU BRODEUR WAREHOUSE - DAY

Dion wraps a pallet of wine in cellophane. Etienne steers a
forklift, lines up the forks. Bumps the pallet.

DION
More to the left.

Etienne backs up, swivels, and bumps it again.

DION
Left more.

ETIENNE
I got it.

But he doesn't...because the forks hit the pallet again.

ETIENNE
Damn it!

Etienne RAMS the pallet and SMASHES a case. Juice spills.

DION
What the hell?

ETIENNE
Doesn't fucking matter.

Etienne climbs down.

DION
Do you need me to steer?

ETIENNE
What's the point?

DION
Rombarde?

ETIENNE
Why's he here? Why now? Why's he
pulling shit like he did to you
this morning?

DION
I don't know.

ETIENNE
And why's the cop here? What's he
trying to prove?

DION
I think he's just security. A
driver. Fuckin' guy to iron his
clothes. I don't know.

ETIENNE
They want something. They are
trying to intimidate us.

DION
What are you getting at?

ETIENNE
Wrap the pallet yourself.

Etienne storms off.

Dion climbs inside the forklift. A YOUNG FIELD WORKER enters
the warehouse.

YOUNG FIELD WORKER
Dion? Your father...

EXT. WINERY - MOMENTS LATER

WORKERS point down the road for Dion. He sees Jean-Claude
bending down, struggling.

DION
Dad! What is it?

Dion runs towards him.

EXT. VINEYARD - MOMENTS LATER

Jean-Claude studies a grape stalk. Dried, yellow. Different than the others. Dion scours the other stalks.

JEAN-CLAUDE
My plants are dying. Look at them.

DION
Parasite? Fungus?

JEAN-CLAUDE
I fear something worse.

DION
Sabotage?

JEAN-CLAUDE
Where's Etienne and Phillipe?

DION
Phillipe is in town. Etienne...I don't know. He left.

JEAN-CLAUDE
This is the work of man.

DION
Rombarde?

Jean-Claude straightens, looking dour.

JEAN-CLAUDE
So it has come here.

DION
What has?

JEAN-CLAUDE
I sent you boys to do one simple task. Learn the harvest as the French do. And what do you boys do in your spare time?

DION
Not this again.

JEAN-CLAUDE
You participate in criminal
activity!

DION
We thought we were helping the
locals.

JEAN-CLAUDE
Helping? Armed thugs ruining an
innocent man's farm?

DION
We didn't know he was innocent.
Until it was too late.

JEAN-CLAUDE
How would you know? You spent more
time in the pubs! What is it with
men in their twenties that think
they can change the world?

DION
We thought Girard was buying cheap
grapes. That undermines the local
grape production.

JEAN-CLAUDE
What gives you the right to decide
what a man can do to make wine?

Dion is at a loss.

JEAN-CLAUDE
A winery has no bearing on his
neighbors land. It's up to him to
make great wine. Not be dependent
on what the man does next door.

DION
Rombarde lied. We know that now.

JEAN-CLAUDE
Rombarde was always jealous of the
other terroir. Girard played by
the rules and Rombarde hated him
for it. He managed to get you
three idiots to do his dirty work.

DION
We weren't the only idiots there.

Jean-Claude waves it off. And begins to LAUGH.

JEAN-CLAUDE
 Bordeaux marks up their wines based
 on one single theory. Because they
 can. The world demands Bordeaux
 and Bordeaux delivers. But is it
 really that good?

DION
 Of course.

JEAN-CLAUDE
 Nothing more than centuries old
 hype?

DION
 Come on. Don't say that.

Jean-Claude strokes a dead leaf.

JEAN-CLAUDE
 This cannot be coincidence.

EXT. VINEYARD - EVENING

Leaves shake in a row of grapes. DRILLING fills the air.
 Seconds later, Serge pops up. Dressed in black. He holds a
 cordless power drill.

The winery in the near distance looks undisturbed.

Continuing, he DRILLS into another stalk. He then removes a
 syringe, sticks it inside the hole, and squeezes.

JEAN-CLAUDE (V.O.)
 You there! What in God's name are
 you doing to my plants?

Jean-Claude grabs the syringe and they tussle. Serge gut
 punches Jean-Claude who drops to the ground.

Serge calmly walks off as Jean-Claude GASPS for air.

EXT. CHATEAU BRODEUR - MORNING

Police units parked. POLICEMEN walk along the rows of vines
 and around the winery.

Dion joins Etienne and Phillippe as they inspect some vines.

PHILLIPE
 Right here. Another one. Damn!

DION

What is it?

ETIENNE

They drilled poison into our vines.

PHILLIPE

We think they used a syringe to fill the stalks. We can't find it though.

DION

So what happened?

PHILLIPE

Dad heard a noise out here. We assume it was the drill. He came out to investigate. We think he surprised the attacker and they struggled. I found him out here unconscious.

ETIENNE

Heart attack.

DION

At least he's in the hospital.

PHILLIPE

He's old, Dion. He can't fight. It was too much.

DION

Who do you think did it?

PHILLIPE

We don't know. Cops found some footprints. They appear to show the guy fled over that hill.

Liquid oozes out of a small hole like sap.

PHILLIPE

Liquid carbon disulfide. It kills the plant within days. The guy did this entire row.

ETIENNE

Do you think it was Rombarde?

DION

It could be anyone.

ETIENNE

Give me a break. No one else would do this. No one around here.

EXT. CHATEAU BRODEUR - WINERY - DAY

Dion cleans a large metallic vat with a mop. Workers behind him dump grapes into large containers.

ABBY (VO)

Getting ready for harvest?

Dion jumps at her voice.

ABBY

Sorry, I didn't mean to scare you.

DION

I didn't hear you come in. Too much noise.

ABBY

I heard about your father. I'm so sorry. Is he okay?

DION

Thanks. He's under good care. He'll get better.

ABBY

So this is where all the magic happens?

DION

No. All the magic is outside. The elements, the terroir. In here, we just package the magic.

Abby looks at all the equipment.

ABBY

How does this work?

Dion places the mop aside.

DION

Well, we gather all the grapes from outside and load them all into this vat, called a hopper.

ABBY

And then the move along this belt?

DION

Yes, to a vibrating table. Follow me.

She walks with him along the belt to a flat table.

DION

Once the grapes fall to the table, we remove them stems, moldy grapes, any foreign objects. The rest of the good grapes go to a fermentation tank.

ABBY

That's called "must," right?

DION

Very good.

He grabs a long pole with a cap on the end.

DION

The must then starts a cold soak for a few days. We add carbon dioxide in there, the must heats up and we use these caps to push the grapes down and recirculate. It's called a punch down.

ABBY

For how long?

He points to a few large tanks.

DION

A few weeks. The must is then transferred from the tank to another and their skins are removed. After that, we transfer to barrels. Whole process take about a month.

EXT. VINEYARD - MOMENTS LATER

Glasses filled with red wine, Dion and Abby stroll among the rows of grapes, stopping at one particular grape stalk.

DION

We all try to achieve the ultimate ripeness. The desire to allow grapes to reach the perfect sugar level.

(MORE)

DION(cont'd)

Some will leave their grapes longer
and longer to get there. Past
their normal stage.

ABBY

Can I try one?

DION

Sure.

She plucks one and bites into it.

DION

It's called humidification.
Seeking the holy grail of the
grape. How does it taste?

ABBY

Yummy.

Dion then squashes another in his hand.

DION

We look for a good stain and the
skin about to shrivel. See that?
A great color. We also want the
stalks to go from green to brown.
This is our "hang time."

ABBY

Which grape is this?

DION

Merlot.

ABBY

So what exactly is terroir?

DION

The land, the composition of the
soil, the sun, all cultivated,
formed, and given love to. From
the soil to the grape. A
harmonious blend of soil, rock,
climate, and last, human touch.

ABBY

So just growing grapes is not
enough?

DION

It's like raising a perfect child.
Every year.

Her cell phone RINGS. She stares at it, then shuts it off.

DION
Realtor always on call, eh?

ABBY
Sorry, another client. Can I buy a
bottle of wine from you?

DION
Sure. What's your palate?

ABBY
I like spice, dark fruits, not dry.

INT. WINERY - LATER

Moving along the rows of bottles, Dion selects one and hands
it to her.

DION
Barbera. We started growing these
a few years ago.

She looks it over for the price.

ABBY
How much do I owe you?

DION
It's on me.

ABBY
Tell you what. Come by my hotel
tonight and we'll share it over
dinner. I'm at the Shady Oak
Hotel.

DION
Seven?

She kisses him on the cheek and leaves.

INT. HOSPITAL - LATER

Dion holds Jean-Claude's hand as he lays in bed. His eyes
are closed. Machines BEEP, tubes and lines run everywhere.

DION
So, the good news is, our sales rep
called and ordered more cases.
(MORE)

DION(cont'd)

They especially want more of the Bordeaux blend. I told you the mixture you set was top notch.

He looks for a reaction. Nothing.

DION

I think we should expand some rows for Syrah-Grenache. I think that's a hit too.

Still nothing.

DION

A pig ate our entire Chardonnay.

No reaction. A NURSE enters the room.

NURSE

I'm sorry, sir. You should leave.

DION

Is he going to be okay?

NURSE

We're doing our best.

DION

Dad? Etienne and Phillippe will come by later, okay? Hang in there. Love you.

INT. SHADY OAK RESTAURANT - EVENING

White cloth, yet casual crowd. Dion refills Abby's glass.

ABBY

This Barbera is marvelous. Silky tannins. Wowza.

DION

Did you feel enough grip on your palate?

ABBY

(GIGGLES)

Grip? I like the finish.

DION

Good.

ABBY

So, how come you are single?

DION
Busy with the winery. Never met
the right one. Lots of excuses.

Dion spots her ring finger. Empty.

DION
Are you single?

ABBY
It's...

DION
Don't say complicated.

ABBY
Over.

Dion smiles.

ABBY
Wine seems very important to you.

DION
It's all I've ever known.

ABBY
What's the allure?

DION
Wine is an emotion. You look
forward to it and you know you'll
change after your first sip. The
taste, the scent, it's all
powerful. It lingers.

ABBY
I love the aftertaste.

DION
It's personal and unique. It will
move you as if telling a story.
Like a good book.

ABBY
A good book?

DION
A book looks the same. Pages, a
cover, words. But when you read
it, you'll interpret and visualize
the story different than someone
else.

(MORE)

DION(cont'd)

Wine does the same, it moves you from one feeling to the next. A perfect balancing act that makes you feel good.

She sips some more.

ABBY

Like a buzz.

DION

No. Any wine maker can create a buzz from alcohol. Wine seduces, it woos you and wants to take you in.

His cell phone RINGS. He answers.

DION

Hey. What's up Phillipe?

(listens)

Oh no...

EXT. CHATEAU BRODEUR - DAY

GUESTS mingle in and outside eating and drinking. A photo of a young Jean-Claude tending to grapes. Sympathy cards surrounded by flowers.

Dressed in a suit, Dion sips a glass of ice tea. He looks around, thinks about mingling but hesitates.

A HAND touches him. He jumps. A LAWYER, impeccably dressed.

LAWYER

Dion, right? You were his youngest son?

DION

Yes, that's me.

LAWYER

I am the attorney for Jean-Claude's estate. We have important matters to discuss.

He motions Dion to the door.

LAWYER

May we talk in private? It is about the estate. Unless, you would prefer another time.

DION
No, it's fine. I need to get air.

EXT. VINEYARD - MOMENTS LATER

Dion and the Lawyer stroll through the grounds.

LAWYER
Jean-Claude loved this winery.

DION
It meant everything to him.

LAWYER
He knew you loved wine as much as he did. Maybe even more. He changed his will just weeks ago.

DION
Oh?

LAWYER
He bequeathed to you one-third ownership of this winery. I've informed your brothers the same.

DION
Right thing to do.

LAWYER
However, Jean-Claude included a clause in this agreement.

DION
What clause?

LAWYER
Shares of this winery can be sold independently. But it cannot be sold entirely. If two of you sell, one of you must remain.

DION
So it stays in the family.

LAWYER
He knew all parties involved may not wish to be involved forever. He wasn't going to force any of you to stay on.

DION
Has there been any negotiating?

LAWYER
For some time now. But not with
your father.

Dion looks over at Etienne and Phillipe who are talking with others. Etienne looks beat.

DION
Who is the interested party?

LAWYER
There has been a few.

DION
Is Rombarde one of them?

LAWYER
Yes. Do you know him?

EXT. WINERY - LATER

Dion loosens his tie as he walks to his car. Etienne sees him and runs over.

ETIENNE
Dion. Wait up.

DION
What is it?

ETIENNE
Look, Dion. Phillipe and I can't
run this winery anymore. You know
that. Our heart isn't in it.
Especially now.

DION
Dad didn't want us to sell it.

ETIENNE
Look, Dion. We're getting a lot of
sweet offers. You'll benefit too.
Money for your business, vacation,
whatever. Point is, we don't have
to struggle anymore.

DION
This isn't about selling out. It's
about giving up.

(MORE)

DION(cont'd)

Dad's wine here is a masterpiece.
If you sell it, the winery will go
to shit. You know it.

ETIENNE

Listen to me, Dion! There is no
future here! We can't run this!

DION

The economy is turning around.
Sales will go back up.

ETIENNE

We took in too much debt during the
recession. We took too much of a
hit. We may have to declare
bankruptcy.

DION

So, your solution is to sell it
Rombarde? That man will destroy
everything Dad worked for!

ETIENNE

He has promised us that not only
will he stick to the same standards
and practices that Dad had, he will
also keep all staff.

DION

Then he recognizes what a great
winery this is.

ETIENNE

Exactly.

DION

Except that he lying! He told me
he is going to mass market novelty
wines. Are you ready for blueberry
flavored merlot? Fuckin' caramel
topped pinot?

ETIENNE

This winery will sell, Dion.

Dion climbs in his car.

DION

Not my share. Ever.

ETIENNE

Where are you going?

INT. RESTAURANT - BAR - LATER

A bottle of Pinot Noir is nearly drained in front of Dion. He still wears the suit from the wake, zoning at the sunset.

A table near the bar. TWO YOUNG GIRLS and a GUY. The guy swirls a glass in front of them.

GUY
Just shake the glass in circles.
Get the wine moving.

GIRL #1
Like this?

GUY
Yeah. Splash is good.

GIRL #2
For how long?

GUY
Uh, thirty seconds is good. The wine has to breathe. It takes a long time.

Dion hears this and SNICKERS.

GIRL #1
Can I drink it yet? I just want to get fucked up.

GIRL #2
Me too.

GUY
Wait, wait. Now, lift the glass up high. Tip it slightly.

They all do.

GUY
See a bit of wine draining slowly?

GIRL #2
I do.

GUY
That's called legs. It shows you how good the wine is. The slower the legs, the better the wine.

GIRL #1
My wine has some hot legs then!

DION
You're so full of shit.

The Guy turns his head.

GUY
Excuse me?

DION
Legs is a measure of alcohol. It doesn't have anything to do with the quality of wine except most high alcohol wines are shit. You are shit.

GIRL #1
I thought too much alcohol was a good thing.

GUY
Hey, man. This is a private party. Why don't you shut the hell up?

DION
If you want advice on how to get one of these girls to fuck you, say something intelligent.

GUY
I got my own wine cellar, bro. I got bottles of Dom and Krystal in there. So I think I know my fuckin' wine.

DION
If you knew your wine, you wouldn't pair a Riesling with oysters. You got a sweet wine because you knew these bitches would drink a lot of it so my guess is, you're trying for a threesome.

GIRL #1
Hey!

DION

If you want to sound like a connoisseur, you wouldn't have selected a seven dollar supermarket wine that you ended up paying thirty bucks for. Now, you're just a sucker.

The Guy stands up. He and Dion face each other.

GUY

Get lost, asshole.

DION

You want to take a swing at me? Go ahead. But you're gonna look really stupid with that bottle shoved up your ass.

The Guy shoves Dion. Dion shoves him back. A WAITER steps in-between them.

WAITER

Take it easy, you two. This is a public place. There are kids here.

GUY

Get this prick out of here. I pay good money in this joint.

GIRL #2

Yeah, that guy started it.

WAITER

(to Dion)

Chill out, sir. Or I'll get the manager.

Dion shoves past, but not before grabbing the bottle.

WAITER

You can't take the bottle with you.

DION

I paid for it, asshole.

EXT. PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Dion walks to his car drinking out of the bottle. He fumbles, drops his keys and SIGHS. Leans back.

A limo pulls up. Serge gets out. Opens the rear door. Inside, Rombarde.

ROMBARDE
Dion. Let us talk.

DION
About what?

ROMBARDE
Your father. A great man.

DION
No thanks.

ROMBARDE
We'll take you home.

Serge eyes him like a cop.

SERGE
You've had too much to drink.

EXT. WINERY - FRONT GATE - LATER

The limo slows to a stop. Serge gets out, opens the door. Dion exits. Rombarde follows.

ROMBARDE
Very beautiful this land. Right in the middle of San Francisco and Los Angeles.

DION
I don't get it, Rombarde. You have your winery in Bordeaux and Napa. Why do you need this one so badly?

ROMBARDE
I knew Jean-Claude's reputation for cultivation and harvest. One of the best in all of Bordeaux. His methods were impeccable.

Rombarde walks to a row, caresses the leaves.

ROMBARDE
Jean-Claude was a master. Look at this texture on the vine. He was able to create a wonderful vine here in California.

DION
This was his life.

ROMBARDE
Perhaps it is best to move on. No?

Rombarde gets in the limo. Serge closes the door, then approaches Dion himself.

SERGE
The attack at Girard Winery. I
have evidence you were there.
We'll talk about old times. Just
you and me, eh?

Serge gets in the limo.

The limo drives off.

EXT. CHATEAU BRODEUR - DAY

A boar shuffles between grapevines.

EXT. HILL - CONTINUOUS

Phillipe swivels the zon cannon. Presses a button. BOOM!
The boar SHRIEKS and runs off.

A RUFFLE behind him. Phillipe turns around. A MIGRANT
WORKER runs up.

MIGRANT WORKER
Mr. Phillipe! Please come!

PHILLIPE
What is it?

EXT. GRAPEVINES - MOMENTS LATER

Near the front corner of the vineyard. Grapestalks removed.
The Migrant Worker bends down, cups mounds of earthed dirt.

MIGRANT WORKER
I coming to check grapes, I see
this!

PHILLIPE
What the hell?

MIGRANT WORKER
The plants is gone, Mr. Phillipe!

EXT. GRAPEVINES - MOMENTS LATER

Dion looks at the holes. Phillipe and Etienne hover.

MIGRANT WORKER
They use a shovel, I think.

ETIENNE
First poison, now this.

PHILLIPE
Maybe we should call the police.

DION
No. Don't do that.

PHILLIPE
Why the hell not?

DION
Because Rombarde came to see me
again. Him and Serge.

PHILLIPE
Why?

DION
He says he has evidence we were
there. And that we'll talk soon.
Turns out, he's a cop.

PHILLIPE
That dude was a cop?

DION
Makes sense right? Remember we got
stopped on the way? And they let
us through?

PHILLIPE
What evidence does he have?

DION
I don't know yet.

PHILLIPE

Well, that's just fucking great.
Not only is Dad dead, we're about
to lose the winery, and now some
crooked cop has evidence we
participated in a crime in France.

Phillipe storms off.

Dion stares at the holes in the ground.

INT. WINERY - DAY

WAREHOUSE WORKERS at the hopper, some at the vibrating table.
Dion walks along the belt, plucking out stems.

Abby and middle-aged, Chinese business man named CHANG enter
the warehouse. He carries a briefcase.

ABBY

Hello Dion.

DION

Abby. I was going to call.

ABBY

Dion, this is Mr. Chang. He is
from China. I told him about you
and he wants to meet you.

CHANG strolls forward, bows, and offers his hand.

CHANG

A pleasure to meet you.

Dion reluctantly shakes it.

DION

What's this about?

ABBY

Dion, Mr. Chang is a client. He
buys properties and loves the area.

DION

What kind of properties?

ABBY

Business ventures.

DION

Wineries.

Some workers look over their shoulders.

DION
Let's step outside.

EXT. VINEYARD - MOMENTS LATER

They walk. Dion and Abby out front, Chang slower, like a child, distracted and observing.

ABBY
They've acquired a few in France
and are now looking to the US.

CHANG
Very good market for wines now in
China. Country very thirsty for
good red wine.

ABBY
Lately, the French are growing
uncomfortable with foreign
investment. Which is why my
clients are looking at
alternatives.

DION
I know. Some of the wineries in
France were bought so all their
wine can be shipped to China.
However, some Bordeaux are putting
a cap on sales to China so the rest
of the world gets a crack at them.

ABBY
The Chinese are now looking at
California wineries.

Chang gently touches a grape but doesn't pluck it off.

CHANG
California wine very good too.

DION
I've been to Chinese auctions and
tastings where thousand dollar
bottles of wine are poured into
shot glasses. Some of it guzzled
like beer. Some even cooled down
with fucking ice cubes.

ABBY

Is that true?

DION

The Chinese don't understand the history and tradition that goes into every bottle. All they want is what is expensive. All those forgeries and fakes in China? I don't think you people mind. As long as you can say you spent a grand on a bottle, you're happy!

ABBY

That's a generalization.

DION

Some Bordeaux wineries have gone to shit once the Chinese bought them. Most are left unattended. They flash cash and buy desperate owners out. The problem is, Bordeaux is all about the terroir that has been shaped and nurtured for centuries.

CHANG

Mr. Dion. China has region similar to Bordeaux. We have soil, weather, and manpower.

ABBY

China is producing some top quality wines on their own. They are the sixth highest wine producer in the world. They recently won medals at a french competition.

CHANG

We can buy experience worker to oversee wine project. Very soon, wine from China number one.

ABBY

You're losing a battle that cannot be won. China already has claimed their next hobby and wine is it. You can't stop them.

DION

I don't have to. China will do it to themselves. The corrupt will always allow fake wines to permeate their market.

ABBY

My government is cracking down hard on those individuals.

DION

No one, outside of China, will ever buy your wine. Your fakes contain formaldehyde, unknown pesticides, and loads of other harmful shit that cannot be in there. Your own rush to gain a reputable, expensive, palate has doomed you.

CHANG

That was before. Now, things different. Now, China wants quality.

DION

I'm not selling.

ABBY

Dion, I'm told this winery is close to bankruptcy. Don't allow that to happen to you. Don't let your father's work fall apart.

DION

I made a promise to my father to never sell. I'll die here.

ABBY

There are good people who want to take it over. Revitalize it. Give them a chance to resurrect it.

She hands him a card.

ABBY

I would love to see you again.

Chang bows.

CHANG

An honor to meet you, Mr. Dion.

They leave.

Dion's cell phone RINGS.

EXT. HOTEL - EVENING

A sullen Dion walks through the busy lobby.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - LATER

Scanning numbers, Dion finds the intended room at the end of the hallway and KNOCKS. The door opens. Dion is let in...

INT. HOTEL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

...and grabbed by STRONG HANDS. They belong to a LARGE MASKED MAN. He is thrown against a wall and patted down.

DION
What is this?

In the middle of the room, Rombarde. Tied to a chair. Bruised, bleeding. Standing over him is Serge wearing gloves and a smile.

The Masked Man releases Dion.

SERGE
A tactic we specialize back in France. He has been playing you.

ROMBARDE
Do not listen to him, Dion.

SERGE
Shut up.

ROMBARDE
I supported you! How dare you!

SERGE
And we'll attack your vineyard!

ROMBARDE
Dirty cop! Swine!

A quick back-hand silences Rombarde. Dion doesn't mind.

DION
What do you mean he was playing me?

SERGE
He has no plans to make and sell cheap wine.

DION

Then what?

SERGE

His plan is to buy your winery cheap and make a substantial profit by selling it.

DION

Selling to who?

SERGE

The Chinese. Once he spread the word that your father's methods are duplicated here too? The Chinese will pay dearly for your winery.

DION

Here we go with China again. This is insane.

SERGE

He has already done this in Napa. Next, is your winery.

DION

He sold his Napa winery?

SERGE

Yesterday.

DION

How was he planning to buy my place cheap?

SERGE

Girard.

Serge lines up and PUNCHES Rombarde. Rombarde CRIES.

DION

I don't understand.

SERGE

Remember what I said outside the limo? I have evidence you were there in that attack. He was going to use that against you. Force you to sell.

Serge then SLAPS Rombarde. That's enough for Dion.

DION
Stop. Don't hit him, please.

SERGE
He knows your brothers want to
sell. The only issue is you.

Serge mumbles to the Masked Man. The Masked Man throws a plastic bag over Rombarde and pulls it tight. Rombarde GAGS and thrashes.

DION
Let him go! Why are you doing
this?

SERGE
The supreme leader of any group is
not the man that leads with money,
but the one who controls the army.
Mon ami, I control the army.

Serge then places a gentle hand on Dion.

SERGE
Come. I want to show you
something.

Serge guides him through an adjoining door to the next room. Behind them, Rombarde kicks and thrashes wildly.

INT. NEXT DOOR HOTEL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Dion is guided to a waiting table where two bottles and two glasses lay. Rombarde's struggles can still be heard.

DION
Are you going to kill him?

SERGE
This is no longer about him. This
is about us.
(points)
Sit. Please.

Reluctantly, Dion takes a seat.

SERGE
Recognize the wine before you?

A quick glance shows Dion, in fact, does.

SERGE

Well?

Next door, a THUMP and a MUFFLED CRY.

DION

Chateau Petrus. 1989.

SERGE

Tell me more, si vous plait.

DION

Incredible vintage, despite the challenging weather that year. A top twenty wine. Thirty five hundred dollars. Is Rombarde dead?

Serge grabs a corkscrew. Begins to open one. WEEPING from next door.

SERGE

See, you and I, we are rare. Old wine traditionalists. We respect a good wine that has earned it's...what you say? Stature?

DION

You're going to open these?

SERGE

Why not? Wine is meant to be drunk.

DION

But they're very valuable.
(leans over)
What if someone hears what's happening next door?

SERGE

There is no one at this end of the hotel. Rombarde paid extra for this.

Serge POPS open the first bottle. He pours some into one glass. Then waits.

SERGE

Well?

DION

You want me to drink it?

SERGE

No, I want you to wear it. Of course, I want you to drink. Why else would I open very expensive wine, you idiot?

Dion grabs the glass. He swirls it, lifts it up to his nose. He SNIFFS and drinks.

SERGE

Yes? The verdict?

DION

Beautiful. Intense. Wonderful. But you know that.

Serge begins opening the second one. POPS that one, pours into the other glass.

SERGE

Try this one now.

Dion does. Same routine.

DION

Unbelievable.

Serge takes a seat opposite.

SERGE

So, you've tried both. Tell me, which one is the fake?

Dion does a double-take.

DION

One of these is a fake?

Serge nods.

DION

How's Rombarde?

SERGE

Never mind him. You may inspect the bottles if you like.

Dion grabs one, studies it. Then the other.

SERGE

And?

DION
I don't know.

SERGE
You don't know.

DION
Both wines taste similar. Very
harmonious, great body. I can tell
a slight difference but these are
both made very well.

SERGE
And the labels?

Dion studies them again.

DION
I think they are both the real
thing.

Serge grabs the first bottle and throws it over his shoulder.
It CRASHES on the floor.

SERGE
Oops.

DION
Why did you...?

Serge springs forward, jams the corkscrew under Dion's neck.

SERGE
My plan is simple. I don't want to
be sole owner of your vineyard. I
know nothing of running one.

DION
Just destroying one.

SERGE
I want to be part owner. I think
one third should be good.

DION
That means one of us has to sell.

SERGE
I am not picky. But you will have
to be. And I want you to remain.

Serge then throws Dion to the bed. On the bed are large bags of corks, sleeves, and bottles. Labels for Chateau Petrus, Pomerol, Domaine de la Romanee, to name a few...

SERGE

You will make your wine but a large sum will be set to the side. Those bottles will be filled but labeled differently than yours.

DION

What?

SERGE

Your wine is good enough, even to the seasoned palate. Good enough to fool anyone. You can thank your father for that.

DION

You mean you want us to make fake wines?

SERGE

And plenty of it.

INT. WINERY - PICNIC TABLE - DAY

A full glass of wine lies untouched. Dion zoning. Phillipe sees him from the winery, walks over. Sits down across.

PHILLIPE

Dion. We need to talk.

DION

A man dies too young if he leaves any wine in his cellar.

PHILLIPE

What?

DION

This drink has been made for thousands of years. But it really hasn't change all that much.

PHILLIPE

Etienne and I are worried.

DION

Each vineyard and each wine they produce are unique.

Phillipe swats the glass away, spilling the juice everywhere.

DION

It will always be, won't it?

PHILLIPE

What the fuck happened in
Bordeaux!?

INT. IRISH BAR - LATER

Dion and Phillipe in the corner. A line of empty shot glasses in front of Phillipe. Dion sips a diet coke.

PHILLIPE

I can't get what happened to us in
France off my mind.

Phillipe takes a shot and SLAMS it on the table.

PHILLIPE

What do you know about Rombarde?

DION

Dad said they were once friends.
But Rombarde was growing angry. A
few bad summers. Fighting with the
unions. Fighting with the weather.
He was losing the battle.

PHILLIPE

Rombarde owned on the left bank,
not the right. Land on the right
is worth more.

DION

Girard was on the right bank.

PHILLIPE

We're talking millions per hectare
difference.

DION

Look, we were stupid kids back
then. No worse than college kids
joining a demonstration or a sit-
in.

PHILLIPE

You said he has proof we were
involved in the Girard attack.

DION
Rombarde? No. Serge.

PHILLIPE
You don't think they're working
together?

DION
No.

PHILLIPE
Etienne and I have had enough. We
want to sell and be done with it.
If this guy has proof we did it, I
don't want it unveiled.

DION
We have another issue.

PHILLIPE
What?

DION
Serge. He roughed up Rombarde last
night at his hotel right in front
of me. Told me Rombarde was lying
about cheap wines. He really
wants to buy our winery and sell to
the Chinese.

PHILLIPE
Why the fuck do you keep these
incidents from us? What the hell
is your problem?

DION
Because you and Etienne freak out.

PHILLIPE
Oh my God. Okay, you said roughed
up? Do you mean kill?

DION
I don't think so. No news about
any murder on TV this morning.

PHILLIPE
So what does Serge want instead?

DION
Business as usual. Except, we make
fake wines.

PHILLIPE
That's it?

DION
What do you mean that's it? We
aren't in business to make
forgeries!

PHILLIPE
What will he do if we don't? He
has evidence. He has us by the
balls.

DION
He hasn't told me what it is. I
think he's bluffing.

Phillips SLAMS his glass down.

PHILLIPE
You'll go to jail you arrogant
asshole!

A concerned WAITRESS comes around.

WAITRESS
Please keep it down.

DION
Sorry. It's been a bad day.

Phillipe's cell RINGS.

PHILLIPE
Hello?

ETIENNE (V.O.)
Phillipe! Come quick!

PHILLIPE
Etienne? What's wrong?

ETIENNE (V.O.)
Our vats! Someone opened the vats
up!

PHILLIPE
What do you mean? How much wine is
gone?

ETIENNE (V.O.)
I'm knee deep in it!

EXT. WINERY - FRONT GATE - CONTINUOUS

A truck full of the field workers pulls into the driveway off the main road. A Towncar suddenly blocks their path.

Serge steps out of the Towncar, holding a bat intimidatingly. Swirling, SMACKING his palm. His clothes stained red.

The truck backs up and leaves.

INT. DION'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Dion drives as Phillipe tries his cell.

PHILLIPE
He won't pick up.

DION
There must be some way to stop this. Someone we can talk to.

PHILLIPE
It's no use. The winery is done.

Dion steers to the right and brakes hard. Gravel FLIES as he brakes to a stop on the shoulder.

DION
We can run that winery. The three of us. We know Dad's methods. He trained us all.

PHILLIPE
We can't fix what's broke. We're in over our heads.

DION
We can fix it and make it strong again.

PHILLIPE
Just drive.

EXT. WINERY - HOUSE - LATER

Dion's car stops outside the house. Phillipe heads for the front door but Dion waves him back.

DION
Let's check the winery first.

PHILLIPE
Yeah, right.

INT. WINERY - MOMENTS LATER

Red wine SLOSHES under their shoes. Two taps are undone, red wine DRIPPING from the opening.

DION
Etienne!

PHILLIPE
I'll check the back.

A soft MUMBLE. From behind a vat.

Etienne comes around it, his head scarred. His clothes wet and red from wine, as if he was laying in it.

DION
Etienne! Are you okay?

ETIENNE
I never saw them. I blacked out.
My fuckin' head hurts.

DION
What happened?

ETIENNE
I went around the corner after I called you and then someone hit me. They must have been still there, releasing the wine.

DION
Where are the workers? Maybe they saw something.

ETIENNE
They didn't show up today.

DION
What? Why not?

ETIENNE
I don't know.

DION
It's harvest time! We can't afford to miss a day!

Phillipe comes back.

PHILLIPE

All is not lost. Some vats are still full.

ETIENNE

I can't take this anymore. We sell it and we get out.

PHILLIPE

There's still the issue with Serge and what he knows.

ETIENNE

What is his evidence?

DION

I don't know. He could've arrested us a long time ago if it was big.

PHILLIPE

What do you think it is?

DION

A bat. He gave me a small bat. I never used it.

PHILLIPE

But your prints are on it.

DION

I think so. But he grabbed it after me. And he hit Girard with it.

PHILLIPE

And put the poor man in a coma.

DION

Good thing he didn't die.

PHILLIPE

What ever happened to him? Girard?

DION

I don't know.

PHILLIPE

You never spoke to Marie again?

DION

Hell no. Not after what we did.

ETIENNE

Did Serge have gloves on?

DION

I don't recall. Maybe. But I would think his gloves would have wiped mine clean?

ETIENNE

Do you think that's it?

DION

I'll take my chance.

PHILLIPE

How else can he prove we were there? Hotel receipts? Credit cards? Think.

ETIENNE

If Serge doesn't really have anything on us, why threaten us?

DION

Because he thinks he can intimidate us into working for him.

PHILLIPE

Well, it's working. Even our workers won't show up. He probably threatened them too.

The spilled wine SLOSHES under Etienne's shoes.

ETIENNE

We've lost so much now. Do you realize how much has spilled? We were barely break even before. Now that we can't harvest, we're doomed.

Dion storms out.

PHILLIPE

Where are you going?

INT. HOTEL LOUNGE - LATER

Dion uncorks a bottle and pours for two glasses. Abby enters the lounge with her own bottle.

ABBY
Business or personal.

DION
Maybe both. Sit.

ABBY
You are wrong about Chang's intent.

DION
Chang or China?

ABBY
The Chinese aren't just interested
in high prices. They're also
interested in making good wine.

DION
They used to mix wine with Coca-
Cola.

ABBY
Wine is a booming business over
there, whether you like it or not.
And if China has the money to spend
on your wine, why not sell it to
them? There's a market over there
for it. Willing to buy your wine.

DION
Why does Chang want our winery?

ABBY
He heard about your father and
quite frankly, he wants in. That's
a win-win for both of you.

Dion tries to answer but can't.

ABBY
Someone wants to buy your wine!

DION
There's a problem...

INT. HOTEL LOUNGE - LATER

Chang sips his wine. Dion faces him, Abby to the side.

DION
So what do you say?

CHANG

I say I am confused.

DION

Look, this Frenchman wants into my business and I can't let him do that. But I may not have a choice.

CHANG

I'm sure this man is free to purchase any winery he likes.

DION

His plan is to mass market fake wines and sell them to China. He needs my winery to do that.

ABBY

How does he do it?

DION

He has a network of trolls who have broken into various wineries in France.

ABBY

Doing what?

DION

Stealing labels, corks, sleeves, bottles. Those he doesn't get, he makes. His print shop is incredible. He showed me two wine bottles and I couldn't tell which one was the fake.

CHANG

Unfortunately, fakes are common already in China.

DION

But not like his. His are top notch fakes. He'll copy them so completely that Sotheby's and other wine auctions won't tell the difference. He'll flood the Chinese market with them. Petrus, Margaux, you name it.

ABBY

So, the biggest Bordeaux producers will tell everyone they're fake.

DION

Those guys don't want that kind of exposure. They don't like gossip. They are wealthy noblemen who will pay dearly to keep things tidy and quiet.

ABBY

Do you think they would really pay him off?

DION

Would you pay five grand for a bottle of Latour if you heard only the day before some floating around were found to be fakes? Bordeaux can't risk that.

ABBY

I see your point.

CHANG

But how is China affected?

DION

Your country is desperate to grow their own wine reputation. If the Chinese market is flooded with fakes, who will ever take them seriously? The world will never buy good wine made from China.

CHANG

Our government will target him.

DION

He's a cop. I'm sure he has connections set up already.

CHANG

So, what do you want from me?

EXT. WINERY - HOUSE

A Lincoln Towncar cruises up the drive. Parks next to a Mercedes. Serge steps out, breathes in the air. THORNE, a lawyer, exits as well. A laptop hanging off his shoulder.

SERGE

Beautiful countryside.

THORNE
Indeed. I've heard this one
produces fantastic wine.

SERGE
Soon to be mine.

THORNE
Well, let's hope so.

The door opens to the manor. Dion exits and approaches.

THORNE
Hello. Are you the proprietor of
this wonderful vineyard?

DION
I am.

THORNE
I am Jack Thorne. I represent Mr.
Serge Perrault. I understand you
and he have come to some sort of
agreement about ownership in the
winery.

DION
Lets talk over here.

THORNE
Can we go inside? A bit unusual
for me to conduct business outside.

DION
No, the picnic table will be fine.

THORNE
Very well. My battery is fully
charged for eight hours. I hope
this does not go longer.

DION
No, it won't. Trust me.

Thorne sets up his laptop on the picnic table. Serge eyes
the property. Dion watches Serge.

THORNE
Serge, Dion, if you will.

Dion takes a seat. Serge sits next to the Thorne.

THORNE

So, I understand you have offered Mr. Perrault here part ownership in the winery. For a tidy sum, of course.

DION

I didn't offer. He blackmailed me.

Serge LAUGHS.

SERGE

It will be fun to work here.

THORNE

That never gets old. Almost there. Sometimes the connection is slow.

SERGE

My connection is fast, actually.

Behind them, Chang strolls out of the winery with Phillipe. Followed by THREE CHINESE MEN. Dressed in jeans and white t-shirts. Young. Fit.

THORNE

So, before I bring up the contract for title exchange, I'll need to see some identification. From both parties, of course.

Chang and Phillipe stop. The Three Chinese Men glare.

THORNE

Oh, I was expecting one of your brothers. Are they present?

DION

No, I'm expecting my partner.

Serge's eyes burrow into Dion.

THORNE

I don't understand.

DION

We sold part of the vineyard to Mr. Chang over there this morning. He is accompanied by his associates.

SERGE

Bullshit.

DION

See, here's the thing. Those three young ones work for Win Hung? Do you know who they are?

Serge shakes his head in disbelief.

DION

Chinese triad gang in San Francisco. Do you know what a large source of their income is?

THORNE

Please, are we here to talk--

DION

Fake wines. Turns out, they ship fake wines to China. All from the US. They hold a monopoly on the effort and they don't like to share.

THORNE

I will not assist in any illegal activity. Unless this is a joke.

Thorne begins to close the laptop. Serge stops him.

SERGE

You don't know who Chang is, do you?

Chang and Phillipe climb inside the Mercedes. One of the young men gets in the driver's side, starts the car, and drive off. Two young men remain.

THORNE

Look, I don't want any trouble.

DION

Mr. Chang? Sure. Owner of Far East Capital Ventures. Offices in San Francisco and Shanghai.

Dion hands the lawyer a title.

DION

I think you'll see that Mr. Chang is indeed part owner. His name is right there. Thirty three percent. My brother Etienne sold his share.

THORNE

Yes. I see.

(to Serge)

Well, it's official. It appears your shares have been purchased outright by Mr. Chang. Unless, of course, there are more shares available? Perhaps another sibling?

DION

Nope. Family retains majority.

Serge SLAMS his fist down. Startled, Thorne stands up fast.

THORNE

I, um, think we should be leaving.

Thorne gathers his equipment and rushes off. Serge closes in on Dion. The Two Chinese Men intercept.

SERGE

I did not think you were this stupid.

Serge walks after Thorne and gets in the Towncar. Etienne comes over from the winery.

ETIENNE

Did it work?

DION

I hope so.

The Towncar ROARS off down the driveway.

ETIENNE

Are these guys real gang members?

DION

No, I took a page from Serge's book. They're security guards. They're pretending to be gangsters.

ETIENNE

Do you think Serge bought it?

DION

Doesn't matter. These guys work for us now. They're assigned to watch our property for the time being.

Etienne looks at the new security guards.

ETIENNE
Can we afford them?

DION
Chang has offered to cover them.

ETIENNE
What about the evidence Serge has?
Will he use it?

DION
I'm banking on the gang factor here
to keep his nose out.

EXT. WINERY - LATER

The three new security guards, dressed in uniform, huddle with Dion and smoke. One breaks off and walks down the driveway. Dion walks over to Etienne whose fiddling with a forklift battery.

DION
They're from the Bay Area. One on
the left is a big Giants fan.

ETIENNE
I'm not sure I approve of the
smoking.

DION
It's boring detail.

ETIENNE
I hope so.

EXT. VINEYARD - EVENING

Sitting on a blanket amid the grapevines and moonlight, Dion opens a bottle of wine and pours a glass for Abby.

ABBY
It's so beautiful at night.

DION
Better after you drink that.
You'll get visions of grandeur.

ABBY

I have to admit. Wine is fun to learn.

DION

Trust me, I'm still learning.

ABBY

I'm glad you came to an understanding with my client. Mr. Chang is very pleased.

DION

As long as we control most of it, we can still run it the way we've always done it. Truth is, I'm curious about China and what can happen there too.

ABBY

I heard it's a lot of work to run a vineyard.

DION

Many people have this idea that owning a winery would be fun. You know, sit around drinking, enjoying life. It's hands-on, dirty, tiring, long hours, battling pests, birds, bad weather, illegal workers, equipment issues...it can go on and on.

ABBY

I saw a new security guard at the front gate. Because of what happened to your father?

DION

Yes.

ABBY

Who did it?

DION

AVF. Armee du Vin Francais or the French Wine Army. They're a French radical group trying to preserve local wine production.

ABBY

The French Wine Army? Come on.

DION
Hijacking, bombings, attacks on
wineries, they are very convincing
in their argument that French wine
stays French.

ABBY
They don't like imported wines?

DION
They don't like imported grapes to
make French wine.

ABBY
This isn't France though.

DION
But one of their members is over
here buying vineyards. He has been
trying to buy ours.

ABBY
Who is he?

DION
Rombarde. Owns a vineyard in
Bordeaux and Napa. He and a French
cop are trying to threaten us.

ABBY
Why would they threaten you?

DION
Because of an incident that
occurred when we were over there.

ABBY
An incident?

DION
We did something stupid, Abby.
Something I regret.

Dion GULPS his wine.

DION
They told us lies and we believed
them. But then it was too late.

ABBY
What did you do over there?

Words escape Dion and he chokes up.

EXT. WINERY - CONTINUOUS

A white van pulls up to the entrance. SECURITY GUARD #1 approaches the door. MASKED MEN suddenly exit. Armed with baseball bats and jugs. They swarm the security guard and knock him down. Serge steps out from the driver's side.

SERGE
Le winery! Vite!

The masked men sprint through the grape vines. Some SMASH plants and leaves as they run.

Serge calmly follows them down the driveway.

EXT. VINEYARD - CONTINUOUS

Dion and Abby roll in the blanket. Suddenly, a SMALL MASKED MAN darts past them, the bushes RUSTLING the next row over.

ABBY
What was that?

Dion cups her mouth, grabs her, and they hide under leaves.

A LARGE MASKED MAN thunders past. Not seeing Dion and Abby.

DION
Quiet.

Releasing Abby, Dion rises fast.

ABBY
Who are they? Vandals?

DION
AVF.

INT. WINERY - MOMENTS LATER

SMASHING and BREAKING inside. Vats are opened up, grape juice projectile spewing on the floor. The other two security guards are knocked unconscious.

Dion opens a rear door, makes it three steps inside when he's thrown against a wall by Serge. The Masked Men stop their barrage and stare.

SERGE

Did you think you could scare me
off?

Dion shoves Serge off him. But as Serge pulls out a small
bat, his focus shifts to Dion's ears.

Earplugs. Dion pulls out a transmitter. The Masked Men
approach with their weapons.

SERGE

(to the Masked Men)

Cover your--

BOOM! The zon cannon, next to the Masked Men. The Masked
Men stumble, covering their ears in pain. Serge falls
against a wall.

SIRENS in the distance.

The Masked Men stagger out of the winery with Serge close
behind them.

INT. WINERY - MORNING

Dion and Etienne begin preparing the damage. Phillipe enters
from outside, cell phone in hand.

PHILLIPE

Insurance will want a police
report. What do I do?

DION

Don't call the cops.

PHILLIPE

Security guards are shaken up. I
don't know if they're coming back.

ETIENNE

This is horrible. How are we going
to recover? We need bills to pay
for all of this.

DION

Chang. We'll ask him for cash.

INT. HOTEL - LATER

Dion KNOCKS on Chang's door.

DION
Mr. Chang? Are you in there?

No answer. He pulls out Chang's business card and his cell phone. Straight to voicemail. Then he dials Abby's number. Voicemail too.

Thinking, Dion then brings up Far-East Capital Ventures on his phone. Most of it written in Mandarin so he hits "translate this page."

Clicks on About Us, then Management Team.

He nearly chokes.

EXT. WINERY - LATER

Dion rolls past the front gates. Abby's Mercedes comes up the drive in the opposite direction. Dion pulls over and stops, lowers his window to talk.

But the Mercedes races by.

DION
Abby. What the hell?

SPEWING gravel, Dion floors it down to the winery.

INT. WINERY - MOMENTS LATER

The winery is cleaned. Etienne and Phillipe, however, sadly hang their heads low as Dion walks in.

DION
Was Chang here?

ETIENNE
Yes, he just left.

DION
Why was he here?

PHILLIPE
Dion, I sold my shares.

DION
You did what?!?

ETIENNE
We're done. Phillipe and I are officially out.

(MORE)

ETIENNE(cont'd)

Chang bought us out. At least with you still in the picture, you'll have some say.

DION

No, no, no! Tell me you didn't!

ETIENNE

He'll be the majority owner.

DION

No, he won't!

PHILLIPE

Yes. He owns two thirds.

DION

No he doesn't! Rombarde does!

PHILLIPE

What do you mean?

DION

Rombarde owns Far-East Capital Ventures! Chang is just their director of international relations!

ETIENNE

What?

DION

Rombarde now owns majority of Chateau Brodeur!

EXT. VINEYARDS - LATER

A sweaty Dion hauls a bucket of grapes and dumps them into a large container hooked up to a tractor. He then climbs on board the tractor and STARTS it up.

Shifting gears, he trudges forward but Abby suddenly appears in front of the tractor. He slows but not by much.

DION

(SHOUTS)

Move!

ABBY

I want to talk to you!

Bearing down on her, she doesn't cave. Finally, grudgingly, he BRAKES, just feet away. She helps herself by climbing up next to him.

DION
You played me.

ABBY
I'm sorry. I just found out.

DION
Why didn't you tell me you worked for Rombarde?

ABBY
I was working for Mr. Chang. Look, Chang contacted my office last week. We've toured a few wineries in Napa and suddenly he wanted to see Paso too. So we came down.

DION
And what about Rombarde?

ABBY
What about him? I don't know him. Chang never mentioned him either. He was acting as their agent.

DION
You never asked who owned them?

ABBY
I have a few Asian clients interested in wineries in California. I don't do background checks on them. Why didn't you do your due diligence on them?

Dion starts the tractor again. Abby holds on.

DION
You helped sell my winery.

ABBY
I did. It's my job.

She looks back at the container, then the fields.

ABBY
You picked this bin all by yourself?

DION
Grapes won't pick themselves.

ABBY
Where are your workers?

DION
Ask Rombarde.

ABBY
I'm sorry. Look, maybe the problem
isn't Rombarde or Serge. Maybe the
problem is you.

Dion stops the tractor. Kills the engine.

DION
What?

ABBY
Your attitude towards the wine
drinker is obnoxious.

DION
Obnoxious?

ABBY
Yes, according to you, only good
wine should exist. The best wine.
Not cheap wine.

DION
People need to be educated.

ABBY
Maybe people just want to drink the
damn stuff.

It hits Dion then.

DION
The sale's not going to happen
anyway. I'll never allow it.
Neither will my brothers.

ABBY
I'm afraid they already did. They
signed the contract today.

DION
There's a breach.

ABBY

Come now. Don't tell me you'll try
for duress.

DION

No. Misrepresentation.

ABBY

Chang worked as power of attorney.
He didn't have to disclose who his
owners were at that time.

DION

It has nothing to do with Chang.

ABBY

Then what?

EXT. WINERY - LATER

The limo cruises down the driveway and parks. A bruised Rombarde steps out with the assistance of a new DRIVER. Rombarde hobbles with a cane.

Waiting at the picnic table is Dion. Rombarde sits, admires the views. The Driver uncorks a bottle and places two glasses down. Wine is poured into both.

Rombarde sips his wine. Dion leaves his untouched.

ROMBARDE

Beautiful. Among your best.

DION

What about Serge?

ROMBARDE

He is just a thug for hire. I have
influential friends too.

DION

He nearly destroyed the winery.

ROMBARDE

He will leave us alone. There is a
truce now.

DION

Honor among thieves.

ROMBARDE

I am excited to run the winery.
When I first met the three of you
in Bordeaux, I ask myself, do these
boys understand what wine is?

DION

And then you coerced us into doing
your dirty work.

ROMBARDE

It was not hard. You three were
ready for action.

DION

My father trusted you to teach us
the harvest. Not a life of crime.

ROMBARDE

I did not force you. And you
believed in it.

DION

I thought we would only spill the
wine!

ROMBARDE

It is more convincing to do damage
that to simply make a mess.

DION

We destroyed the poor man's winery!
We were terrorists!

Behind them, the migrant workers stroll down the driveway.

ROMBARDE

Ah, here comes the help. Plenty to
do. I will not employ your
brothers, Dion. But you, I need
you to help run it.

DION

I wonder if I'll need a sweater?

ROMBARDE

A sweater? You can wear whatever
you want.

DION

I'm just wondering what the weather is like in Bordeaux this time of year. I wonder if maybe a jacket will suffice.

ROMBARDE

You want to take some time off? I won't allow it. It is harvest time, my boy. We've much work to do.

DION

No, it's not a vacation. I'm going to the big house. Jail.

ROMBARDE

I don't understand.

DION

The Girard attack. I'm going to confess.

ROMBARDE

Don't be a fool.

DION

I've spoken to a member of the Police National in Bordeaux. I made a plea, guilty with an infraction. Equivalent of a felony over here. My plane leaves tonight.

ROMBARDE

I don't believe you.

DION

When I become charged with the crime, the contract my brothers made, as well as the one Chang made, becomes null and void.

ROMBARDE

Impossible.

DION

I represented myself as a person in good faith. Clearly I was not and me not being here, will affect the winery. I'm a criminal. The winery stays in my family.

ROMBARDE

We shall see about that.

A POLICE CAR drives down the driveway. A PAIR OF OFFICERS step out and approach Dion and Rombarde. The Driver wisely stays away.

OFFICER #1

Dion Brodeur?

DION

That's me.

OFFICER #2

We have an order for your extradition to France. You are under arrest. Please stand up.

Smiling, Dion complies.

OFFICER #2

Turn around. Feet apart. Hands behind your head.

Dion is then searched, patted down.

DION

Before you read me my rights, can you inform Mr. Rombarde that he is trespassing on my property and I would like him to leave.

ROMBARDE

This is preposterous! This is my winery!

OFFICER #1

Please leave, sir.

ROMBARDE

I will contact my lawyers!

OFFICER #1

Are you resisting?

Rombarde slowly rises. Looks around the vineyard.

ROMBARDE

You little shit. You will rot in prison. I'll see to it that your life will be miserable.

Rombarde leaves in a huff, his cane angrily SLAPPING the ground. He climbs in the Mercedes, ignoring the Driver's assistance, and soon the car takes off.

OFFICER #2
You have the right to remain
silent...

INT. FRANCE - PRISON - DAY

Cement walls, cold, and unpleasant. Dion, sporting a beard now, folds laundry next to other PRISONERS.

A FELLOW PRISONER tugs his arm. Points to a doorway where PRISON GUARDS wait.

Dion smiles, folds his last bedsheet, and leaves.

EXT. BORDEAUX - CAFE - SUNSET

A clean shaven Dion sits at a cafe by himself, a half carafe of wine in front of him. He's looking over nearby vineyards. The sun setting.

Suddenly, the seat across becomes occupied.

Serge.

An empty glass in his hand. He helps himself to Dion's wine.

SERGE
A bit dry. Needs to age more.

DION
Still, it's nice.

SERGE
But not as good as yours?

DION
I can't afford much right now.

SERGE
What happened to your winery?

DION
Struck a deal with a foreign
investor. We're back on track.
Got some capital to repair certain
fixes.

SERGE
Foreigner? From where?

DION
China. Legit. Will serve as a
distributor for our wines in Asia.

SERGE
If you can't beat them, join them.

DION
Something like that.

SERGE
Rombarde wanted to put a hit on you
in prison.
(beat)
But I would not allow it.

DION
Why?

SERGE
Bad publicity.

DION
For whom?

SERGE
Exactly.

Serge drinks his glass on one gulp.

DION
If it makes you feel better, I
won't be coming back. I am not
allowed in your country again. My
taxi will arrive shortly to take me
to the airport.

SERGE
I know. But three months is all
you did. This does not fit the
crime.

DION
And I wasn't alone.

SERGE
You got a lucky break. But maybe
your luck will run out someday.

DION

Maybe.

Serge slides over a small bat to Dion. Dion eyes it, then looks back at Serge.

SERGE

A souvenir.

DION

Were my prints on there?

SERGE

Does it matter? You confessed.

DION

I had no choice.

Serge stands, looks at the vineyards.

SERGE

Beautiful, isn't it?

Serge leaves. Gets into a waiting car and drives off.

A taxi pulls up.

INT. TAXI - LATER

Zoning, Dion watches the vineyards as they drive. At one point, he sees a flower store.

DION

Une moment, si vous plait. Um, can you stop here?

TAXI DRIVER

The flower shop? Yes.

DION

Merci.

EXT. GIRARD WINERY - MOMENTS LATER

The taxi waiting behind him, Dion holds a bouquet of flowers at the gate to the Girard Winery.

Except now it's called DOMAINE DE CANTERE.

DION
Do you know what happened to the
Girard's?

TAXI DRIVER
No, Monsieur. Sorry.

He props the flowers by the sign and climbs back in.

EXT. BRODEUR WINERY - EVENING

Dion escorts Abby to her car.

ABBY
Next weekend, you come up.

DION
Deal. Drive safe. I'll call you.

They kiss. Abby climbs in and drives off. Dion watches her go, but becomes distracted momentarily.

A light inside the winery. A bottle CRASHES.

EXT. BRODEUR WINERY - STORAGE ROOM - EVENING

DRIPPING, like liquid spilled. The door is mysteriously open. Stepping inside, his shoes SLOSH in red wine.

DION
What the hell?

He FLICKS on the lights.

INT. STORAGE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Destroyed bottles everywhere. Shattered glass amid rolling waves of wine on the floor.

Movement to his right.

A DARK FIGURE silhouetted in a backlight. A woman's shape.

DION
Who's there?

The quick image of a bat and -- WHAP!

Dion's head is grazed and he falls to the floor. With blood oozing down his forehead, he looks up, sees --

Marie Girard.

Holding a baseball bat.

DION
What? Why? Who?...

MARIE
Remember me?

She tosses the butterfly broach on his bloody body.

INSERT FLASHBACK

INT. GIRARD WINERY - 2009

The Masked Men flee out the back. Girard aims and FIRES wide. Too scared to move, all Dion can do is drops his bat. Girard grabs a rough hold on him.

GIRARD
You are not AVF!

Dion tries to shove Girard off him. As they tussle, the butterfly broach SKIDS across the floor.

Meanwhile, Serge now has Dion's bat and he swings at Girard, knocking him down.

Blood on Girard's head.

SERGE
Vive le France!

Dion seizes the opportunity and runs out.

Serge follows, but not before carefully pocketing the broach.

EXIT FLASHBACK

MARIE
A present from a dirty cop.

DION
I never meant to hurt you.

MARIE
This is for my father.

She cocks her bat back and swings.

Like chopping wood.

WHACK, WHACK.

Over and over.

Dion is bloodied to a pulp.

She flings the bat aside and strolls through the front door.

Dion tries to rise but can't, falling into the spilled wine.
The wine soaking, enveloping him.

His own blood mixing within.

THE END

FADE OUT