

INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT MOMENTS LATER

Alex enters. Rocky meows, rubs against his leg.

Alex checks his phone.

FIVE TEXTS FROM ANNE:

"Call me."

"Call me."

"NOW."

INT. ANNE'S APARTMENT NIGHT

Dark. Still. Just the whisper of a record needle.

A haunting, slowed-down instrumental version of "Lipstick Promises" plays warped and ghostly.

We pan across:

A MASSIVE WHITEBOARD Taped-up photos. Torn script pages. Fragments of bloodied costumes. Center grid a Hamlet character map.

HAMLET ALEX CLAUDIUS FERNANDO GERTRUDE BRIDGET THE GHOST CARL
POLONIUS QUENTIN OPHELIA SIMONE LAERTES DWAYNE HORATIO ANNE
FORTINBRAS ALEX (RESURRECTED)

No lines of dialogue. Just:

Anne writing names in red sharpie Circling FERNANDO again and again Tacking a bloody lipstick tube to the corner Placing the ZEUS symbol next to Alex Pinning a screenshot of the "Deuce's Wild" script with the words: "THE PLAY'S THE THING" underlined three times.

She steps back.

A single candle burns next to the board. Her reflection glows faintly in the window twin to Alex's.

Anne picks up a marker. Under Fernando's name, she writes:

"The Puppet Master." Then below it, she writes in small letters: "The first lie was love."

She exhales. Hands trembling not with fear, but with resolve.

She draws one final line. From FERNANDO to ALEX. Across it, she writes: "BROTHERS. BLOOD."

Hold on that.

Then:

CAMERA PUSHES INTO THE REFLECTION mirror on mirror until we are back inside the machine.

SCENE SPLIT: ANNE MAPPING / ALEX IN CONTROL

INT. ANNE'S APARTMENT NIGHT

The whiteboard glows with connections FERNANDO at the center. Anne draws the final line.

"Brothers. Blood."

Her breath catches.

Cross-cut to:

INT. ABANDONED STUDIO NIGHT

The lights hum. Dust floats like ash in the air.

Alex stands alone. Shirtless. Barefoot. Breathing hard.

He walks to the center of the mat.

The place where it all fell apart.

He plants his hands. Slowly. Deliberately.

His fingers splay scars visible, fingerprints blurred.

ALEX (V.O.)

They took my balance. My name. My voice.

But not this.

Not this.

He kicks up.

A brutal handstand.

Muscles trembling, but locked.

Held. Owned.

No stunt double. No illusion.

This is Alexfull, scarred, strong.

SLOW PAN AROUND HIM

The world upside down.

But him? Upright in his own truth.

He lowers himself with perfect control.

ALEX (V.O.)

Print this.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT NIGHT

No dialogue.

Just the sound of his breathing. Controlled. Measured.

ALEX, shirtless. The ZEUS tattoo gleams on his shoulder perfectly aligned in the mirror.

He doesn't blink.

The world is chaos. But this this is control.

Back to:

INT. ANNE'S APARTMENT NIGHT

She stares at the board. The candle flickers. She reaches out. Extinguishes the flame.

SFX: WHOOF

Then back to:

MATCH CUT TO:

FERNANDO at the investor dinner Raising a glass. Toasting.

But behind the eyes? He feels the shift.

INT. DARK ROOM / UNKNOWN LOCATION NIGHT

ON SCREEN THE GRID.

SFX: HEARTBEAT-STYLE RHYTHM: BUMP... BUMP... BUMP... AS NAMES DROP RED.

A white screen. Stark. Empty. Then one by one photos appear. Black and white. Mugshot-style. SIX faces.

Names fade in below them. Each one flashes. Then goes red.

ONE DOWN FRANCISCO.

TWO DOWN ROSE.

THREE DOWN DWAYNE.

FOUR DOWN SIMONE.

FIVE DOWN CARL.

SIX DOWN BRIDGET.

CLOSE ON:

The screen pulses. Then glitches. One face fades back in: ALEX eyes locked. Alive.

INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT NIGHT

Slow, deep ****breathing****. Controlled. Grounded.

ALEX shirtless, black shorts. Balanced on fingertips. Doing pushups like it's life or death. Each drop an echo of a THUD. A past death. Each rise a vow not to be the next.

THUD FRANCISCO'S BODY. THUD SIMONE'S FALL. THUD DWAYNE'S LAST BREATH. THUD SIMONE'S GURGLE. THUD ROSE'S SILENT SCREAM.

SFX: SILENCE

ZEUS tattoo glints on his shoulder. His reflection in the floor mirrors the strength.

SFX: STEADY BREATHING FROM ALEX.

He does a full-on perfect handstand. Holds. Lowers. Controlled. His chest swells. His biceps pumped. His breathing like a fine-tuned machine, barely a sound.

His coal-black eyes reflect no fear only purpose.

Five o'clock shadow. He locks in the mirror, not in vain, not in awe, but in ZEUS, he controls his destiny.

Rocky watches from the counter. Silent. Still. Loyal.

SFX: Single Violin with the notes: "I can buy myself flowers" with the last note hanging.

INT. BRIDGET'S ESTATE NIGHT

ON SCREEN:

TICK TOCK. 12 HOURS REMAINING.

ANNE (V.O.)

Twelve hours left. One final truth.



HANDPRINT

**WRITTEN BY
DENNIS J MANNING**