INT. POLICE STATION — DAY

Lowery walks through deserted offices which appear to have been recently abandoned.

He runs into a mannequin with its head blown off, draped in a powder-blue uniform jacket.

LOWERY
Hello? Anyone know where I can find Hiram?

A small generator rumbles inside an otherwise empty kitchen.

Lowery follows the generator’s long electric cord through the kitchen, into the hall, up three flights of stairs...

EXT. ROOFTOP — POLICE STATION — DAY

...to a fan aimed at a glistening water pitcher.

And there’s Hiram in his underwear, carefully ironing his powder-blue uniform pants with an antique coal-heated iron.

HIRAM
Are you here to pay your fine, Mr. Lowery?

LOWERY
No, I came here looking for you...
   (looks around)
Where is everybody?

HIRAM
They were fired. Told not to return until they were invited back by your people.

LOWERY
So what, you’re the only traffic cop in the entire city?

Hiram lays down his iron, picks up the chilled pitcher. Dribbles some water on his pants.

HIRAM
I am the only one foolish enough to work without an invitation.

LOWERY
That’s a lot of ground to cover for one man...
HIRAM
1,435 intersections and not one with a working traffic light.

LOWERY
Well we’re going to fix that.

HIRAM
“We”?

LOWERY
I’ve been authorized by the provisional government to form a new Joint Task Force on Traffic with the Iraqi people. And I want you to be my point-man.

Hiram turns away, unimpressed. Flips his pants and continues ironing.

HIRAM
Before you people arrived it took 15 minutes to cross the city. Now it can take an entire day...
(flipping his pants)
Do you know what that means in a city like Baghdad?

LOWERY
Lots of angry drivers?

HIRAM
It means meat rotting in trucks before it can get to market... Babies born in the backseats of taxis instead of hospitals...
(glancing at Lowery)
Where was your son born, Mr. Lowery?

LOWERY
I don’t have a son. I’m not married.

HIRAM
(shrugs)
You are still a boy then.

And Hiram dribbles water on the iron with a loud HISS. Lowery waves away the clouds of steam.

LOWERY
Look, I can’t guarantee it’ll be like the old days.
(MORE)
But I promise, after we’re through, it’ll take no more than four hours to get across town -- three tops!

Hiram frowns at Lowery. Makes a decision.

HIRAM
Half an hour.

LOWERY
Two hours...

HIRAM
One.

LOWERY
Deal!

Lowery smiles, shakes Hiram’s hand.

HIRAM
So what do you need from me?

LOWERY

HIRAM
I can get you men. But you need to do something for me first...

MOMENTS LATER – LOWERY, HIRAM BOTH STAND IN THEIR UNDERWEAR

with their pants spread on the ironing board. Hiram picks up the water pitcher.

HIRAM
It takes a very delicate touch to do this correctly.

He sprinkles a few drops, runs the hot iron across his pants, creating a razor-sharp crease.

HIRAM (CONT’D)
This is how you measure the depth of a man’s soul.

LOWERY
By the sharpness of his crease?

HIRAM
By the pride he takes in serving his people.
Lowery frowns, picks up the pitcher, carefully sprinkles water on his pants. Runs the iron over them:

A razor-sharp crease. Hiram smiles.

HIRAM (CONT’D)
Now I am honored to be your partner
in the Joint Task Force on Traffic.