

Gordon Returns

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EXT. STREETScape - NIGHT

A car chase is in progress. The fugitive vehicle is a black ford sedan with 3 men in dark clothes and beanies. They are GEORGE (35+) DANNY (30+) and STAN (50+).

The car suddenly turns down a narrow side street. It stops. Danny and George get out near a large trash bin. In moments, they have hidden themselves inside it. The car accelerates off, just as the police car sweeps by the alley. It stops, reverses, and heads down the alleyway. The car has now turned into another side street. The chase continues as more police vehicles join in. A helicopter flies overhead. Police have blocked the road. The sedan speeds up, trying to ram its way through. Police jump for safety. There is a massive impact, and the sedan crumples as it trashes the police vehicles, which are overturned by the force. The police are not slow to act, spraying the cars with fire extinguishers.

LATER

Body bag being zipped. We see the last of Stan before he is put into the Coroner's Van. Several police are attending the scene, photographing, measuring, noting, etc. RALPH's (25) sniffer dog on lead is pawing at the boot of the sedan, which is the only part intact. The dog's handler has ordered her to sit, but she refuses.

RALPH

Sit, Bonnie. We know.
Drugs.

To LUCY BAKER (30s), an attractive detective who notices that the dog is persistent.

Must be a ton of the stuff in
there.

Lucy is puzzled. The dogs are trained to ignore stuff once it is found, so it can search for other areas.

LUCY

Get that trunk open.

One of the rescue crew produces a crowbar, and the boot lid is opened, revealing GORDON HAIMES (14) curled up tightly in a hogtie, hands and ankles cuffed, a ball gag is in his mouth. He has been protected throughout the crash by bags of cannabis.

RALPH

Don't move him. Check him for injuries.

A small group works on Gordon, then Lucy unlocks his handcuffs and fetters, using her keys. Gordon is placed on a stretcher. A medic ROB (40s) takes charge.

ROB

Not well. Possible internal injuries. St Marks handles kids. We'll take him there.

LUCY

What's your name, Son?

GORDON

(whimpers) Aaargh.

LUCY

I guess we'll deal with that later.

Ambulance moves off taking Gordon to hospital.

INT POLICE STATION - NIGHT

FELIX REITER (handsome 30s) stands by Lucy's desk thumbing a file. She's sitting by her laptop searching picture ID files.

FELIX

Gordon Haimes. Paper boy. Last seen four years ago. Prints match. Smaller and thinner than his progressed age pics. Better tell his Mum and Dad the good news. Lucy, Ralph.

RALPH COX (40) gets up from his desk and joins them. He has been listening in on the conversation - along with most of the station officers.

EXT. HAIMES HOUSE FR. ENTRANCE NIGHT

Lucy and Ralph get an initial cool reception at the door, then there are yells of delight as the house comes alive. Lights go on. SIMON and ELIZABETH HAIMES (late 30s) dance across the lawn in their pajamas while their children JEREMY (12) and WENDY (16) look on.

INT. CHILDREN'S WARD LOBBY NIGHT

Doctor Mellor is slowing Elizabeth and Simon down as they wish to rush into Gordon's ward. As they walk swiftly down the corridor, he warns them.

MELLOR

He's awake, but very confused. We must take it easy.
The police are guarding him.

ELIZABETH

He's not under arrest?

MELLOR

Hospital doesn't want any trouble. Police and Family visitors only. No press. It's bedlam down there.

INT GORDON'S WARD - NIGHT

Gordon lies on a bed with oxygen canula and drip. His face is bruised. He looks very pale and thin. His eyes open as Elizabeth and Simon enter. Initially, he lifts himself and backs against the bed end. Then recognition on his face and he relaxes, burst into tears. Mother and son hug each other fiercely. She ruffles his hair, cut untidily short, and looks at his back, criss-crossed with scars, burn scars, and some with scabbing still fresh. His ribs are showing beneath his thin skin, and his arms and legs are also painfully thin. Rope burns mark his wrists.

ELIZABETH

We'll have you back
to your old self
again in no time,
love.

Oh, they've made a mess
of you. What have they
done to you?

GORDON

Mummy, Oh, Mummy. I'm
so sorry. I couldn't
tell you. I couldn't
find you. I tried to
get away, but I
couldn't.

Don't be angry.

I'm hurting.

He lies back on the bed as his father approaches him.
Gordon looks at Simon and screams.

GORDON

NO! Keep away! Not again!
No more!

Simon backs off, confused. Dr. Mellor holds his arm and
pulls him out of Gordon's sight.

MELLOR

He's still confused. Thinks
you're someone else. Don't
take it personally.

Simon turns his head away and tears spring to his eyes.

SIMON

He's my son, for God's sake.
What have they done to him?

Elizabeth joins their huddle

ELIZABETH

I'm staying with him. Simon,
he'll be all right. I'm sure
he'll be all right. I'll
talk to him. He's back.
It's a miracle.

She hugs Simon and massages his back affectionately.

Why not go home and come back
in the morning. You'll have
to take the day off. Wendy
and Jeremy will be wondering

...

SIMON

We'll get his room ready.
He'll need his own room. I
don't need the study.

INT FELIX' HOME KITCHEN - DAY

SANDRA REITER, (his wife, 35) is serving breakfast to JOHN (10) and LUKE (9) getting them off to school. The television is on.

T.V.

There is joy in the Haimes family today, as their son, Gordon returns home. Gordon was kidnapped five years ago from his paper run. He was rescued by police when a car he was in crashed a road block. The driver didn't survive. The boy was found bound and gagged in the boot.

John, curious, walks around the kitchen counter holding his toast in one hand.

JOHN

Did you rescue the little boy, Dad?

FELIX

No. Lucy and Ralph did. Bonnie found him. She kept pawing at the boot.

LUKE

Cause she's a clever dog.

FELIX

Ruffles John's hair.

She certainly is. Spelling done?



JOHN

Course. And my other homework. Daddy, can I tell the class how Bonnie found the little boy?

Sandra finishes checking the boys' backpacks. She has them ready by the door.

FELIX

That's fine.

SANDRA

Come on. The bus will be here soon. You don't want to miss it.

As they leave, Felix gets down to his breakfast of toast, fried eggs, tomatoes, bacon and chips. Sandra closes the front door and returns to the kitchen, readying coffee. The remains of her breakfast are on the table. She brings the cups over, kisses Felix on the back of his head, and sits down to finish. Felix sips his coffee.

SANDRA

So, you're busy again. Dreadful business. John wants me to let him deliver pamphlets. I said, No.

Felix grins.

FELIX

The chance of a boy getting kidnapped is lower than the chance of getting hit by lightning. It's a very rare crime. Girls aren't so lucky. Anyway, Simon and Elizabeth are no longer under suspicion for murder.

SANDRA

Bloody cynical.

FELIX

I'm paid to be cynical.

Drains his cup of coffee and tips tomato sauce on his chips.

Morning off, and I'm interviewing Gordon this afternoon.

He picks up some of the blood-red chips and takes them to his mouth.

INT GORDON'S WARD - DAY

Felix and Lucy are in Gordon's room. The bed has been propped up so Gordon's in a sitting position.

FELIX

We need to know what happened to you, Gordon. Some things we do know because of the tests the doctor did.

Gordon looks at him, but says nothing.

We know you've been raped. Your back is scared. Looks like they used a cane or whip on you.

GORDON

Whip. It was a whip.

LUCY

Was that for disobeying them?

GORDON

Whip first, then rape. No more. Go away.

He pulls the hospital sheet up over his head.

ELIZABETH

I think he's had enough.

FELIX

Two questions? We need a lot more than that, Mrs. Haines. A lot more.

ELIZABETH

He hardly talks to us. Won't have anything to do with Simon. He needs time.

FELIX

We may not have much time. The sooner we can catch these men, the better.

ELIZABETH

We're taking him home today. The doctor says it will be the best thing for him - to be with family again.

FELIX

I hope you don't mind, but I'm putting someone in front of your house for a while. Don't go anywhere with Gordon without telling us.

ELIZABETH

He's not in any danger.

FELIX

If I was one of his kidnapers, I'd be anxious to shut him up. Whatever that took.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - A WEEK LATER

Lucy, Ralph, and Felix stand behind the mirror watching as Gordon is interviewed.

LUCY

He's recovered quickly. Thought we'd be waiting for weeks.

FELIX

We're not there yet. Kid's still traumatized. Elizabeth said he wanted to talk to us. Good for him.

INT. STATION INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

Gordon, in a comfortable arm chair, has a pack of Big Mack fries also with tomato sauce. He chews them intently. Child Protection Officer, DEBBIE WATSON (45) sits on a firmer chair asking questions and taking notes.

GORDON
(waving chip)
Good.

DEBBIE
I take it they didn't feed
you well.

GORDON
Doggy style.
They kept me handcuffed.

Debbie Makes notes in her book and looks at the mirror. Gordon looks at it, and back at her. A TV Camera is in front of him, recording.

GORDON
Are a lot of people watching
me?

DEBBIE
A couple of detectives,
that's all. We need
witnesses - for the court
case.

GORDON
The rapes. I couldn't do
anything about it.
(fidgets uncomfortably)
If they used lube, it didn't
hurt so much. I got used to
it.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - SAME TIME

Felix, Lucy, and Ralph are watching through the observation window, and also monitoring the TV monitor.

DEBBIE
(filtered)
Did it happen often?

GORDON
(filtered)
They didn't want me for
ransom.

Looks nervously at the floor. Fidgets.

DEBBIE
Who were they?
Do you know where?

GORDON
I don't know anything - who -
where. It was secret. I only
knew Master and Scourge.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

Debbie looks at a picture of Gordon's back in her folder.
She shows it to Gordon.

DEBBIE
Scourge?

GORDON
(Smiles wryly)
Said he was an expert.
I suppose he was.

DEBBIE
Marking you like that?

GORDON
Hurting me like that. He
liked hurting me. That's why
they called him 'Scourge'.

(fidgets)
Can I get some Coke?

DEBBIE
Sure. You're a brave kid,
you know that?

GORDON

Expression changes from cheerful to anxious again.

No, I'm not. After a couple of weeks, I'd do anything they told me to. Anything. You don't want to know that stuff.

DEBBIE

Give me an example.

At this, Gordon reacts, pulling himself up into a defensive ball and shouting.

GORDON (shouting)

No! Don't ask me.

DEBBIE

OK. You're doing well.
Don't throw it now.

Lucy enters with a small bottle of coke and a straw. She hands it to Gordon, smiles and leaves.

Gordon sits balled up, drinking defensively from the coke bottle.

GORDON

Thanks for the coke.

He manages to unwind himself and steadies for more questions with a small nod.

DEBBIE

How many men were there?

GORDON

Seven. Maybe more. Two were nice. I thought they were doctors. They spoke nice. Gave me lollies and chips.

Finishes the rest of the chips and tosses the paper container onto the floor. He is sweating profusely, with a slight tremble.

GORDON

That's for the janitor. Give him something to do.

(Break)

The thin one made me dress up in school clothes - white shirt, tie, black pants, shoes and socks. I had to touch my toes. Six cuts. Then he'd come on me. Had blood blisters for days.

DEBBIE

Could you remember what school it was? Maybe the colour of the tie?

GORDON

Red with yellow stripes - on an angle. It had a badge. I never looked at it. Always too worried to look at it.

DEBBIE

The other man?

GORDON

We'd strip. It was a sixty-nine. Easy. He never hurt me.

DEBBIE

Sixty-nine?

GORDON

Don't tell me you don't know what that is. FUCK YOU!
Don't bullshit me!
(becomes agitated)

Debbie stands, gathers her papers and leaves the room. Lucy and Ralph enter. Ralph stands behind Gordon and holds his arms. Gordon struggles, but relaxes when Ralph sits him down in the chair.



RALPH
That's better, Gordon.
Try to relax. Can we get you
a coffee?

Gordon is sweating and trembling.

GORDON
I've tried to fight it off.
I need it bad.

LUCY
What do you need? Smack?

GORDON
Yes. Please - you've got to
help me. I don't want to go
back. No! Not that!

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - SAME TIME
Felix turns away from the mirror. He looks at Debbie.

FELIX
You're all right?

DEBBIE
It's him I'm worried about.
They got him hooked.
Bastards. It takes weeks to
get on methadone.

FELIX
You'd be surprised how quick
we can be. He'll have it
this afternoon.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY
Felix, Debbie, Lucy, and Ralph are sitting in conference
discussing the interview.

DEBBIE
Elizabeth will be in charge
of his methadone. They'll get
him on Naltraxone therapy.

Sips her coffee.

RALPH

Four years of that. It would
send anyone crazy.

LUCY

Smack. That's what he was
hiding.

DEBBIE

No. Sexual stuff. He'll have
a lot of guilt. Fourteen,
and the only sex he knows
about is perverted, sick.

RALPH

Think he's gay?
(break)
Well, he'd have to be.

FELIX

He has a younger brother.
What he has been through may
have imprinted him severely.

DEBBIE

He's getting counseling.

LUCY

Needs more than that. I'll
talk to his parents.

INT. HAIMES HOUSE LOUNGE - DAY

Debbie has put the suggestion to Elizabeth. She is
furious.

ELIZABETH

Look, I know you want to
help, but there's no way
Gordon would do anything to
hurt anyone. Jeremy's his
brother. No!

DEBBIE

I'm not suggesting he will.
I'm merely asking you to be
observant. Gordon needs
expert help. Counseling is
fine, but he needs a full on
psychiatrist.

ELIZABETH

They want to put him in an
institution. No way!

INT. MEDIA ROOM - DAY

The press has gathered to meet Gordon. He sits with,
Debbie, Elizabeth, Simon, Jeremy, and Wendy. TOM WALL (35)
anchors the program. Reporters,
SANDRA and REGGIE wait their turn.

TOM

(to camera)

As you know, the press has
agreed not to ask any
embarrassing questions, and
we know that viewers will
respect Gordon's privacy.

(indicates Sandra)

First is Sandra Marsh from
"Night-Talk".

SANDRA

How does it feel, being home,
Gordon?

GORDON

Much better. Home is best.

SANDRA

Will you be going to school?

GORDON

Yes, to catch up.

TOM

Reggie Blake from Channel

four.

REGGIE

How did the kidnapppers take you, so close to home?

GORDON

a van drove up beside me. Two men jumped out of van, grabbed me, threw me inside, jumped in, closed the door, and drove off.

REGGIE

Did you struggle?

GORDON

They pulled a sack over me. I struggled, but they were bigger than me.

INT. HAIMES HOUSE LOUNGE - DAY

The family is watching the TV show from their home.

REGGIE

(filtered)

Mrs. Haimes, you must be delighted your son has returned.

ELIZABETH

(filtered)

It was a miracle. We'd all prayed, and God answered our prayers.

Gordon switches the TV off. He looks at his father, gets up from his chair, and sits on the arm of Simon's chair. He places his arm over his dad's shoulder affectionately.

SIMON

Worked out I'm not going to eat you?

GORDON

Yep.

Simon grabs Gordon, and pulls him into a much closer, more intimate hug. Jeremy is taller than Gordon. He watches with a slight frown.

SIMON

It's so good to have you
back. We really missed you.

JEREMY

(with attitude)
You said he was dead.

GORDON

(whispers to Simon)
Counselor Jones said -
sibling rivalry.

WENDY

I'm really glad you're back,
Gordon.

Elizabeth grabs Jeremy and hugs him to her. He's happy with the attention. Gordon looks at him and winks.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Lucy is working at her laptop, searching for matches to prints found on the drug bags. She stands and takes her file to Felix's office.

LUCY

Got some matches. Daniel
Morgan. No kiddie stuff, but
two drug convictions. George
Watkins -Indecent dealing,
got off - lack of evidence.

FELIX

That's enough for warrants.
Pick them up. We'll do a
lineup. See if Gordon can
I.D. them

INT. SHED AT REAR OF HAIMES HOUSE DAY

An untidy interior with lots of junk. A long work bench is along the wall. Behind it is a shadow-board of tools. Jeremy is sitting in a canvas hammock. Gordon is placing a piece of wood into a bench vise.

JEREMY

If somebody tried to make me suck their dick, I'd bite it off.

GORDON

I thought about it. They would have hurt me - real bad. They showed me first. See that scar?

Points to scar on his arm and takes a pair of needle nosed pliers from a shadow board behind the bench. Holds them up.

Said they'd skin me slowly. I got a little sample. That was enough. Jeesh it hurt.

JEREMY

You couldn't fight them?

GORDON

I was tied up. Grabs a coil of sash-cord rope off the bench. I'll show you. Come here.

Jeremy obliges. Gordon secures his wrists with a sheer lashing.

GORDON

Turn around. Put your hands behind your back.

He ties Jeremy's hands then pushes him down to his knees, and ties his ankles. It is a firm hogtie. He puts Jeremy on his side.

GORDON
Comfortable?

JEREMY
No.

GORDON
Now you know what it's like
to be kidnapped.

Takes the needle nosed pliers and places them inside
Jeremy's nostrils.

JEREMY
Gordon, Don't.

Gordon is breathing heavily.

GORDON
Don't call out. I'll
squeeze.

JEREMY
Gordon, Let me go, please.

Gordon replaces the pliers on the shadow board. He takes
his time. Jeremy, uncertain, lies still, looking up at
Gordon.

GORDON
Don't worry. I wont hurt
you. Now you know what it's
like.

He lifts Jeremy back to a kneeling position and unties him.

Except they kept me like that
most of the time, in a dog
cage.

He sits on the hammock and breaks down, crying. Jeremy
shakes the rope off - more than embarrassed, feels tears
coming to his eyes. He sits next to Gordon and holds him
tightly, wrapping both arms around him.

JEREMY
You're safe, Gordon. You're
home. You're my brother. I
love you.



INT LINEUP OBSERVATION ROOM DAY

Gordon, flanked by Lucy and Felix, looks at the men lined up against the wall.

GORDON

Number two and number five.

FELIX

Sure about that?

GORDON

Absolutely. They put me in the car. I never saw them before that. Master is out there, somewhere. So is Scourge.

FELIX

I wanted to talk to you about that. Would you like a coke, milkshake, or coffee? We'll go down to the canteen. It's cozier.

INT. POLICE STATION OFFICE - DAY

Lucy and Elizabeth are talking about security

LUCY

We haven't caught the kidnapers. They won't want him testifying. I'm saying, be careful.

ELIZABETH

Should we move?

LUCY

Could you afford it? Some sort of cul-de-sack would be better. With a high front wall.

ELIZABETH

Gordon tied Jeremy up, the
other day, in the shed.
Didn't hurt him. Let him go.

She looks away, embarrassed

He swears, and masturbates.

LUCY

That bothers you?
All boys do it.
If they don't, they get wet
dreams.

ELIZABETH

He cuts himself. Smokes. Ties
himself up. Puts little burns
on his arms. He's so
restless.
(sniffs in hanky)
We prayed to get him back.
He's come back, but it's like
it isn't him.

LUCY

It's going to take time.
Give him a lot of space.
Believe me, he is looking for
himself, too.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE MEDICAL COMPLEX DAY

Gordon and Elizabeth leave the building and walk to a bus stop. While waiting, Gordon looks down at the foot path. A pair of black shoes enters his field of view. Gordon freezes. Then he looks up at the man standing in front of him. It is the face of consummate evil. The man brushes past them and walks on, giving Gordon a bit of a shove as he leaves.

Their bus arrives. Elizabeth notices that Gordon is standing very still. Saliva dribbles from his mouth, and he looks slack jawed.

ELIZABETH

Whatever is wrong with you?
Don't go all funny on me now.
You're getting better.

She notices the front of his jeans is wet.

We'd better get home.

She bustles him aboard the bus and finds a quiet seat.

INT. HAIMES HOUSE LOUNGE - DAY

Ralph is interviewing Gordon, who is now in different clothes. The stolid policeman writes in his notebook, concerned, but not excited.

RALPH

So you saw a man you believe
to be "Master". The one who
kidnapped you.

GORDON

At the bus stop. Yes.

RALPH

And you didn't call out?

GORDON

Couldn't. I couldn't move.

ELIZABETH

He was terrified. Messed
himself.

GORDON

Mum.

ELIZABETH

Well it's true. He stood
there dribbling and peeing
his pants. That's how
frightened he was. If I'd
known, I'd have strangled the
bastard.

EXT. CYCLING TRACK AND PARK EVENING

Felix and Sandra are jogging along the path, accompanied by sons John and Luke on their cycles. They reach a fenced off area where the cycle track ends. Felix and Sandra stop for a breather. John and Luke join them.

FELIX

A good little workout.
Now we get to go all the way
back.

JOHN

I'm not tired. I'm going to
run with you guys next time.

Sandra looks about uneasily.

SANDRA

Someone just walked over my
grave. I've got the
spookiest feeling.

FELIX

Hold your breath for a while.
You've built up too much
oxygen.

SANDRA

No, it's not that. I feel as
if I'm being watched.

Luke points to the road, some distance across parkland.

LUKE

That white car's been
following us. He was parked
down the road when we left
home.

FELIX

Don't point. Just ignore it.
We'll run home, and see if he
follows us back.

SANDRA

Felix, you're scaring me.

FELIX

Come on.

He begins to jog back the way they've come. The little family group keeps together, and the car does a U turn, following them back.

FELIX

Honey, I want to get a snap of it without being seen. Cover me. You too, John.

John, Luke and Sandra move between Felix and the car as they jog on.

It could be any scumbag.

He dials on his small mobile phone, and takes some pictures of the car.

Ralph, Felix here. Dispatch two cars One along Wright Avenue, one along Park street. Urgent. Detective being stalked. Intercept a white Chrysler 300 sedan. Hurry it up.

The cycle path moves closer to the roadway. In the distance, approaching sirens can be heard. The car suddenly turns off the roadway and hurtles across the grass towards them.

SANDRA

That tree. It's thick enough. She drags the two boys behind it.

Police vehicles drive into the park towards the oncoming car. It swerves and heads back towards the road, with the police vehicles in pursuit. Another police vehicle stops beside them. Ralph is at the wheel. Bonnie, his dog, looks smugly through the rear window.

RALPH

Nice evening for a family
run, Captain.

RADIO (filtered)

Car abandoned in traffic.
No sign of the occupant. He
got away.

LUKE

Bonnie's in the car. She can
follow him.

RALPH

She sure can.
(into radio)
Tracker dog will be on the
scene in moments. Nobody
touch that vehicle.

FELIX

Good luck, Ralph.

JOHN

Go get him, Bonnie!

LUKE

Yay!

Ralph's car skids around to head off in the direction of
the chase.

FELIX

We'll get the bastard. His
fingerprints or DNA will be
on that car somewhere.

SANDRA

Felix, I'm scared.

FELIX

I know. We'll talk about it
at home. Looks like we might
need more protection.



INT. SHED AT REAR OF HAIMES HOUSE - NIGHT

It is a hot night. Gordon and Jeremy are playing darts in the shed at the rear of the house. Its sliding windows are open to let a slight breeze through. The moon is not up, and the garden is very dark.

GORDON

You need triple twenty to get in.

JEREMY

I know. Dad always plays with me.

ELIZABETH (O.S.)

You got ten minutes, boys and supper's ready.

GORDON

(Calling out loudly)
All right, Mum!

There is a sound, like a car backfiring towards the front of the house. The boys ignore it and continue to play.

JEREMY

Got it. I'm in front now.

GORDON

Not for long.

There is a much louder sound from the house. It isn't a car backfiring. It's a shot. There are two more. The boys stand dead still, looking at each other.

GORDON

Back window, quick.

He pulls the light switch cord and plunges the shed into darkness. The boys manage to shimmy through the rear window of the shed.

EXT. REAR OF HOUSE YARD BEHIND SHED NIGHT

A deadly game of cat and mouse begins. The boys drop to the ground. A man's head appears at the shed window and shines a torch.

JEREMY (whispers)
That isn't Dad. Triple
twenty.

He throws a dart at the face, and there is a scream and a terrific BANG! As the man mis-fires his pistol, missing them.

Lights go in the adjoining houses, and residential neighborhood-watch alarms begin to sound.

The boys try to get through the back gate, but someone is waiting for them. Gordon lets a dart fly and there is another scream. He slams the gate shut. The two boys are trapped. Approaching sirens sound in the distance.

MANS VOICE (O.S.)
Leave them! Get out of here.

There is a rustling through the garden as the men race off. The sound of a vehicle burning tyres as the hit-men get away.

The boys stay still, until police cars arrive. Many of the men are in flak jackets and SWAT squad gear. Within moments, they find the two boys hiding in the shrubbery of the garden. Ralph and Lucy hurry over to them. Moments later, two ambulances arrive.

LUCY
Thank heavens you're both
safe.

JEREMY
Mum?! - Dad?!
(break)
Wendy?!

Jeremy looks at Lucy. Her face says everything. then Jeremy begins screaming. She holds him, struggling with his grief. Gordon stands still, frozen to the spot.

JEREMY
(screams) NO! Aaargh!

INT. POLICE STATION BRIEFING ROOM NIGHT

The station is a hive of activity. Members of the SWAT squad and senior officers are in the briefing room. Felix enters with a folder and walks to the podium.

FELIX

Everyone here? Good. We lost a good officer tonight, three members of a family are dead, and their two surviving children are under armed care. My family was threatened, but we don't know if there is any link between the incidents. Lieutenant Lucy Baker.

Lucy swaps places with Felix.

LUCY

What started off as a fairly simple kidnapping case has escalated. The victim has enough information to implicate a lot of people. Some of them may be political figures, doctors, and professional men.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM PRE-DAWN

Ralph has brought the boys coffee. They are still in the clothes they had on the night before. They sit at the interview table eating a breakfast of cereal from small cardboard boxes in white plastic bowls with plastic spoons.

RALPH

There you are. Same stuff we give the prisoners and they don't complain.

GORDON

Mister Walton, Sir. What's going to happen to us now?

RALPH

Normally we'd be able to put you in one of the state's group homes, but they don't have security - not heavy security. You're both going under a Witness Protection program.

INT. POLICE STATION OFFICE - DAY

Felix has just been taken off the case. He is furious, but the two senior officers, in suits, are adamant. HACKET (50) and TUBBS (45) stand apart from him,

FELIX

The attack on me - there is no evidence connecting it to the Haimes case.

HACKET

You said you'd spoken to the Haimes family about security. You placed an officer in a car outside. He's dead. The Haimes family is dead. Don't take this any further, Felix.

TUBBS

Your competency could become the subject of investigation. We want you right off the scene. We have to find somewhere to put the boys.

FELIX

You've got tons of forensic evidence. Bloodstains, dart wounds, even prints. I've got four weeks leave. I'll take it. We've got a mountain cabin. Remote area.

HACKET

Does anyone know where this cabin is?

FELIX

Not that I know of. It's no secret, but ...

HACKET

Maybe this will cut you some slack.

Turns around slowly and gestures with his finger at his sudden idea.

We have to protect the boys. Would your wife be willing to take on two more kids in your cabin?

TUBBS

Yes. You could take eight weeks special leave. You'd have State fostering allowance - to cover expenses.

HACKET

Minimal contact with the outside world. Funerals and Court excepted.

FELIX

I'm on your wavelength. I'll ask her.

Turns back to look at Hacket

Lucy is very familiar with the case so far. May I recommend her as my replacement?

TUBBS

Sure.

INT. FELIX'S 4WD TOYOTA CRUISER DAY

Sandra is driving. Felix turns around to look at the four boys in the back. Luke and John are sleeping. Jeremy and Gordon are awake, looking out of the windows.

SANDRA

Always said we should have
four kids. Wouldn't mind a
girl, though.

FELIX

It's never too late. You guys
right back there?

GORDON

We're fine, thank you, Mister
Reiter.

FELIX

Felix and Sandra. If we're
going to be family for a
little while, we may as well
be comfortable.

GORDON

Thanks, Felix.

JEREMY

Thanks Felix and Sandra.

EXT. VIEW OF ROAD DAY

Establishment shot of Toyota driving towards the mountains.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Lucy moves her laptop into Felix's office and places it
with other files. She looks at the office computer, a
large Macintosh with the police logo on the screen. Ralph
enters and hands her an envelope. He has a newspaper under
his arm.

RALPH

System passwords - Courier
just brought it, Captain..

Lucy tears the envelope open and looks inside. Then she
drops it into the shredder.

LUCY

It's only temporary. He will be back.

Now - what have we got? Two thugs with nasty gashes on their heads. DNA and blood types. Two sets of nice prints. One Chrysler. Stolen.

She sits in the chair and looks around.

RALPH

Three shells and we're still looking. Four nine milimetre bullets recovered. Victims all shot at close range. It's a mess.

Tosses newspaper on the desk.

LUCY (READS)

Captain Felix Reiter has been removed from the Gordon Haines case after his family was assassinated last night in a daring raid by the criminal underground. A police officer, guarding the family, was found shot dead in his patrol car.

She tosses the paper into her waste-paper basket.

The public wants action. I've got an idea. We'll shake the bastards about a bit, and see what pops up.

EXT STREETSCAPE DAY

Police busy picking up dealers, prostitutes, and petty thugs.

INT. BARS AND CLUBS DAY

Police raiding clubs, bars, and illegal gambling rooms.

EXT. HOUSES DAY

Police searching houses, deliberately harassing local crime bosses, generally closing crime down.

INT. PRIVATE BASEMENT SOMEWHERE IN CITY NIGHT

A group of ten men are sitting around a table discussing events. STREETER, a crime boss, sounds off

STREETER

I always knew kiddie rackets were dangerous. We got no control over them. I can't drive without getting a ticket. Who did the hit?

THUG#2

We think they were military. Getting too old, and too slow. They muffed it.

STREETER

Know them?

THUG#2

No. Only the two on remand. The kid fingered them.

STREETER

Take care of them Lennie. Corpses don't tell tales. Give the piggies a dead end.

THUG#3

What about the kid? While he's about, the heat is going to be on.

THUG#2

I saw him on Television. That sort of thing gives crime a bad name. I'm a father. Anyone know this pedo ring? Anyone know anyone in it?

STREETER

(looking in his diary)
 Four yeas ago, Felix Reiter
 bought a property off a
 friend of my Uncle. Its lot
 35a, Mountain Drive,
 Pineville.

THUG#3

You want us to pay him a
 visit, take them out?

STREETER

No. Someone's already tried
 that and stirred up a
 hornet's nest. Just put word
 out. Shift the fight off our
 ground. The 'hood quiets
 down, and we're back in
 business.

EXT FELIX'S CABIN DAY

The Reiters have arrived at their cabin and are carrying
 various boxes, cases, etc. inside.

INT BOYS' ROOM DAY

Gordon and Jeremy check out the small landing outside their
 room.

JEREMY

There's a ladder right down
 to the ground.

GORDON

Probably the fire escape for
 the top story.

They start to unpack their cases and put various clothes
 into their cupboards and lockers.

INT REITER'S CABIN - GROUND FLOOR. DAY

Felix is attending to the gun cabinet. It contains a
 formidable armory. He ensures that each weapon is fully
 loaded and there is a box of appropriate ammunition beneath
 each weapon. Gordon enters carrying a large box of
 groceries.

He places it on the kitchen table. Jeremy has a lighter load of breakfast cereals. Gordon looks at the weapons cabinet.

FELIX

What do you know about guns, Gordon?

GORDON

Not much.

FELIX

You should learn. After lunch, we'll squeeze a few rounds off.

SANDRA

I'm not letting John or Luke.

FELIX

Gordon and Jeremy are old enough. After what happened ...

EXT MINI RANGE AT REAR OF CABIN. DAY

Felix, Gordon, and Jeremy are wearing protective glasses and earmuffs, at the moment around their necks. Felix explains, using a 9mm automatic.

FELIX

(demonstrating)

You don't have much time to sight, so if you turn the pistol sideways and point it at your target, you'll usually hit it. Muffs on.

He checks the boys have their ear protectors on, adjusts his, and goes through a quick drill for safety, then fires 3 shots at the plywood target. He safety's the pistol and places it on the bench in front of him.

FELIX

Right, Gordon. You first.

Gordon picks up the Beretta, clicks off the safety, copies Felix's action and fires 3 rounds into his target. He safety's the pistol and puts it back on the bench. Felix checks the magazine, then it is Jeremy's turn.

INT FELIX'S CABIN - UPPER FLOOR NIGHT

John and Luke, well trained, are asleep in their double bunks. Felix checks on them briefly and looks into Gordon and Jeremy. The light is out, but the two boys are looking out of the window. Gordon is practicing an escape trick with a rope figure of eight lashing tied around his hands. Jeremy is coiling his rope to hang on the wall.

FELIX

Clear night. You'll see
plenty of stars.

Looks at Gordon's tied hands.

You can get out of that?

Gordon demonstrates by pulling his hands free.

GORDON

I like doing it.
I'm good at rope escapes.
Jeremy's learning. I could do
better with handcuffs.

FELIX

Not with mine. They're pick
proof.

JEREMY

Mister Reiter, are we safe?

FELIX

Should be. Nobody knows we're
here.

GORDON

So why are you teaching us to
shoot?

FELIX

Boys who know guns and fire-
arm safety are more likely to
use them properly.

JEREMY

What if you're wrong, and
they do know where we are?

FELIX

We'll be careful. See any
strangers, you tell me. OK?

INT CABIN - BEDROOM LATER

Felix and Sandra have relaxed in bed.

SANDRA

Settled them down?

FELIX

They're still awake. Let
them get to bed in their own
time. Keep them busy
tomorrow, and they'll sleep
like logs tomorrow night.

SANDRA

Good advice. If we stay
awake, we'll sleep like logs
tomorrow night.

FELIX

Glad you're in the mood.
Must be the mountain air.

EXT WOODS NEAR CABIN DAY

Felix leads Gordon, Jeremy, Luke and John on a mountain
hike. They all have staves cut from saplings to help them
walk through the thick brush.

GORDON

Look at that!

They have come across a mountain stream with water-falls.
It tumbles down into the bushy depths below. They sit on a
log which gives them a good view of the falls.

FELIX

There's good fishing in the hole at the bottom. We can follow the track down. I warn you, it takes a good hour to get there.

GORDON

Right. But how long does it take to get back up again.

FELIX

Depends on how fit you are, I guess.

EXT MOUNTAIN LOOKOUT LATER

Felix and the boys reach a flat grassy area with a good view over the local mountain-scape.

FELIX

That large peak is called "Old Baldy" by the locals. It's the core of an old volcano.

GORDON

How do they know?

JEREMY

Geologists study the landscape. Right, Felix?

FELIX

The whole area was mined by prospectors. There were a couple of good mines. Gold, mainly.

JEREMY

I learnt it at school.

Gordon looks down and mutters.

GORDON

Lucky you. I missed out on school.

Felix places both hands on Gordon's shoulders from behind.

FELIX

This is the school of the outdoors. We learn as we walk. Lessons like 'tolerance'.

JEREMY

Sorry, Gordon. Didn't mean it.

Gordon looks at Jeremy and shrugs.

GORDON

No offence.

EXT SERVICE STATION - COUNTRY TOWN - EVENING

Two black four-wheel drive vehicles take on fuel. Six men in dark non-descript clothing take on refreshments. The vehicles drive out of the service station and take a dirt road out of town.

INT FELIX'S CABIN

NIGHT

Felix and Sandra finish the washing up. The boys are watching a cartoon Video. Gordon has managed to 'con' Felix's handcuffs and is practicing getting them from behind his back to the front of him by wriggling his hands over his backside. Their escapology ropes are coiled neatly on the couch.

FELIX

Might be a good night to turn in early. We've had a long day.

JOHN

Aw, Dad. When the video's finished.

LUKE

Yeah.

They look up somewhat rebelliously, so Felix shrugs and gives Sandra a knowing look.

FELIX
Who said Policemen make
authoritarian fathers?

EXT ROAD TO CABIN NIGHT LATER
Gordon and Jeremy are doing bit of night exploring. They
are wearing dark bib and brace overalls over black T
shirts.

JEREMY
Felix will kill us if he
finds out we're not in bed.

GORDON
No he won't. We're not going
far.

Sound of vehicles approaching. Parking lights only.
Get off the road, Jeremy.
Hide.

The boys duck into the bushes and watch as the 2 cars drive
past. The vehicles stop. Business as the six men get out
of the vehicles in their black attack clothing, get their
weapons, and start up the road towards the cabin.

As soon as they are out of sight, the boys sneak a look in
the vehicles, which have been left unlocked.

JEREMY
Look at the guns. They want
to start a war.

The boys help themselves to a couple of automatics that
they take from a vest left in the car. They check the
weapons are loaded, and take extra ammunition. Gordon
finds a mobile phone. He pockets it. The boys take to the
woods again.



EXT WOODS NEAR CABIN ROAD NIGHT

Gordon tries to phone Felix, but fails to connect.

GORDON

Damn. This phones got a pin number.

JEREMY

Nine-one-one will work.
Try it.

GORDON

We've got to warn Felix somehow.

INT 911 EMERGENCY ROOM NIGHT

Susan, The operator who takes the call is sharp.

SUSAN

You're on witness protection?
Felix Reiter is your
detective. What precinct?
Right. How to warn them?
You have automatics. Shoot
them into the air, then clear
out of there.

EXT. FRONT OF CABIN NIGHT

The 6 assassins have dropped into a group to observe the cabin and are getting ready to spread out. Suddenly, there is a cacophony of shots from the darkness. An upper story window breaks. Lights come on in the cabin, then are turned off quickly.

MASTER

Shit. They're warned. We'll
have to rush them. Donovan,
Carpenter, get back to the
cars. Be careful. Scourger,
Watson, and Blake - with me.

The men rush forward to hit the cabin before the occupants have the opportunity to defend it. They kick in the front door. There is an exchange of fire.

EXT ROAD TO CABIN NIGHT

Donovan and Carpenter reach their vehicles, only to find them well alight. They stand looking helplessly for a couple of moments, then double back up the road towards the cabin.

DONOVAN

Whoever it is, they're in the woods. Flush them out.

The men race into the woods. They are experienced fighters, possibly ex-marines. They duck low to avoid exposure. A cat and mouse game develops as Gordon and Jeremy - now with faces camouflaged with mud streaks, drop to observe what is happening. The men search for them, but the boys have the advantage of being small and hard to find. Jeremy crouches under a bush as one of the men walks past his hiding place.

The boys work their way back towards the cabin. Donovan and Carpenter are heading in the same direction.

EXT. FRONT OF CABIN NIGHT

Scourger and Master drag Sandra's body out onto the landing. Blake appears with John and Luke, their hands are tied behind them with the escapology ropes. The boys are wearing their ski-pajamas.

BLAKE

Sure you want these kids?

MASTER

Reiter's dead. One shot through the heart. His kids are a bonus prize. Now all we need to do is find the others.

EXT WOODS NEAR CABIN NIGHT

Jeremy looks around and finds himself facing Donovan who points his automatic right into the boy's face.

DONOVAN

Got you. Drop it, boy.

There is the close sound of a fire-arm, and Donovan's face explodes. Gordon is revealed behind and to his right, smoking automatic in hand.

GORDON

I told you to be careful.
Get his gun.

JEREMY

(agitated)
You killed him. You shot
someone.

There is the sound of someone, nearby, rushing through the bushes.

GORDON

(coldly)
The other is getting away.

There is the distant sound of police sirens as the local sheriff and his men begin their rescue.

EXT. FRONT OF CABIN NIGHT

Reiter's car with Master, Scourger, Blake, Carpenter, and Watson makes a getaway. John and Luke can be seen in the rear window. Gordon and Jeremy look on helplessly, then realise the cabin is on fire.

GORDON

Come on. Felix and Sandra ...

He realises Sandra is dead. He looks at her briefly. Her night-dress is covered with blood. There is a bullet hole in her forehead. Jeremy starts to panic, but Gordon grabs him firmly.

GORDON

Where's Felix?

The boys rush into the house. The kitchen is on fire. Felix, bare chested, lies on his back, his automatic lies about a foot away. He looks dead, with a bullet wound in his left chest. Jeremy grabs the fire extinguisher.

GORDON

Checks Felix

He's breathing.
Get him outside first.

The two boys, with great difficulty, drag him out onto the porch by his arms. As they get him away from the house, the Sheriff's car arrives. Joe Metcalfe, (40) takes position behind the vehicle with his deputies. Gordon and Jeremy stand with pistols ready.

METCALFE

You Gordon?

GORDON

Yes Sir. Detective Reiter is alive, sir. The others got away, but they took John and Luke.

METCALFE

Boys, put those guns down and step right away from him. You're All right now. We're here to take charge. Put your hands in the air - empty.

Gordon and Jeremy lower their guns and place them on the ground. They step away from them and put their hands up. Quickly, the sheriff's men cuff their hands behind their backs and take them over to the cars. They place them against the rear door, turned around to face Metcalfe.

METCALFE

Don't worry boys. You're at a crime scene, armed, so this is just standard procedure. Now tell us what happened.

In the background, the deputies are administering first aid to Felix, and the cabin fire is being extinguished.



EXT. FRONT OF CABIN

LATER

An ambulance loads Felix, and a coroner's van is being loaded with two body bags. A helicopter is in the background, with members of the State Swat Team grouped around an officer. Moves in closer to reveal Captain Lucy Baker in the field with her force. She walks over to the sheriff's car.

LUCY

Sheriff Metcalfe, I'm Captain Baker. Are the boys all right?

METCALFE

Reiter's alive. The bullet went above his heart through the lung and busted his clavicle. He should be right - eventually. Sandra's dead. Bastards took the two Reiter boys in the family car.

LUCY

How are Gordon and Jeremy?

METCALFE

Fine. The older boy confessed to shooting one of the men. The little bastards were armed for bear. They're in our custody.

Points to where Gordon and Jeremy sit, handcuffed, in the rear of his vehicle. Gordon pulls his cuffed hands to the front over his ankles and feet.

LUCY

Those men killed their family and have just killed their foster mother. They are witnesses, not thugs. I'd appreciate it if you'd release them to us.

Metcalfe shrugs. Then he grins.

METCALFE

Just didn't want them to get
into any more trouble. I
guess they did what they had
to do. They're all yours.

He walks to his car, but Gordon and Jeremy are already out.
They hand Metcalfe the handcuffs, and run to meet Lucy. She
is overjoyed to see they are safe. Metcalfe looks in
amazement at the handcuffs and then at the boys.

LUCY

It's all right, Sheriff. He's
become a great little
escapologist. Reaction to
being kidnapped, I guess.

EXT

UPPER MOUNTAINS - WOODS

DAWN

Master leads his group of thugs up a mountain path. John
and Luke trudge on, their hands are tied behind their
backs. If they try to slow down, Scourger hits them with a
skinned piece of branch, cut like a cane.

MASTER

See that mountain? We'll
head to the Right of it.
Then we go around it.
There's plenty of water we
can go through to throw off
any scent.

JOHN

I need to take a leak,
Mister.

SCOURGE

We're not stopping. If
you've got to go, then go.

JOHN

You're cruel.

Scourger grins

SCOURGER
 (Laughs softly) Yeah. Just
 remember that.

EXT ROAD'S END DAWN

Lucy, Gordon, Jeremy, and the Law Enforcement group stand looking at the remains of Reiter's car, which has been pushed into a canyon.

An officer looking at the wreck waves his arms to show there is nobody in the vehicle.

LUCY
 Nobody. That means they must
 have taken to the hills.

METCALFE
 Its wild country. There are a
 dozen towns they could head
 for. They're armed. If I was
 them, I'd discourage pursuit.

GORDON
 Bonnie could track them.

LUCY
 Alert to the suggestion.

Sheriff, you've got dogs?

METCALFE
 Have we got dogs. Yes, Maam.
 (chuckles)
 We have dogs.

INT HOSPITAL WARD DAY LATER

Felix is lying back in bed. A drip is attached to his arm, and a drain tube is in his chest wound. Lucy, Gordon, Jeremy, Hacket, and Tubbs are visiting.

HACKET
 The press is all over us. We
 are moving in on this gang.
 State Governor sends his
 condolences, by the way.

GORDON

I feel awful.
Guess we should have gone
somewhere else - with another
family.

FELIX

If 'ifs' and 'buts' were
fruit and nuts, what a feast
we could have. They taught
us that in training.

He ruffles Gordon's hair.

Not your fault, little buddy.
These are very bad bastards.
You took one out. I'm real
proud of you.

GORDON

He was about to shoot Jeremy.

HACKET

Judge Percival issued him
with a writ Noli Proseccii.
That doesn't happen often.

FELIX

Who pushed that through?

HACKET

I did.

FELIX

Do you guys mind If I talk to
the boys for a while?

LUCY

Sure. We'll take a coffee
break in the canteen.

They leave. Felix is alone with Gordon and Jeremy.

FELIX

That's a relief. Now, you
guys can do me a big favour.

INT HOSPITAL WARD DAY LATER

Lucy, Hacket, and Tubbs enter the ward. It is empty.

EXT UPPER MOUNTAINS - WOODS DAY

John and Luke, hogtied, lie on their sides on the ground in front of a tree. Their faces are bleeding and bruised from a beating. The five men sit around a very small camp-fire drinking coffee from metal cups.

SCOURGE

If we off the kids, we can travel a lot faster.

MASTER

No. We might need them if things get tight. You watered them? Can't keep up if they're dehydrated.

SCOURGE

Don't worry, they'll keep up.

He fills a cup with water and approaches the boys.

Now if you don't want to experience pain again, you'll drink all of this. Don't want you to get thirsty.

He drags them upright to a kneeling position. The boys look at him and drink. Both are very angry.

Oh, if looks could kill.
(laughs)

He puts the boys back on their sides, then returns to the others near the fire. John wriggles round to face Luke.

JOHN

(whispers)

Don't cry, Luke. They wouldn't be giving us water if they wanted to kill us.

LUKE

I'm scared, John. Don't let them hurt me again.

JOHN

Just do what they tell you.

MASTER

Break over. Bury this fire
and hide it. Get the kids.

Blake unties the ropes from the boys' ankles. He stands them up and checks their bonds. The group moves off, with their small hostages in tow.

EXT. FRONT OF CABIN EARLY NEXT DAY

Felix, Gordon, and Jeremy have light agricultural motorbikes, about 90cc. On a trailer behind a 4wd recreational vehicle. The bikes have large cogs as gears, and are ideal for mountain riding. Supply packs are strapped on the bike sides. The three are dressed in black skivvies, black jeans, black belts, boots, black helmets, and dark glasses. They have assault rifles slung across their backs, and loaded pistols in side holsters. Felix has discarded the medical lung-wound drain, and a discarded drip also lies in the bottom of the trailer. The bikes ready, the three ride off up a side track leading from the cabin into the woods.

EXT TIMBER CUTTERS TRACKS THROUGH WOODS DAY

Felix leads the boys through the woods on their motorcycles. They jump logs, go over ramps, and rush headlong into the task of getting ahead of Master's gang.

INT. POLICE STATION BRIEFING ROOM DAY

Lucy has a large map on the wall. Her task force has been assembled, and sits waiting for her. She raps the map.

LUCY

(refers to notes)

Operation 'Skunk Hunt' starts now. Our objectives are - to rescue Luke and John Reiter from their kidnappers. This is the over-riding priority over all else. Second, we capture this gang dead or alive.

LUCY

They leave these mountains in handcuffs or body-bags. I don't care which.

Takes a drink from a glass.

Thirdly, Captain Reiter is known to be in the area with Gordon and Jeremy Haines. God knows what is going through his head, but he must be frantic, and out of his mind with grief and anger. He must be neutralized, and the two Haines boys must be removed from his presence and neutralized also.

She points to pictures of the three on her large screen.

Under no account must deadly force be used against them. These are innocent victims of a nasty situation, but Felix is clouded in his judgment, and that makes our task even more difficult.

EXT WOODS UPPER MOUNTAINS DAY

Metcalfe, his men, and a large pack of hounds are on the trail.

LUCY (V.O.)

Sheriff Metcalfe is tracking the fugitives at a safe distance with hounds. We have warned him not to get too close.

EXT SHOTS OF HELICOPTERS OVER MOUNTAINS DAY

LUCY (V.O.)

The area is being scoured from the air. The

helicopters can't get too
low, because we don't know
what arms the fugitives have.

MONTAGE OF ACTIVITY - LINES OF MEN SEARCHING WOODS.

LUCY (V.O.)
Law enforcement from three
states is searching the area.

EXT HIGH WOODLANDS DAY

Felix is resting. He's exhausted, and finds breathing
difficult. He scans the lowlands with his field-glasses.

FELIX
I think we're ahead of them
now. They don't know these
forestry trails.

GORDON
You look kind of - sick.

FELIX
I am a bit, but we must keep
going. I'll heal. Give me
the tablets. Something
cillin - kills the bugs.
These pain-killers make me
sleepy.

tosses the pain killers away - takes the anti-biotic.

Drink some more water. You
mustn't dehydrate.

The boys take sips from their canteens.

JEREMY
Why do you think they'll come
this way?

FELIX
It's what I'd do. They could
go to the forestry towns, but
I'd head that way, then
double back around 'Old
Baldy'.

Puts his canteen on his belt.

Not much law in Pineville if
the sheriff is out hunting
them. I think somebody is
going to pick them up.

EXT UPPER MOUNTAINS - WOODS DAY

The fugitives have stopped, listening carefully, they
detect the distant sound of hounds.

MASTER

They're getting closer. Find
a thin tree.

There's a thin tree nearby. The lower branches are cut
off. Luke's hands are tied behind it, and he is made to
kneel in front of it. Scourger pulls his legs from under
him, so he is lying on his stomach with the tree at his
crotch. His body is bent upwards. His ankles are tied to
his hands.

LUKE

It hurts. Please - let me
go.

MASTER

Break his legs. Then they'll
have to carry him out.

SCOURGE

Put a bullet through him.

MASTER

That won't slow them down.
An injured boy has to be
stretchered out of these
woods. Takes six men.
They'll all have to go back.

LUKE

No, please don't hurt me.
Don't!

JOHN

Not Luke. No, he's my
brother, please!



There is a thud, a snapping sound and a childish scream. Then silence. The men move out with John, who is crying.

MASTER

Don't worry. The dogs will find him. He'll be in hospital tonight.

JOHN

You fucking piece of shit. When they strap you on a gurney and fill you with heart stoppers, I want to pull the lever.

Scourge laughs

SCOURGE

Hear that, chief. Kid's found his balls. I'd watch him 'f I was you.

The men laugh. Scourge pulls hard on the rope, making John stumble. His pajamas are torn, and he is badly scratched by branches. The boy's eyes are red, but he is too dehydrated to cry much.

EXT UPPER MOUNTAINS - WOODS EVENING

Luke, tied on the tree in a hogtied position, screams and shouts for help. There is a sudden noise, and he looks up to see a large pack of hunting dogs, mouths drooling, and heading towards him. He screams again in terror.

EXT UPPER MOUNTAINS - WOODS EVENING

Metcalfe and his deputies have found Luke, but they aren't stopping the hunt. We hear an unseen helicopter overhead as it shines a bright light down, and members of the SWAT team work on the injured boy. They gently place Luke into a rescue stretcher. He is being winched upwards.

METCALFE

We're only a couple of hours behind, eh? Thought they'd buy a bit of time. Well it isn't so, boys.

A second team of men don night glasses and get ready to move out with the dogs. Metcalfe stays with them. He puts his night glasses on.

METCALFE

We can see in the dark, and
the dogs don't need to.

EXT UPPER MOUNTAINS - WOODS EVENING

John looks a real mess. He is filthy with mud and dirt. He lies silently on the ground, hogtied so he can't move. The gang is having a rest.

SCOURGER

Have any more smart ideas?
You didn't count on the
helicopter rescue.

MASTER

You're right. So we can't
stay here for long.

BLAKE

We could split up. I think
they're tracking the boy.
They can't have all our
scents.

BLAKE

There must be some way we can
slow them down.

SCOURGE

We could drop him down a mine
shaft. It'd take days to
rescue him.

MASTER

Grizzly Canyon Mine.
Abandoned. It's about five
miles from here.
There'll be a well, or shaft,
or something.



SCOURGER

I still think it would be better to shoot him and leave him.

MASTER

I've told you - they won't bother stopping to rescue a corpse. A live boy is different.

BLAKE

They'll take a week to rescue him if they have to. We need time.

MASTER

Blake, you can carry him.

He kicks the small fire out, and the men move off.

Blake picks John up, carries him over his shoulder, The men move off into the darkness.

EXT LEDGE OVERLOOKING MINE NIGHT

Felix, Gordon, and Jeremy are camping on a ledge near the mine. They have a small lamp. Felix is perspiring.

FELIX

My brains must be in a knot. I'm not well enough for this caper, and I never should have brought you two here.

JEREMY

Don't talk like that. We all got reasons to be here.

EXT TRACK INTO MINE NIGHT

Master, Scourger, and the gang walk quietly into the mine area. They don't notice a small fishing wire across the path. As he steps past it, it pulls a tiny piece of wood from a clothes peg, closing a circuit that sets off a small beeper in Felix's headset.

EXT LEDGE OVERLOOKING MINE NIGHT

Felix wakes the boys and looks through his sniper-scope. The men walk into the mine area. John has been released from the hogtie and walks with them, but his hands are still tied behind his back.

FELIX

They've arrived. John is with them. Where's Luke? There's no Luke.

GORDON

Settle down. Maybe he got away.

JEREMY

Before you start shooting, how about we try to get John away from them.

The men have taken John to the well. There is a large coil of rope on a winding bar, hanging down onto a broken bucket. Blake cuts it free, grabs the end of it, and ties John's ankles together.

FELIX

What are they doing to him?

GORDON

(using field glasses)
Dropping him into the well. They must want to get him rescued. That will slow everyone down. I bet that's what happened to Luke.

JEREMY

How deep is that well?

FELIX

Deep enough to be a nuisance. It's dry. They ran out of water for the mine. I hope they don't drop him.

EXT. CLOSE TO WELL NIGHT

The men lower John down the well. He cries out, but they don't take any notice. Felix leans back, distressed, but glad the boy is alive.

FELIX (V.O.)

They want him alive down there.

The rope is loose. Scourger wiggles it, then drops it. There are screams and wails from the well.

EXT LEDGE OVERLOOKING MINE NIGHT

Gordon is looking through the night sight.

GORDON

Scourger dropped the rope in. John's trapped down there.

FELIX

He isn't happy, but he's safe. Whoever comes here will have to find a long rope. It could take hours.

JEREMY

That's all they need. A few hours.

GORDON

There's too many of them to take on.

FELIX

I thought about a fire-fight, but there are too many. I think they'd win. They won't hang about. We'll wait until they've gone. That's an old police tactic.

They watch as the gang moves off.



EXT TRACK INTO MINE NIGHT

Sheriff Metcalfe and the tracking dog team arrive at the mine. He isn't really surprised to find Felix and the boys. He manages to ignore the fact that they are armed to the teeth.

EXT MINE SITE DAWNING LIGHT

METCALFE

This a fancy dress party, or
can anyone join?

Looks into the well, illuminating it with his searchlight torch.

JOHN

Help! Help me, please!

FELIX

John, it's Daddy. We're
coming down as soon as we can
get a long rope.

JOHN

Daddy, I can't move.

METCALFE

Luke is in hospital. They
broke his legs and left him
tied to a tree. Hoped to
delay us. It worked. They got
an hour on us.

Takes his night vision glasses off. It is obvious that he is very tired. The dogs, too, are panting.

FELIX

They trekked you around Old
Baldy and I think they're
heading back to Pineville.
Can you get a rescue team
here with a long rope?

He looks down the well again.

John, we're getting a rope.
Hang on. Be brave.

GORDON

I think I could wriggle down to him.

METCALFE

It's too dangerous. We don't want any dead kids at this stage. By the way, Felix, your superiors are pissed. You shouldn't have involved the Haimes kids.

The sound of a helicopter, far off, swells louder.

FELIX

I had to get here somehow. Nobody else was helping.

EXT LEDGE OVERLOOKING MINE NIGHT

Gordon and Jeremy quietly wheel their motorbikes back to the woodland track. They are wearing night vision glasses 'souvenired' from the deputies.

GORDON

They're so busy with the rescue, they won't notice we've gone. We should be able to catch them.

JEREMY

What then?

GORDON

Payback time.

The boys wheel their motorcycles along the track in the darkness.

EXT. FURTHER DOWN THE TRACK NIGHT

Suddenly, Gordon stops. Both boys listen carefully. Someone is talking ahead of them. Gordon takes his rifle from his back and whispers to Jeremy.

GORDON

(Whispers)

I'd know that voice anywhere.

He peers through the night sight of the rifle. Then he thumbs the safety catch and cocks the rifle.

There are five of them.
Scourger and Master are out
in front.

JEREMY
(whispers back)
There are too many of them,
Gordon. Don't.

GORDON
(Whispers urgently)
If I take the rear one - on
the Left, and you take the
one on the Right, there'll
only be three.

Jeremy lays his motorcycle next to Gordon's and cocks his rifle.

JEREMY
(whispers) I'm ready.

GORDON
Count of three.
One
Two
Three . . .

EXT. MINE AREA NIGHT

Felix looks around for Gordon and Jeremy.

FELIX
Where are the boys?
I told them to stay here.
Where the hell have they got
to?

METCALFE
They wouldn't be stupid
enough to chase after our
felons, would they?

There is the sound of two shots, a long way away.

EXT. FURTHER DOWN THE TRACK NIGHT

Gordon and Jeremy fire, then shoulder their rifles, pick up their bikes, and kick start them. There is the sound of motorcycles as the boys head back towards the mine. As soon as they are far enough away, they turn their headlights on.

EXT. ROADWAY LEADING FROM THE MINE NIGHT

The boys have shot well. Carpenter lies in a crumpled heap. Watson is badly injured. Master, Scourger, and Blake have dropped to a defensive firing position, but the boys bikes have kicked up so much dust that they cannot return fire. Master is furious and tries to retrieve the situation.

MASTER

The bastards. Fuck!
After them. Don't let them
get away.

SCOURGER

Chase after someone who is
armed - in the dark. Not
me.

He looks down at Watson and shoots him through the head.

I suggest we get as far away
as possible. The law will be
here in minutes.

The men begin running along the road back towards
'Pineville'

INT. POLICE STATION OFFICE DAY

Lucy can relax a bit. Her primary and secondary objectives have been met. The two Reiter boys have been rescued, Felix and the Haines boys are safe. Two bodies have been recovered from near the mine. Their photos are on her desk.

LUCY

They're safe, Ralph.
John, Luke, Felix, Gordon and
Jeremy. All safe and in good
hands.

She looks at the file again.

LUCY

Two bodies recovered. Both
have long records.

Looks up cheerfully at Ralph.

We're going to have to re-
program those boys.

RALPH

You're not charging them?
That was a sniping job.
The boy is a callous killer.

LUCY

Who would convict him?
Charging him would be
political correctness gone
mad. Master, Scourger, and
Blake got clean away.
Somebody gave them a ride
out.

INT HOSPITAL WARD DAY

Felix, John, and Luke are sharing a ward which is guarded
by armed police. Gordon and Jeremy have been allocated
beds in the next ward. They have changed into ordinary
clothes, calf length shorts, T shirts, and athletics shoes.
Felix is back on a drip, and is having his lung wound
drained. John has bandages on his wrists and ankles, but
is awake, so the two boys are talking to him. Luke has his
legs in casts, slightly elevated.

GORDON

Three of them got away, so
we're going to be moved - as
soon as they can find a
place.

JOHN

Where will they take you?

GORDON

I don't know. Fort Knox,
Area 51, or something.
Anywhere safe.

JEREMY

It isn't safe here. They wont
put us with you guys again.

JOHN

But we saw their faces, too.
We can identify them. We know
what Master and Scourger look
like.

JEREMY

(urgently)

Don't tell anyone. Keep
quiet about it.

JOHN

But they know. Master,
Scourger, Carpenter, Blake,
and Watson. I saw them all.

GORDON

Don't worry about Watson or
Carpenter. Master, Scourger
and Blake are still alive.
Very dangerous. We'd better
tell Captain Lucy, because
you two guys are in danger,
same as us.

INT POLICE STATION OFFICE - A MONTH LATER DAY

Lucy is being polite to Felix, who sits opposite her on the
visitor's side of the desk, but there is no subterfuge
about her mood. She is both angry, and regretful.

LUCY

You get compensation. The
D.A. wanted to charge you
with 'Child Endangerment'
but he's backed off.

Felix has finished filling out a form. He hands it to Lucy,
who countersigns it.

LUCY

I'll look after this.
You've got far too close to
Gordon and Jeremy, but the
kids like you. Four kids. Can
you hide them safely?

FELIX

I've got a place, and I'm not
telling anyone.

EXT. COURTYARD OF POLICE STATION DAY

A man in an FBI jacket is showing the boys the closed van
in which they will leave the station, unobserved.

FBI MAN

If you look inside, you'll
see there are bunks, so you
can sleep on the trip.

He helps the boys up into the back of the van. Lifting
Luke, who puts his crutches down. Equipment shelving has
been modified into bunking. He gives a friendly grin.

Care to try them out?

INT. POLICE STATION OFFICE DAY

LUCY

I don't want to know. Danny
and George were killed in the
remand center, so there's no
trial. The boys aren't
getting witness protection.
Money?

FELIX

Sandra was insured. So am I.
Sold up everything. House,
cabin, There's just me, the
boys, and our suitcases. The
Haimes family was insured, so
Gord and Jerry can draw on
that. They can't sell their
house yet.

LUCY
Can payments be traced?

FELIX
They go through a secure
accountancy firm. Then to me.
They can't trace us that way.

Lucy gives a wry grin. She stands to dismiss him. Felix gets out of his chair and picks up his walking stick.

LUCY
Then I guess you'd better
disappear. Good luck, Felix.

She gives him a light kiss on the cheek and pats him affectionately.

I wish things were better.

FELIX
(leaving)
Don't worry. We'll work it
out.

INT. POLICE STATION DAY

The boys were waiting on a form, but are no longer there.

FELIX
Where are the boys?

RALPH
They went down to the
courtyard with the FBI agent
- to look at your escape van.

FELIX
What agent? What escape van!

With Ralph in tow, he rushes for the stairs leading down to the courtyard.

EXT. COURTYARD OF POLICE STATION DAY

The courtyard is empty. A set of crutches lies on the ground. Felix drops to his knees and screams.

FELIX
Luke! John! NOOOO!

INT. STATION BRIEFING ROOM NIGHT

Officers from Operation Skunk are watching the security footage from the station's cameras. Lucy is directing the briefing.

LUCY

Nobody challenged him,
because he came in through
the side door.

RALPH

(nursing a bruised face)
He had an FBI jacket and a
badge.

HACKET

Seemed to know the boys.

We see security footage of the man in the police station,
but he always has his face away from the camera. He
approaches the boys and chats with them. They get up, and
follow him through the side door.

Hell, everyone knew that
Felix was going into hiding.

Outside footage the man descends, holding Luke and carrying
his crutches in his left hand.

We didn't know his plans.
How is he, by the way.

LUCY

Cooling off in a cell,
heavily sedated. How's your
face?

RALPH

He just hit out at the
nearest person. I feel so -
responsible. Checked the
crutches for prints?

LUCY

They're in the lab now. Go
on.

RALPH

Felix was busy with you. The kids wanted to look at the van. There was no problem.

(break)

They are one up on us all the time.

Security footage of van driving out of the courtyard. Two men are in the front, but too blurred to be identified.

One step ahead. One of us is feeding them information.

LUCY

Some one, or some thing. I want a full security sweep of the station. Bugs are very hard to find.

There is a slight disturbance at the door. A rather disheveled Felix enters. He takes a seat at the back of the room.

LUCY

Are you all right?

FELIX

No. Sorry, Ralph. Mind if I sit in?

LUCY

You're not a member of this task force, but under the circumstances, I'll allow it.

Further street footage on screen shows the van traveling down streets, but the footage ends.

We don't monitor vehicles out of the central Traffic area. There were no prints on the crutches, except those belonging to Felix, Ralph, and Luke. The vehicle registration plate was from a van that was wrecked two years ago.

Felix puts his head into his hands. The others look at him with mixed feelings.

EXT UPPER MOUNTAINS - WOODS EVENING

Luke is tied to a tree unable to move. He gasps in panic. There is the sound of barking, and huge dogs appear, moving in on him, licking him, and barking. He screams.

INT WOODEN COTTAGE ON CATTLE RANCH DAY

Luke wakes to: A Wooden bunk contains the sleeping bodies of the other boys. Felix is rustling up breakfast. Luke breathlessly pokes his head above the sheets and looks around. He sees where he is and relaxes.

LUKE

Kidnapped by my own Uncle
Max. Some nightmare.

He looks out of the window.

It's flat out there - And I
mean - flat.

FELIX

Miles and miles of flat.

The other boys are waking. Gordon climbs out of his bunk and heads to the toilet with a set of day clothes.

JEREMY

Are we going to work this
ranch?

FELIX

That's why I bought it. I
always had a hankering for
country life.

In the background, The boys change into their day clothes, jeans and work shirts, elastic-sided boots, etc.

I hope the Jones boys like
horses.

Gordon appears wearing jeans and a navy-blue denim shirt. He sits at a chair.

GORDON

Good morning, Mister Jones.
Why did you choose that name?

FELIX

Very common. Hard to look up
in a data-base.

The other boys join him at the table. They name off.

GORDON

Peter Jones

JEREMY

Frank Jones

JOHN

Bruce Jones

LUKE

Andy Jones.

FELIX

Walter Jones.

They join hands and he says 'Grace'.

Lord, we thank you for this
meal and for our new home. Be
with us and watch over us,
the Jones family, day by day.

ALL

Amen.

END