

MAD DOG KILLERS

By

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TITLE OVER BLACK:

This is a true story

FADE IN.

EXT. PRISON - EVENING

Exterior of an ominous building, a dark and imposing prison. A large sign says "OHIO STATE PENITENTIARY."

SUPER: "January 3rd, 1949"

INT. PRISON - EVENING

Winding through the prison's hallways, past guards, guard posts, cells, inmates peering out from behind bars, through Death Row, across the courtyard to the Death House, where MURL ROBERT DANIELS, slim, boyish, looking younger than his 24 years, is led out of his cell by Warden RALPH W. ALVIS, two GUARDS, and a Catholic priest, FATHER LUCIER. DANIELS' eyes are closed; he leans heavily on the priest. Together they softly recite the Lord's Prayer.

INT. PRISON EXECUTION CHAMBER - MOMENTS LATER

The procession files into the execution room. WITNESSES line the wall opposite a simple wooden electric chair. The GUARDS start to quickly and efficiently strap Daniels in the chair.

DANIELS (V.O.)

I guess I always knew I'd burn.
Well, maybe not always, but once me
and Johnny started out, I figured
this is how it would end up.

SUPER: "Six months earlier."

INT/EXT. TRAIN - DAY

Daniels rides through rural countryside and farmland, engrossed in a letter.

DANIELS (V.O.)

I'd known Johnny for a long time.
First ran into him up at Mansfield;
that's the Ohio State Reformatory
at Mansfield, Ohio. I was up there
on an armed robbery beef.

(MORE)

DANIELS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

We met when we was both working on the honor farm and living in "J" barracks. We got to be pals. But I guess it all really started after that, after we both got paroled.

The squeal of brakes as the train pulls into a station. Daniels looks up as the CONDUCTOR enters the train car.

CONDUCTOR

Parkersburg, West Virginia. All out for Parkersburg.

ON THE TRAIN PLATFORM

The train finally stops and Daniels steps onto the platform. He pulls a flask out of his hip pocket and takes a long pull on it before slipping it back into his pocket.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Daniels knocks on the door of a nondescript house. MRS. WEST, 40s, haggard, wearing a faded, threadbare housedress, answers, wiping her hands on her stained apron.

MRS. WEST

What can I do for you, young fella?

DANIELS

I'm looking for Johnny, John West.
Is he home?

A look of disdain clouds Mrs. West's face as she gives Daniels the evil eye. She calls over her shoulder.

MRS. WEST

Johnny! Somebody here to see you.

Mrs. West slams the door in Daniels' face. Daniels waits. Suddenly the door bursts open and there stands JOHN COULTER WEST, tall, rail thin, with a shock of lopsided unruly hair, and thick, round spectacles. At 22, he is younger than Daniels but looks much older.

WEST

Murl, buddy, you made it. Am I glad to finally see you.

West embraces Daniels in a huge bear hug. Daniels, clearly glad to see West, is also clearly surprised and uncomfortable by this show of affection, and quickly pulls away.

DANIELS

It's good to see you, too, Johnny.
When did you finally get out?

WEST

Couple of months ago. March, I
guess. Been staying here with my ma
since then.

He pulls the flask from his pocket and offers it to West.

DANIELS

Here, want some?

West takes a long pull and hands it back.

WEST

(grimacing)
Thanks.

DANIELS

Is there a place we can go and get
a decent drink? We need to talk.

WEST

Yeah, sure, I know a place.

West opens the door and calls to his mother.

WEST (CONT'D)

Hey, Ma, I'll be back in a while.

INT. BAR - DAY

West and Daniels sit in a bar, a dirty, dimly-lit dive, and nurse their beers. A few hard-core DRUNKS are scattered among the cheap tables.

DANIELS

So, what have you been up to since
you got out?

WEST

Not much, just working shit jobs.

DANIELS

Yeah, me too. Working for my Pop
now. But I'm sick and tired of
working shit jobs for peanuts.

WEST

Yeah, me too. At this rate we'll
never have a pot to piss in.

DANIELS

Look, are you still ready to do what we talked about? You know, make some real money, easy money?

WEST

Hell yeah. I just been waiting for you.

DANIELS

There's nothing to stop us now.

WEST

What I really want to do is get some money in my pocket and then go back and get that bastard Harris. You know he gave me a hard way to go up there at Mansfield.

MEMORY FLASH

Interior, barn. A big beefy red-haired man on the wrong side of 50, RED HARRIS, holds something in his hand, leather and metal - a horse halter - pinning Daniels against the stall, raising the halter, bringing it down on a cringing Daniels.

BACK TO PRESENT DAY

WEST

Murl? Yo, Murl?
(snapping his fingers)

DANIELS

(dazed)
Wha...what?

WEST

You okay?

DANIELS

Yeah. Yeah, Red-man. That piece of shit beat on me a bunch of times.

WEST

Yeah, I remember. I can't wait to show up at his front door and beat his ass.

DANIELS

Yeah, of all the people in my life that treated me like shit, he's the worst.

(MORE)

DANIELS (CONT'D)

Always telling us what to do, and beating the crap out of us no matter what we did.

WEST

Yeah, I can't take any more of that. Even my ma is always telling me what I have to do. I'm sick of it. It feels like I ain't even allowed to run my own life.

DANIELS

But first things first, we need to get some money.

WEST

And guns, we're gonna need guns.

DANIELS

Right, and that takes money. Are you ready to go?

WEST

Hell, I been ready since I got out. I just need a few things at the house. And I guess I'd better say goodbye to my ma.

DANIELS

All right then, let's vamoose.

They chug down the last of their drinks.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Daniels waits on the front porch of the West home, listening to the heated conversation through the door.

WEST (O.S.)

Look, Ma, I'll only be gone for a while. We're just gonna go have a little fun.

MRS. WEST (O.S.)

Now you looky here, Johnny, that boy ain't nothing but trouble and he's gonna get you in more trouble.

WEST (O.S.)

No he ain't, Ma, it's just for a few days.

MRS. WEST (O.S.)
 You know how you are, Johnny, you
 know you're a little, well, slow.
 These other boys get you in
 trouble, they always do.

WEST (O.S.)
 I ain't slow, Ma. And Murl ain't
 like that, he's my friend.

MRS. WEST (O.S.)
 And what am I gonna tell your
 probation officer?

WEST (O.S.)
 I don't know. Tell him I'm working.
 I don't care. I gotta go.

West exits the home, a small duffel bag over his shoulder,
 and slams the door behind him, rolling his eyes at Daniels.

WEST (CONT'D)
 Let's go, buddy.

EXT. STREET - COLUMBUS, OHIO - DAY

A cab stops at the curb in the downtown area of Columbus.
 West and Daniels step out.

DANIELS
 You got any money?

WEST
 Yeah, I got a few bucks. Why?

DANIELS
 Well, we're gonna need those guns,
 so we'd better do that first.

WEST
 Okay, Murl. This is your town,
 where do we go?

DANIELS
 Look, there's a sporting goods
 store, they'll have what we want.

INT. SPORTING GOODS STORE - DAY

As West and Daniels enter the store, a little bell attached
 to the door jingles. West and Daniels stroll to the gun
 counter. The STORE OWNER joins them.

STORE OWNER
Can I help you boys?

DANIELS
Yes, sir. We're looking for a
couple of guns.

STORE OWNER
You looking for rifles, shotguns,
what?

DANIELS
Handguns. Can I see that one right
there?

Daniels points to a .32 caliber automatic. The store owner
hands it over. Daniels hefts the weapon, works the slide.

STORE OWNER
(to West)
How 'bout you, young fella?

WEST
Let me see that one there.

The store owner hands a .380 automatic to West. West grips
the gun and aims it off into the distance.

DANIELS
What do you think, Johnny?

WEST
I like this one.
(to store owner)
I'll take it.

DANIELS
Yeah, and I'll take this one.

STORE OWNER
Smart choices, boys, them's some
nice guns.

WEST
What's that?

STORE OWNER
That's a blackjack.

The store owner grabs a blackjack out of the case and slaps
it against his palm, making a loud smacking sound.

STORE OWNER (CONT'D)

It's for self-defense. Pop somebody on the head with one of these and you'll sure enough get their attention. It'll persuade 'em to leave you alone, but won't hurt 'em permanent.

West takes the blackjack and hefts it in his hand, slapping his palm a few times.

WEST

I like this, Murl, can we get one?

DANIELS

Sure.

(to store owner)

We'll take two of those. We'll need some bullets, too.

STORE OWNER

No problem, boys. Couple boxes each?

DANIELS

Yeah, that'll do.

WEST

For now.

West and Daniels exchange looks, grinning.

EXT. ST. FRANCIS HOTEL - DAY

West and Daniels exit the St. Francis Hotel, West with his back pack slung over his shoulder.

DANIELS

Okay, so we'll need a car, see.

WEST

Didn't you tell me you have a car?

DANIELS

I did, but I sold it.

WEST

Sold it? What the hell for? We're gonna need a car.

DANIELS

Well we can't pull stick ups in my own car, now can we? That wouldn't be very smart.

WEST

You're right about that. You're a smart one. So what are we gonna do?

DANIELS

Steal one. Let's try that parking lot over there. Lot's of folks just leave the keys in their cars.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

West and Daniels cross the street to a parking lot full of cars. They split up, each taking a row of cars, and peer into the cars one by one. After checking a few cars...

WEST

(loudly)

Hey, Murl, I got one. The keys are right in it.

Daniels trots quickly to the car, a 1947 two-tone gray two-door Pontiac, looking furtively up and down the street.

DANIELS

Shush, let's not let the whole damn town know.

WEST

(dejected)

Oh. Sorry.

(lighting up)

But look, the keys are in it, just like you said.

DANIELS

(looking the car over)

This one will do.

WEST

Hey, since I found it, can I drive it? You know I'm a good driver.

Daniels looks up and down the street again, seeing no one.

DANIELS

Sure, but let's make it quick.

West jumps in behind the wheel and fires up the engine as Daniels hops in. It catches the first time and West tears out of the parking lot with a squeal of tires.

EXT. STREET - DAY

West and Daniels pull to a stop on a residential street in a middle class section of Columbus.

INSIDE THE CAR

They peer through the windshield at a row of nearly identical houses.

WEST

Is that it, your house?

DANIELS

Yeah, that's it. I just need to go in and get a few things. Won't take me long.

WEST

Anybody home?

DANIELS

My mom. She'll give me a bunch of crap about leaving, make a big deal out of it.

WEST

Want me to come with you?

DANIELS

Nah, better not, it'll just make it worse. You wait here and I'll be right back.

Daniels takes a deep breath and opens the door.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Daniels enters the kitchen of a middle class home, nicely furnished, neat as a pin. MRS. DANIELS, a middle-aged woman in a neatly pressed, flowered housedress with a bright print apron, looks up as he quickly walks through the house. She follows, wiping her hands on her apron.

MRS. DANIELS

Murl, honey, where have you been?

Mrs. Daniels walks into the bedroom where Daniels digs into a dresser drawer, stuffing clothes into a suitcase.

MRS. DANIELS (CONT'D)
Murl, what are you doing? You're not going away again, are you?

DANIELS
Yeah, ma, I'm going away again.

MRS. DANIELS
You'd better not go anywhere, honey, you don't look so good. You should stay here. Is there something wrong with you?

DANIELS
I'll be all right, I'll be fine. Don't worry.

MRS. DANIELS
(pleading)
Look, Murl, don't go. Why can't you just stay here. Please don't go.

Daniels stuffs more clothes into his suitcase. He walks over to his closet and picks up a license plate from the floor and shoves it under his arm.

MRS. DANIELS (CONT'D)
Please don't go, honey. There's something wrong with you. You shouldn't go. Please, Murl.
(beat)
Is this because of that West boy you met up at Mansfield?

Daniels glares at his mother, confirming her suspicions.

MRS. DANIELS (CONT'D)
Keep away from that boy, Murl. He ain't nothing but trouble.

DANIELS
Don't you talk like that, Ma. He's a smart son of a bitch. The smartest man I ever saw.

MRS. DANIELS
You keep away from him, Murl. Maybe he's too smart for you. All them other boys was smart, too, and look where that got you. Jail, that's where it got you.

Daniels grabs the suitcase and an old guitar case and walks through the house and out the kitchen door, Mrs. Daniels close behind.

MRS. DANIELS (CONT'D)

(crying)

Murl, please don't go. I'm sorry.
Please don't go. You're not right,
something's wrong with you.

Daniels exits the kitchen door, Mrs. Daniels right behind him. He turns to face her.

DANIELS

No, Ma, there's nothing wrong with me.

MRS. DANIELS

Then why do you want to go away?

Daniels looks at his mother for a long time, turns, and walks away. Mrs. Daniels stands on the back porch, crying.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Daniels approaches the car, calling out to West.

DANIELS

Hey, open up the trunk.

West opens the trunk and Daniels tosses his suitcase and the guitar in and pulls a screwdriver from a small tool kit. He changes the license plate, putting on the one from the house.

WEST

What are you doing?

DANIELS

Changing the license plate.

WEST

What for?

DANIELS

Well, the owner of this here car is going to report it stolen pretty soon, see, and the police will be looking for a '47 Pontiac two-door with a particular license plate number. Well, with this here plate, they'll look right past us, see?

WEST

Where did you get that plate?

DANIELS

Off my old car.

WEST

Good idea, Murl. You're sure a smart one.

DANIELS

Just one of the tricks I learned. Can't say Mansfield never taught us nothing.

Daniels finishes changing the plate and tosses the old plate and the screwdriver in the trunk, slams the lid down, and gets in the car.

INSIDE THE CAR

Daniels sits in the passenger seat, staring straight ahead, his jaw clenched, his lips a tight, thin line.

WEST

Everything okay?

DANIELS

Yeah, I guess. Maybe. I don't know. Let's get the hell out of here.

WEST

Okay, buddy, you got it.

West slams the car in gear and speeds off.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

West and Daniels cruise the streets of Columbus. West is driving as they take turns swigging from a whiskey bottle.

WEST

So where do you want to start?

DANIELS

Well, we'd better start with something easy.

WEST

Like what?

DANIELS

I been thinking. Gas stations are pretty easy. This time of night, only one guy working. And they gotta have some cash, right?

WEST

I guess so.

DANIELS

We need to find one. Someplace busy, but not too busy.

WEST

Why not too busy? There'd be more cash.

DANIELS

Maybe, but there'd be lots of people around, and maybe a cop, too. We want to get in, get the money, and get the hell out.

WEST

Easy as pie.

DANIELS

Right. But we need to be close to town, so we can get lost quick.

WEST

And so they'd have some money, too. Some place out in the sticks wouldn't have shit for cash.

(beat)

We just gonna hit one place?

DANIELS

Been thinking about that, too. We ought to hit a couple, real quick like, before anyone can call the cops and they start looking for us.

WEST

You mean like BAM and then take a powder?

DANIELS

Yeah, something like that.

WEST

Okay, then what?

DANIELS

Well, then we probably ought to find a place outside of town for the night. You know, lay low.

WEST

You know any places?

DANIELS

There's some tourist cabins up toward Buckeye Lake. Nobody would look for us there.

West slows to a stop across the street from a gas station.

WEST

Hey, there's a place. What do you think?

DANIELS

(staring through the windshield for a moment)

Yeah, that looks good. You ready?

They each take another swig from the whiskey bottle and grab their guns, check the action, and chamber a round.

WEST

Yeah.

DANIELS

Okay, let me do the talking, see?

WEST

O-kay. You talk better than I do anyways.

West sets his gun down on the seat, then slams the car in gear, accelerates quickly and whips into the gas station, screeching to a stop.

EXT. GAS STATION - MOMENTS LATER

West and Daniels jump out of the car and walk quickly up to the attendant, JOEY, standing behind the cash register. Daniels steps behind the counter and holds his gun down low at his waist and points it at Joey. Joey's eyes go wide and his mouth drops open.

JOEY

What the hell...

DANIELS

This is a stick up, see?

Joey throws his hands up in the air.

DANIELS (CONT'D)

Put your damn hands down. Just open the register and give us the cash.

Joey does, handing over a wad cash to Daniels, who shoves it in his pocket.

DANIELS (CONT'D)

(waving the gun)

Okay, out there.

Joey leads the way into the maintenance bay. Daniels spots some stairs leading down into a storage room.

DANIELS (CONT'D)

(pointing to the stairs)

Okay, pal, down there.

Joey starts down the stairs. Suddenly West rushes by Daniels and smashes Joey on his head with the blackjack. Joey crumples, falls down the stairs, landing in a heap, holding his head and moaning. West smashes Joey on the head over and over as Joey tries vainly to protect himself. Finally Daniels grabs West and pulls him back.

DANIELS (CONT'D)

Jesus, Johnny, that's enough.
You'll kill the poor bastard.
C'mon, let's get the fuck out of here.

Daniels drags West back up the stairs and together they run to their car. They roar out of the gas station, squealing tires and fishtailing halfway down the block.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

The car is speeding down the street. WEST and DANIELS are breathless and excited. But...

DANIELS

Damn it, what the hell did you do that for? There weren't no call to do that.

WEST

I want to show you I got guts. You know I'm green at this.

(MORE)

WEST (CONT'D)

I mean, I stole some stuff before,
but I never done no armed
robberies. You been around a lot
more than I have, and I want you to
show me the ropes on this stuff.

DANIELS

It's good to have guts, but have a
little brains, too. I'll show you
all I know, but you gotta listen.
You just can't blow a fuse like
that. You gotta be smart.

WEST

(angrily)

I am smart. Don't you say I ain't
smart. Don't ever say that.

DANIELS

Okay, okay. I didn't say you
weren't smart. No reason to snap
your cap.

They drive along in silence as they look for another gas
station to rob. West spots one and stops.

WEST

How about that one?

Daniels watches the gas station.

DANIELS

That one looks okay. Now look,
we're not going to hit this guy,
see, we're going to stop all that
stuff. We mess around and hit a guy
and kill him and they'll have the
heat on us, see?

WEST

Okay, I won't hit him. Not unless I
have to. But you know something,
Murl?

DANIELS

What?

WEST

It felt good. To hit him, I mean.

Daniels stares at West.

DANIELS

Okay, let's go on in there and get this done.

West guns the motor and they whip into the gas station and screech to a stop.

EXT. GAS STATION - MOMENTS LATER

West and Daniels jump out and walk over to the attendant, GEORGE, emptying the trash can near the pumps. Daniels pulls his gun, keeping it low and out of sight. George's mouth drops open.

GEORGE

Holy cow, fellas, what...

DANIELS

This is a stick up, see? Now get in there and give us the cash.

George raises his hands.

DANIELS (CONT'D)

Put your damn hands down. Just get in there and give us the cash.

George drops his hands.

GEORGE

Sure, fellas, just don't shoot me, please.

DANIELS

I won't shoot you if you just get in there and give us the cash, quick like, you hear?

GEORGE

Sure. Sure, fellas.

Daniels waves his gun and together they walk briskly to the station. George opens the register, hands the cash to Daniels who stuffs it in his pocket. Daniels waves the gun in the direction of the garage.

DANIELS

Okay, pal, back there.

West and Daniels march George to the back of the garage, against the back wall.

DANIELS (CONT'D)
Okay, now look here. You stand
right here for ten minutes before
you do anything, you hear?

GEORGE
I hear you, fella. Are you gonna
shoot me?

DANIELS
I ain't gonna shoot you if you
stand here for ten minutes. Don't
make me come back here and drill
you, see?

GEORGE
Right here, ten minutes. Got it.

WEST
(raising his gun and
pointing it at George's
head)
I'll come back here and fucking
kill you, you hear me?

GEORGE
Jesus, I hear you, I hear you!

Daniels runs to their car while West continues to point his
gun at George.

DANIELS
C'mon.

West finally runs to the car and they jump in. West fires it
up and they squeal out onto the street and speed away.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

West and Daniels speed down the street, ecstatic from their
robbery, the adrenaline pumping.

WEST
Yeeeeeeeeee-haw. Hot damn, Murl, you
are one cool cat.

DANIELS
You see? You see? No need to hit
anyone. We stick 'em up and get
away clean and no one gets hurt.
See that?

WEST

Yeah, buddy, I sure as hell do. That was slick. What a gas. You sure do know the ropes. That guy was pissing in his pants.

DANIELS

God damn, that was so easy.

Daniels pulls a wad of cash from his pocket.

DANIELS (CONT'D)

Look at this. I don't think I ever had this much money all at once. And all in just a few minutes.

WEST

This is it, this is the life. Raising hell, doing whatever we want, taking whatever we want.

DANIELS

Damn right. This is what we been waiting for.

WEST

What next? What do we do now?

DANIELS

Well, I think that's about it for tonight. That first guy will have called the cops by now and they'll be all over looking for us. We need to lay low for tonight.

WEST

Damn, I want to do another one.

DANIELS

Yeah, I know. Me too. But like I said, we gotta be smart, too. Guts ain't enough. Damn, I need a drink.

Daniels reaches down and grabs the bottle of whiskey. Empty.

DANIELS (CONT'D)

Shit. We need another bottle.

WEST

Think we can afford it?

DANIELS

Yeah, maybe.

WEST

Where the hell we going?

DANIELS

We need to head out of town. You know where Buckeye Lake is?

WEST

Sorta. East, right?

DANIELS

Yeah. They got some tourist cabins out that way. We can stop at one of those for tonight. We'll get a bottle along the way.

WEST

I like the sound of that.

INT. TOURIST CABIN - NIGHT

West and Daniels enter a small cabin in a rural, wooded area. West pulls the bottle of whiskey out of a bag, opens it, takes a long swig and hands it to Daniels.

WEST

(holding his shaking hand out)

Damn, I'm still shaking. Does that mean I'm scared?

Daniels takes a pull on the bottle.

DANIELS

Nah, it's normal. I heard some vets talking once, said they shook after every time they had a fight. Something about nerves.

WEST

Okay, if you say so. So what next?

DANIELS

Whiskey, then sleep.

WEST

Hell, I know that. I mean tomorrow, what are we gonna do?

DANIELS

Yeah, I knew that.

WEST

We gonna do some more gas stations?

DANIELS

Nah, those were just warm-ups, to see how we did.

(he pulls the wad of cash from his pocket and drops it on the table)

We did good.

WEST

So, what's next?

DANIELS

I think tomorrow we pull off something bigger, something with more cash. A tavern, maybe.

WEST

You mean a bar?

DANIELS

Well, one with a restaurant, like a grill or something. Lots of people go to those so they should have lots of cash in the register. We'll hit one of those, at night, after lots of folks have been in.

WEST

Sounds good to me. Maybe we can spend some of that, too.

West nods his head toward the cash laying on the table.

DANIELS

Damn right. Why else would we steal it if we can't spend it?

WEST

Damn, this is the life.

(beat)

Murl?

DANIELS

Yeah?

WEST

I ain't never felt like this before. You know, like I was in charge or something.

DANIELS
Me either, buddy. Me either.

EXT. TOURIST CABIN - LATE AFTERNOON

West and Daniels exit the cabin with their bags and trusty bottle, throw their bags in the trunk and get in the car.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

WEST
Damn my head hurts.

Daniels hands him the bottle.

DANIELS
Here, take a drink, that'll help.

West takes a short swig.

WEST
(grimacing)
Shit, this had better help.

DANIELS
It will, don't worry. Hair of the dog.

West slams the car in gear and drives off.

EXT. RYAN'S GRILL - NIGHT

West and Daniels pull up outside Ryan's Grill and look it over. As they watch, several people go inside.

WEST
This looks like a good one.

DANIELS
Yeah, looks busy. Probably lots of cash. Let's go look it over.

INT. RYAN'S GRILL - NIGHT

Stopping just inside the door, West and Daniels look over the busy tavern while their eyes adjust. It's full, PEOPLE drinking, eating, a couple of GUYS in the back corner playing cards. They stroll to the bar. The bartender, FRANKIE, walks over.

FRANKIE
Can I get you boys something?

DANIELS
Yeah, couple of beers.

FRANKIE
Coming right up.

Frankie walks away and returns with two large mugs of beer.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)
Wanna pay now or run a tab?

DANIELS
Run a tab.

FRANKIE
You got it, boys.

West and Daniels take a sip of their beer, looking the place over. Frankie rings up another order and opens the cash register - it's full. They spot a safe under the counter.

WEST
Damn, lot of people in here.

DANIELS
Yeah, but that's good. Everybody's busy, nobody will notice.

WEST
Okay, let's get this done.

West reaches inside his jacket and starts to pull his gun out as he stands.

DANIELS
(in a loud whisper,
looking around furtively)
Whoa, whoa, whoa, what the hell are
you doing?

West freezes, then sits back down and leans toward Daniels.

WEST
(in a low voice.)
We're gonna stick this place up,
right?

DANIELS
Well, yeah, but we gotta do this
smart, see? Keep your gun covered,
don't let nobody see it.

WEST

But there's too many people in here, we gotta keep 'em covered.

DANIELS

Look, there's no need to pull it, see? If you don't pull it, nobody will know nothing about it. Just let the bartender see it, see?

West's expression clearly shows he does not agree.

DANIELS (CONT'D)

Look, you wanted me to show you the ropes; I'm showing you the ropes.

WEST

Okay, if you say so.

DANIELS

Okay, now let's do this.

Daniels looks up from their whispered conversation and signals the bartender. Frankie walks over, wiping his hands on a towel. Daniels slides his hand under his jacket.

FRANKIE

What's up, boys, need a refill already?

DANIELS

I got a gun right at your head, now don't you move.

Daniels opens his jacket and Frankie sees the gun in his hand. Frankie's eyes go wide. He freezes, terrified.

DANIELS (CONT'D)

Put your hands on the bar.

Frankie slaps his hands down on the bar.

DANIELS (CONT'D)

Now, my friend here is going to keep an eye on you, so you stay put.

West grins nervously and opens his jacket, showing the gun in his hand to Frankie, who is clearly mortified.

Daniels walks behind the bar and opens the register, grabs the cash and stuffs it into his pocket. Kneeling down, he gives the handle of the safe a twist and it opens. Smiling, he stuffs handfuls of cash into his pockets.

Frankie looks nervously over his shoulder at DANIELS and glances quickly around the bar.

WEST

(leaning across the bar)
If you don't start smiling and act like you're happy, I'm gonna blow your fuckin' brains out.

Frankie looks at West and grimaces gamely, trying to look as happy as he can under the circumstances.

Daniels looks around to see if anyone notices the robbery, and walks around the bar.

DANIELS

Now look here. You just stay right there until after we're gone. Otherwise, we're gonna have to start shooting, and no telling who's gonna get hurt, see?

Frankie nods, still trying to look happy and failing miserably. West and Daniels walk casually toward the door. Pausing, Daniels winks at Frankie and they bolt out the door.

EXT. RYAN'S GRILL - NIGHT

West and Daniels run across the street and jump in their car. WEST fires it up and they screech away from Ryan's. The car speeds down the street, careening around corners.

INT. CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Both men are ecstatic at their success, grinning like idiots.

WEST

(pounding his hands on the steering wheel)
Hot damn, Murl. Shit. HaHAAAAAAAAA!
Woo-hooooooooo!

DANIELS

Shit, that was slick. Smooth as a baby's butt. What did I tell you, nobody even knew it was a stick up.

WEST

Damn, you were right. You sure do know the ropes. I thought that bartender was going to shit himself.

DANIELS
 (pulling wads of cash out
 of his pocket)
 Damn, look at this.

WEST
 (staring over at the cash
 in Daniels' fist)
 I ain't never seen that much money
 at one time. How much do you think
 we got?

DANIELS
 I don't know. Got to be at least a
 thousand here, maybe two.

WEST
 Hot damn, hot damn. Let's hit
 another one, back to back, like we
 said.

DANIELS
 Nah, we'd better blow this town for
 a while, maybe even the state. The
 heat will be on now.
 (holding up a handful of
 cash)
 Besides, don't you want to spend
 some of these greenbacks, have some
 fun?

WEST
 Damn right. Okay, where to?

DANIELS
 Well, I always wanted to go to St.
 Louis.

WEST
 St. Louis it is then.

DANIELS
 No hurry, though, we got plenty of
 time now.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

The Pontiac careens onto a main road and speeds off.

EXT. NIEBEL HOUSE - MORNING

Very early in the morning, the light just beginning to push back the darkness. A small, two-story frame house in a rural area, with a meticulously trimmed lawn and neat and orderly flowers and bushes.

INT. NIEBEL HOUSE - MORNING

NOLANA NIEBEL, 52, a short plump woman in a flowered cotton dress, prepares breakfast. At the table sits her husband, JOHN NIEBEL, 50, a big man with a crew cut and wearing farmer's overalls. He reads a newspaper, sipping a cup of coffee.

NOLANA

Where are you going to be working today?

JOHN

I got the morning meeting at six.

NOLANA

Well, yes, but after that?

JOHN

This morning I have to get some replacement parts ordered, that always takes a while. You know the prison system, nothing ever gets done fast.

NOLANA

Will you be home for lunch or should I pack something?

JOHN

I should be here. I'll take the tractor and some of the fellas up to the potato field this afternoon, get started up there.

(beat)

Why isn't Phyllis down here yet? She's going to be late for work if she don't hurry.

NOLANA

Oh, John, don't be such a father. She was out a little late last night, with her friends, I think.

JOHN

On a work night?

NOLANA

Now John, she's 22 and can make her own decisions.

JOHN

Yeah, but good ones?

Footsteps, tromping down the stairs. PHYLLIS NIEBEL bursts into the kitchen. Short and plump, like her mom, pretty, hair in tight pin curls. She plants a kiss on Nolana's cheek.

PHYLLIS

Morning, Mom.

NOLANA

Morning, honey.

Phyllis hops over to her father and throws her arms around him in a huge bear hug, nearly spilling his coffee.

PHYLLIS

Morning, Daddy.

Phyllis plants a big kiss on John's cheek, making a loud smacking sound. She plops down at the table.

PHYLLIS (CONT'D)

How are my favorite parents this morning?

JOHN

I hear you were out late last night.

PHYLLIS

Not that late, Daddy. Besides, I'm a big girl now, do I still have a curfew?

JOHN

Well, you know, this is still...

NOLANA

(shooting John a disapproving look)

Its just that your father and I worry about you when you're out like that. Can't your parents worry about you?

PHYLLIS

Sure. And yes, I was out late. But I was still home before midnight. I can't help you go to bed so early.

John folds up his paper and stands. He is visibly distressed, uncomfortable with the conversation.

JOHN

Well, I'd better be going or I'll be late for my morning meeting.

He kisses his wife dutifully on her cheek, then does the same to Phyllis and walks out.

PHYLLIS

Bye, Daddy, love you.
(turning back to her mom)
Mom, is he ever going to realize I'm all grown up?

NOLANA

No, honey, you'll always be his little girl. It's always that way with fathers and their daughters.

PHYLLIS

Jeez, I just wish he wouldn't be such a, a...

NOLANA

A father?

PHYLLIS

Well, yeah.

NOLANA

Don't worry, honey, he'll get used to it. Now you'd better hurry up and eat. You have to get ready or you'll be late for work.

Phyllis scoops up a forkful of eggs as Nolana turns back toward the stove.

EXT. STREET - INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA - AFTERNOON

The gray Pontiac pulls up at the curb in front of a Savings and Loan, West at the wheel. Daniels steps out, closes the door, and leans back into the window.

DANIELS

It shouldn't take me too long to change this money. Just drive around the block and pick me up when I come out.

WEST

You be careful, there's probably
guards in there.

DANIELS

I'm not gonna rob it. Besides,
ain't nobody here knows what we did
in Columbus. Just drive around the
block and don't get pulled over.

Daniels walks into the bank as West drives away.

INT. SAVINGS AND LOAN - INDIANAPOLIS - MOMENTS LATER

Daniels pauses inside the door to get his bearings. He spots
the shortest line, takes a deep breath and gets in line.
Daniels spots an armed GUARD locking the exterior doors.

TELLER

Next in line please.

Daniels stares at the guard.

TELLER (CONT'D)

Sir? Sir!

Daniels breaks out of his trance and approaches the window,
still eyeing the guard.

TELLER (CONT'D)

How can I help you, sir?

DANIELS

Uh, I need some bigger bills.

Daniels pushes a wad of singles across the counter.

TELLER

And how would you like that, sir?

DANIELS

Uh, twenties, I guess. Can you make
it snappy, I'm kinda in a hurry.

The TELLER counts the bills. Daniels glances nervously at the
guard as he locks the exterior doors one by one.

TELLER

Sir, you can help count. That way
it will go faster.

Daniels grabs a handful of the bills, then looks at the guard
again as the guard locks the last door.

Daniels scoops up the bills laying on the counter, reaches across the counter and grabs the bills out of the teller's hand.

DANIELS

Uh, I gotta go now.

The teller is dumbfounded as Daniels walks briskly away from the window, stopping in the middle of the lobby. Panicking, he turns to a WOMAN standing at the end of the line.

DANIELS (CONT'D)

Hey, lady, how do you get out of here?

WOMAN

(turning and pointing to a side door)

Why, through that door, young man. They leave that one open for people to leave.

Daniels nearly runs across the lobby and out the side door. The woman smiles and several people in the bank, including the guard, shake their heads.

EXT. STREET - INDIANAPOLIS - MOMENTS LATER

Daniels runs out onto the street and stops at the curb, frantically looking up and down the street. The Pontiac pulls around the corner and stops. Daniels jumps inside.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

West gives Daniels a look.

WEST

What the hell's wrong with you? You look like you seen a ghost.

DANIELS

Just get the hell out of here, will ya?

West shrugs and pulls away from the curb.

WEST

Okay, so what gives?

DANIELS

That damn guard, I thought I was a
goner. He went around locking all
the doors.

Daniels jerks around in the seat and looks behind them.

DANIELS (CONT'D)

You hear any sirens?

WEST

What are you talking about?

DANIELS

I think that guard recognized me,
see, and tried to lock me in. He
probably called the cops already.

WEST

Murl, do you know what time it is?

DANIELS

What?

WEST

Its five o'clock. They was just
closing up.

DANIELS

(staring at West)

What?

WEST

You know, so nobody else could come
in. Closing time.

Daniels stares at West, then it dawns on him and
understanding spreads across his face.

DANIELS

Shit!

West bursts out laughing and, after a few seconds, Daniels
shakes his head and chuckles.

DANIELS (CONT'D)

What a dumb ass I am. Jeez. Let's
get outta here.

WEST

Where to?

DANIELS

I'm tired of this crummy place
already, let's just hit the road.

EXT. ST. LOUIS STREET - AFTERNOON

West and Daniels exit the Star Hotel. Both have changed into something sportier, ready for some fun on the town.

WEST

So, what do you want to do?

DANIELS

Well, we need to get decked out
with some nicer duds now that we
got us some money. Can't go out on
the town looking like this.

WEST

I ain't never been no good at
picking out clothes. Hell, this is
just about as nice as I ever been
dressed up.

DANIELS

Well, there must be a store around
here where we can get a decent
suit. Then we'll find us a road
house, maybe meet us some girls.

WEST

I ain't no damn good at that,
either. I always feel funny around
girls. I just don't know what to
say or what to do.

DANIELS

Well, we'll see about what we can
do about that. We need a bottle.

EXT. ST. LOUIS - ROAD HOUSE - EVENING

West and Daniels pull up in front of a road house. Stepping out of the car they are dressed in brand new suits, looking very snappy.

DANIELS

This looks like a good place.

WEST

Yeah, I hope they got good food.
I'm hungry.

DANIELS

So how do you like them new duds?

WEST

Hell, I ain't never had nothing like this. This is the life, huh? Ritzy!

DANIELS

You bet. Let's go get us a drink.

INT. ROAD HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

West and Daniels stand just inside the entrance. The place is busy, loud, smoky, dimly lit. PATRONS are sitting at tables, smoking, eating, laughing. A waitress, JEANNIE, walks over.

JEANNIE

Can I help you boys?

DANIELS

You bet, honey. We'd like us a table, something to eat, and something to drink...and a little company, too.

JEANNIE

Well, the eats and drinks I can take care of, but the company you'll have to handle yourselves.

Jeannie leads them to a table next to a stage with a piano, a drum set, and several guitars on stands.

JEANNIE (CONT'D)

What can I get you boys?

DANIELS

What do you feel like, Johnny?

WEST

A big, thick steak, rare, with a great big baked potato with all the trimmings, that's what I want.

DANIELS

Yeah, make that two of those. And whiskey. There a show tonight?

JEANNIE

There's a show here every night, honey. Some right good dancing music. Starts pretty soon.

(MORE)

JEANNIE (CONT'D)

You boys should stick around, you might find that company you was looking for.

West and Daniels exchange sly smiles.

INT. ROAD HOUSE - LATER THAT NIGHT

West and Daniels are still at their table, only now it is littered with glasses, a bottle, and an overflowing ashtray. The boys have been joined by two pretty young women, GINGER and BECKY. A hillbilly BAND is on stage, the dance floor is full. The band launches into a cover of Merle Travis' Merle's Boogie Woogie.

GINGER

I LOVE this song. Dance with me, Johnny.

WEST

Uh, sure.

Ginger grabs West by the hand and pulls him to the dance floor and they dance to the twangy, fast-paced music.

BECKY

Oh, me too, Murl, I wanna dance to this one, too.

DANIELS

(pulling her onto the dance floor)

Sure thing, darlin'. Let's show 'em how its done.

The four dance wildly to the old-fashioned boogie-woogie music. They are uncoordinated as they are more than just a little bit drunk. When the song is done, they break into applause for the band, breathing heavily from the exertion. The band leader, COWBOY TODD TAYLOR, steps to the microphone.

COWBOY TODD

We're gonna take a short break folks, but we'll be back in a little while.

The crowd boos good-naturedly.

COWBOY TODD (CONT'D)

Hey now, I don't like the sound of that, so we'll definitely be back. Yall have fun in the meantime.

Cowboy Todd and his band set down their instruments, the dancers slowly return to their seats.

WEST

Damn, and I was just starting to have a good time.

DANIELS

Yeah, me too. 'Sides, I can play as good as them.

BECKY

You can play one of them instruments? Which one?

DANIELS

The guitar. Maybe not as good as them, but pretty near.

WEST

Hell, Murl plays a hell of a guitar, and he can sing, too.

GINGER

Sometimes they let folks play on stage. You know, when there's no band. Like now. Hey, there's the manager now, we could ask him. Want to give it a try, handsome?

DANIELS

Sure, what the hell.

A short, balding, heavy-set MAN dressed in a too-small suit with a string tie and cowboy boots passes near the foursome.

GINGER

Hey, Bob.

BOB

Hey there, good lookin'.

GINGER

Bob, my friend here says he can play the guitar and sing. Wanna give him a try?

BOB

(to Daniels)
You any good, boy?

DANIELS

I do okay.

WEST

Okay hell, he's damn good.

BOB

You got your own guitar?

DANIELS

Yeah, but its out in the car.

BOB

(to Cowboy Todd)

Hey, Todd, this here fella says he wants to play some for us. Okay if he uses one of your flat-top boxes?

COWBOY TODD

(sauntering over to the group)

You know your way around a guitar, son?

DANIELS

Yeah, I can play some.

COWBOY TODD

(looking Daniels over carefully)

What the hell. Give it a shot. I'll introduce you. What's your name?

DANIELS

Daniels. Murl Daniels.

Cowboy Todd steps back up on stage, switches the microphone on. DANIELS picks up a guitar, throws the strap over his shoulder and picks at the strings, tuning the instrument.

COWBOY TODD

Ladies and gents, we got us a volunteer from the audience this evening says he wants to entertain you for a spell. What do you think about that?

A smattering of applause. One obviously drunk cowboy in the back let's out a loud whoop.

COWBOY TODD (CONT'D)

Well, there you go.

(turning to Daniels)

What are you gonna play for us, young fella?

DANIELS

Uh, how about Blue Moon of
Kentucky?

COWBOY TODD

Here's Murl Daniels with Blue Moon
of Kentucky. Good luck, son.

Daniels steps up to the microphone and stands, frozen. He begins to play, hesitantly at first, then louder and with more confidence. Soon, the crowd is tapping their feet and nodding their heads to the rhythm.

GINGER

(grabs West by the hand)
Let's dance some more.

West and Ginger dance across the floor to Daniels' singing. More join them. By the time the song ends, the dance floor is nearly full. When's he's finished, the crowd applauds. Daniels waves to the crowd and rejoins his group.

GINGER (CONT'D)

Hey, you're pretty good.

WEST

Damn right. You're great, Murl. You could be on the radio and everything.

DANIELS

Thanks, but I ain't that good. Good enough for a road house, maybe, but not that good.

BECKY

You know, its getting late, Ginger. Hadn't we better get going?

GINGER

Yes, I guess we'd better head home.

WEST

You gals gotta go? I thought we was having a good time?

DANIELS

Yeah, don't you like us?

GINGER

Well, you boys are kinda cute.

DANIELS

So, you want to go back to our place and have some fun?

BECKY

I don't know if we should.

WEST

Hey, we got us another bottle out in the car. We could go to the cabin and drink some more.

GINGER

Well, maybe some other time.

DANIELS

You sure? We could have a lot of fun together.

GINGER

Yeah, I bet we could. But we need our beauty sleep for work tomorrow.

WEST

Damn, I was hoping we could...well, you know?

BECKY

Will you be here tomorrow?

WEST

If you are, sure.

BECKY

Well, maybe we'll see you then. Good night.

GINGER

Yeah, good night, boys.

Becky and Ginger blow West and Daniels kisses as they walk out, leaving West and Daniels watching them walk away.

WEST

I thought you said we was going to ...you know, get lucky tonight.

DANIELS

Yeah, well, I thought we were. That guitar bit always works.

WEST

Well, it didn't work this time.

DANIELS

Yeah, I figured that out.

WEST

What the hell, I need another drink.

DANIELS

Yeah, there's always more girls out there.

MONTAGE

West and Daniels live large on the spoils of their robberies, throwing money around - buying clothes, buying guns, drinking and carousing at road houses, Daniels plays guitar and sings - on the road trip of a lifetime. Along the way they pick up two girls hitchhiking and the girls join them while they buy more clothes, including dresses and jewelry for the girls.

INT. ROAD HOUSE - EVENING

A rough road house, table littered with drinks, empties, and overfilled ashtrays, a live BAND playing hillbilly music. WEST sits with two young girls, BETTY and DORIS, cute in a clean, scrubbed, backwoods kind of way, wearing overalls and nondescript blouses.

Daniels is on a pay phone. He slams the phone down, returns to the table, and plops in a chair.

WEST

Who was that on the phone?

DANIELS

That was my ma, she's real upset.

BETTY

What's she upset about, honey?

DANIELS

She wants to know where I am, thinks I'm getting into trouble. Says she'll call my parole officer if I don't come home.

WEST

Your parole officer?

DANIELS

Yeah, she's just worried is all.

DORIS

I thought you boys said you didn't get caught, that you got away clean?

DANIELS

Well, yeah, for them robberies in Columbus, but this was before that.

WEST

Yeah, we was in prison for a while before that.

BETTY

You boys gonna be okay?

DANIELS

Yeah, we'll be fine. Why don't you gals go powder your nose for a while? Me and Johnny need to talk.

Betty and Doris exchange looks, but shrug and walk away.

WEST

What the hell was all that about?

DANIELS

I been thinking. I'm getting tired of these two. Maybe its time to ditch these two and move on. Specially if my ma decides to call my parole officer. I don't think she will, but you never know.

WEST

But we been having fun, ain't we?

DANIELS

Yeah, some. But these ain't the kinda girls I want, not really.

WEST

What do you mean?

DANIELS

Well, you know after we picked them up hitchin' and bought them all that stuff?

WEST

Yeah? Spent a lot of dough on them. So what?

DANIELS

Well, we bought them those dresses,
and they ain't never worn them. All
they want to wear is them damn
hillbilly overalls. And we're
running low on money, too.

WEST

Well, they ain't puttin' out
anyways. So what do you want to do?

DANIELS

Get rid of 'em, I guess?

WEST

You mean rub 'em out?

DANIELS

No, hell no. I mean dump 'em, like
send them home or something. Kill
'em? Hell, what are you thinking?

WEST

Well, you said get rid of 'em...

DANIELS

Jesus, you're not in your right
mind.

WEST

So, when do you wanna do this?

DANIELS

Tomorrow will be okay, I guess. We
can drop them at a bus station or
something. Who knows, maybe
tonight's the night.

EXT. BUS STATION - DAY

West and Daniels are standing in front of the bus station
with Betty and Doris.

DANIELS

Look girls, we got stuff to do now
and we can't have you tagging along
like lost little puppies.

BETTY

But this ain't right. We been
having fun, ain't we?

WEST
(under his breath)
Not that much fun.

DANIELS
(glaring at West)
Yeah, but we gotta get back to
work. We got stuff to do, stuff you
can't be around for. Man stuff.

DORIS
So what are we supposed to do?

DANIELS
(handing her some cash)
Here's some money, you go on and
catch a bus and go on home.

Daniels gives Betty a quick kiss on the lips. West tries to give Doris one, but she turns her head and West's kiss lands on her cheek. West and Daniels quickly get into their car and drive away in a squeal of tires and a cloud of dust.

INT. CAR - SECONDS LATER

WEST
So now what?

DANIELS
Hell if I know.

WEST
But you said we had stuff to
do...what stuff?

DANIELS
I don't know, I just made that up
to get rid of them.

WEST
Slick. So what do we do now?

DANIELS
I'm getting kinda bored. Feeling
like a little more excitement than
just girls and good times.

WEST
You talking about another robbery?

DANIELS

Yeah. Besides, we could use some more pennies from Heaven, we're running a little low.

WEST

Yeah. I like the sound of that.

The car turns onto a larger highway and passes a sign, "COLUMBUS - 400 miles".

EXT. PICNIC GROUNDS - MANSFIELD, OHIO - DAY

A large gathering enjoys a huge 4th of July picnic. Tables are covered with festive red, white, and blue bunting and table cloths and piled high with every type of good, home-cooked, picnic food imaginable. Present are many TOWNSPEOPLE, GUARDS from the prison, and the Niebel family, John, Nolana, and Phyllis.

NOLANA

John, looks like everybody is having a grand old time. Happy Fourth of July!

JOHN

Yeah, looks like a good turnout. I wish Loyal could be here already.

NOLANA

Well, you know the Navy, they're not going to let Loyal out just so he can be home for the Fourth of July. He'll be home soon enough.

JOHN

Yes, I suppose a few more days isn't going to hurt.

Phyllis walks up to the table holding hands with a young man, BILLY, 20s.

PHYLLIS

Mom, Daddy, I want you to meet someone. This is... (she looks at him sheepishly)

BILLY

Billy...Billy Ranklin, sir.

Billy sticks out his hand to John, who glares at Billy, boring his eyes straight into him, giving Billy his best father/prison superintendent stare. Billy withers.

PHYLLIS

Now Daddy, don't be like that.

(to Billy)

Let's sit down and get something to eat.

They sit. John continues to stare holes in Billy as Phyllis dishes up a plate.

NOLANA

Now John, be nice to Phyllis' friend.

(to Billy)

What did you say your name was?

BILLY

Billy, ma'am.

NOLANA

Right...Billy. We were just talking about Phyllis's brother. He's coming home from the Navy soon.

BILLY

(to Phyllis)

You have a brother in the Navy? You didn't say anything about a brother. Do you have any more brothers?

PHYLLIS

Yes, I have another one, but he's in Chicago.

BILLY

A father who's a prison guard..

PHYLLIS

Prison superintendent, actually.

BILLY

And a brother in the Navy. Geez!

John stares holes in Billy as Billy gulps nervously.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

West and Daniels sit in their car, parked on a side street outside Joe's Grill.

WEST

Wow, sure looks busy.

DANIELS

Yeah, that means they'll have lots of cash. You ready?

WEST

Yeah. Yeah, I'm ready.

West pulls out a Colt 1911 .45 caliber pistol and shows it to Daniels. The weapon is cocked and ready to fire.

DANIELS

Now this is just like before. You just show it to the bartender so's no one else can see it. We're in and out, and no one knows the place even got robbed, right?

WEST

Yeah, I remember. But anything goes wrong and I'm gonna shoot some sumbitch.

DANIELS

Nothings gonna go wrong if you just keep your head. Put that thing away. Okay, let's go.

INT. JOE'S GRILL - NIGHT

The place is hopping, full of PEOPLE, smoky, noisy, a jukebox playing loudly. West and Daniels pause, walk to the bar. One of the bartenders, JOE, comes over.

JOE

What'll it be, boys?

DANIELS

Gimme a whiskey, on the rocks. You got Four Roses?

JOE

Yeah, course we got it.

DANIELS

That's what I want.

WEST

Yeah, me, too.

JOE

Coming right up.

Joe pours the drinks and sets them down on the bar.

JOE (CONT'D)
You guys wanna run a tab?

DANIELS
Yeah, we're gonna stick around a
bit. Gimme a couple of cigars, too.

Joe walks away. Daniels and West exchange looks, nods.

DANIELS (CONT'D)
Now when he gets back we'll both
pull our guns at the same time.

Joe returns carrying two large stogies. West and Daniels pull
their guns out so Joe can see.

DANIELS (CONT'D)
Don't move and you won't get hurt.
Put your hands on the bar.

Joe drops the cigars and puts his hands on the bar.

WEST
There's two of 'em in back.

Daniels spots two more BARTENDERS behind the bar. Daniels
walks behind the bar. The other two bartenders see Daniels,
spot his gun, and scurry out the back door. Daniels pops the
cash register open and grabs the cash.

As Joe turns to see what is going on, his hand comes off of
the bar. West fires a shot into the wall. All hell breaks
loose. People scream and run. Joe quickly puts his hand back
on the bar.

Daniels empties the cash register and walks up behind Joe,
putting a gun to his head.

DANIELS
All right, buddy, open that
safe...now!

Joe kneels behind the bar and opens the safe. People shout
"it's a robbery" and "he's got a gun" and run out of the bar.
Joe reaches into the safe and tosses Daniels a large bag of
coins and a stack of checks and cash. Daniels runs out from
behind the bar, grabbing the cigars off the counter.

DANIELS (CONT'D)
(to West)
Let's get the hell outta here.

West and Daniels run out of the bar and down the street toward their car. As they run out of the door, West's gun goes off again.

DANIELS (CONT'D)

What the fuck are you shooting at?

WEST

Nothing, it just went off.

DANIELS

Well, stop shooting, dammit.

West and Daniels run to their car, fire it up, and take off down the street. The car whips around a corner, fishtailing.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

DANIELS

Okay, okay, you can slow down now.
I don't think anyone is chasing us.

WEST

Holy shit, that was a real shoot-out. Did you see that?

DANIELS

Yeah, I was there, I saw it. What the fuck were you shooting at?

WEST

That bartender, he took his hand off the bar. He was gonna try something.

DANIELS

So you were going to shoot him?

WEST

No, I was just trying to scare him.

DANIELS

Well you scared the hell out of me. You almost shot me. Did you see I was behind him when you shot?

WEST

Naw, I wasn't going to shoot you, I shot the wall behind everybody.

DANIELS

And what was you shooting at when we ran out? What was that?

WEST

Oh, that. Uh, that was a mistake.

DANIELS

A mistake? What the hell kinda mistake?

WEST

I was trying to uncock the gun so it wouldn't go off when we was running and it went off anyway.

DANIELS

So you were trying to not shoot and you shot anyway?

WEST

Yeah, I guess.

DANIELS

Well, at least you didn't shoot yourself, or worse, me.

WEST

So how much did we get?

DANIELS

(emptying his pockets)

I don't know. Got this big bag of change and a pretty good stack of bills. These checks ain't no good to us, though. Looks like it might be a lot.

WEST

So now what do we do? Do we hit another one? I want to do that again.

DANIELS

Yeah, let's stick to the plan. No one will expect us to hit someplace again right away, so that's what we'll do. Drive around and let's find another place. Hopefully someplace that has more money in the till.

INT. CAR - LATER THAT SAME NIGHT

West and Daniels cruise down the street, searching.

DANIELS

Pull around here. See that place
over there?

West pulls into a side street and turns off the car. They
stare intently at a tavern called Ambrose's.

WEST

I don't like it.

DANIELS

Don't like it? I been here before.
I like it, let's see what's in it.

WEST

I don't like the look of it. It
just don't feel right.

DANIELS

C'mon, this is the place. Let's see
what it looks like. Remember, no
shooting unless we have to. Don't
get too trigger happy.

WEST

I still don't like it.

West and Daniels walk toward the rear door of Ambrose's.

INT. AMBROSE'S TAVERN - NIGHT

Ambrose's is packed, PEOPLE at the bar, in booths along the
wall, in the dining room. In a booth along the wall opposite
the bar is EARL AMBROSE, the owner, his wife JANE, and his
brother CLYDE, talking and enjoying their dinner.

Ambrose spots West and Daniels enter through the back door,
pause, walk over and sit down at the bar and order drinks.
Ambrose eyes them carefully.

JANE

What's the matter, Earl?

AMBROSE

What? Oh, those two at the bar.
They bother me. One of them looks
familiar, but I can't place him.

CLYDE

(looking over at the bar)
Ah, let 'em go. Just customers.
(MORE)

CLYDE (CONT'D)

I was just telling Jane that Joe's place down the street was held up an hour ago. Two men got away with a lot of cash.

AMBROSE

(looking at West and Daniels)

Hmmmm.

West and Daniels nurse their nearly empty drinks. They exchange a look and nod imperceptibly to one another. One of the bartenders, ERNIE, walks over to them.

ERNIE

You boys need a refill?

West and Daniels open their coats and pull their weapons. The blood drains from Ernie's face.

DANIELS

Put your hands on the bar.

Ernie slaps his hands on the bar.

DANIELS (CONT'D)

Now don't you do nothing stupid and you won't get hurt.

Ernie nods. Another bartender, JACK, glances over at Ernie and walks over to see what is going on. As he approaches, West points his gun at him. Jack hesitates, then starts to raise his hands. West crooks his finger and signals him to come closer. Jack stands next to Ernie.

WEST

(to Jack)

Hands on the counter, pal.

Jack places his hands on the counter.

Ambrose has been watching the action unfold.

AMBROSE

Jane, those two are trying to hold the place up. I'm going to call the cops.

Ambrose starts to slide out of the booth.

JANE

(in a harsh whisper)

Earl, please! Stay here!

Ambrose and West make eye contact. West watches Ambrose start to slide out of his booth. West saunters toward the opposite side of the room. Suddenly West whirls, the .45 in his hand aimed directly at Ambrose as he walks toward the dining room.

WEST

Hold it!

Head down, Ambrose continues toward the dining room.

WEST (CONT'D)

Damn you!

West fires at Ambrose. The booming of the giant .45 is deafening. People scream. Daniels fires a single blind shot in the direction of Ambrose, hitting nothing. West continues to fire, hitting Ambrose who crumples to the floor.

A woman's scream pierces the din. More shots ring out from the giant hand cannon. The noise is ear-splitting.

WEST (CONT'D)

Shut up, shut up! Nobody move!

At the bar, Daniels trains his gun on the two bartenders.

DANIELS

Okay, don't either of you move or you get it, too.

Daniels quickly walks behind the bar.

DANIELS (CONT'D)

(to Ernie)

You, open up the cash registers.

Ernie rings the cash registers open. Keeping his gun trained on Ernie, Daniels scoops up the cash.

Daniels casually walks from behind the bar and joins West.

DANIELS (CONT'D)

(to West)

You okay?

WEST

Yeah, I'm good.

DANIELS

Okay then, let's get out of here.

WEST

(shouting to the people in
the tavern)

(MORE)

WEST (CONT'D)

Don't any of you move for ten minutes. Ten minutes, or you'll get more of the same.

West and Daniels back toward the door and then turn and run out into the street.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE AMBROSE'S TAVERN - NIGHT

West and Daniels run down the street. As they turn the corner, another car pulls up just as Clyde Ambrose runs into the street. Clyde recognizes the driver, JAMES HILDRETH, and runs to the car.

JAMES HILDRETH

Hey, Clyde, what's up?

CLYDE

We've been held up...two punks...Earl's been shot. Did you see them? Which way did they go?

Before Hildreth can answer, West and Daniels' car shoots out of the side street, squealing tires and fishtailing as it turns the corner and speeds off.

CLYDE (CONT'D)

That must be them.

JAMES HILDRETH

Get in, quick!

Clyde jumps into the passenger seat.

JAMES HILDRETH (CONT'D)

Hang on!

Hildreth tramps down on the gas pedal and the heavy sedan leaps forward, rocketing down the street, gaining rapidly. West and Daniels brake hard and turn right at the next intersection, followed closely by Hildreth.

JAMES HILDRETH (CONT'D)

If I get the chance I'll crash into them.

West and Daniels speed through the streets, twisting and turning in an effort to lose their pursuers. They gain ground in the turns, but the big sedan eats up the distance in the straightaways.

After several turns, West and Daniels swerve into a left turn and, as Hildreth makes the turn behind them, another car pulls in front of Hildreth. Hildreth swerves, narrowly missing the other car and skids to a halt, pounding on the steering wheel as he watches his prey turn the corner and disappear.

JAMES HILDRETH (CONT'D)

Shit. Shit, shit, shit. We lost them. I'm sorry, Clyde.

CLYDE

(writing on a slip of paper)

Don't worry, Jim. Besides, I got their plate number. The cops will get them.

INT. AMBROSE'S TAVERN - NIGHT

Ambrose's body is laying on the floor. Police OFFICERS interview WITNESSES. Two WOMEN are seated with Jane at a booth as she weeps uncontrollably. A man in an impeccable police uniform sporting Captain's bars on his collar, CAPTAIN WILLIAM MURPHY, talks to a short, dumpy man in a rumpled suit, DETECTIVE GLENN HOFFMAN. Two MEN push a gurney into the room followed by a DOCTOR carrying a black medical bag. The three stop beside Ambrose's unmoving body.

CAPTAIN MURPHY

Other room first, Doc. There's a woman who's still alive.

(to Hoffman)

Hell of a mess.

DETECTIVE HOFFMAN

You're telling me. One dead, one wounded, don't know how much they got away with yet. I'll bet my next paycheck this is the same gang that knocked over Joe's earlier.

CAPTAIN MURPHY

Yeah, I don't think I'll take that bet. I'd better call the sheriff and get some more people on this.

Clyde rushes in, followed by James Hildreth. They spot the two cops.

CLYDE

We chased them, Captain, but they got away.

CAPTAIN MURPHY

Hold on a sec...you saw them?

CLYDE

Yeah, we chased them but another car got in the way and we lost them.

CAPTAIN MURPHY

Did you see their car?

CLYDE

Sure did. A gray, two-tone Pontiac, two door, late model.

CAPTAIN MURPHY

Did you happen to get a license plate number?

CLYDE

Sure as hell did.

Clyde pulls the slip of paper out of his pocket.

CLYDE (CONT'D)

Ohio plate, D-4-3-5-1.

CAPTAIN MURPHY

Well done, Clyde.

Captain Murphy hands the slip of paper to Detective Hoffman.

CAPTAIN MURPHY (CONT'D)

Here, Glenn, see if you can track this down.

The two attendants wheel the gurney out, now with a WOMAN laying on it. The doctor stops.

CAPTAIN MURPHY (CONT'D)

So, what can you tell me, Doc?

DOCTOR

Well, the woman's wound is serious, but not life threatening, I think. She'll survive as long as we get her into surgery soon. This man...well, looks like he took one right through the pump. Dead almost instantly, I'd say.

CAPTAIN MURPHY

Just one shot?

DOCTOR

Yes, I think so. It's possible there's another wound, but I didn't see one. I'll know more later, of course.

CAPTAIN MURPHY

Okay. Thanks, Doc.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

West and Daniels speed away from Ambrose's Tavern.

WEST

Son of a bitch, son of a bitch. That was something back there.

DANIELS

Yeah, just like the OK Corral.

WEST

I got him, too, I got that sumbitch. He wouldn't listen, he just wouldn't stop. Like he was askin' for it.

DANIELS

Yeah, I saw that. I think he had a gun, too. I saw him reaching for his pocket, like he had a gun and was looking to shoot.

WEST

Yeah, I plugged him. How many times you think I got him?

DANIELS

Every time, you got him every time. Plugged him full of holes. That was some damn fine shootin'. He's deader than shit now.

WEST

Did you shoot any?

DANIELS

Yeah, I shot one time, but I don't think I hit anything. I was watching those guys at the bar, makin' sure they didn't try nothing.

WEST

That guy didn't stop when I told him to. I showed him, though, didn't I? The sumbitch.

DANIELS

Yeah, you showed him. We'll show them all.

WEST

I'm tired of people shitting on me, not listening to me. They'll do what I say from now on, or I'll plug 'em. So, how'd we do? Did you get anything from the till?

DANIELS

Yeah, I cleaned it out while you was shootin' up the place.

WEST

How much?

DANIELS

I don't know for sure, but a lot, Between the two jobs we got a shitload of cash, thousands maybe.

WEST

Thousands! Shit, I ain't never seen thousands of dollars before. Never figured I ever would, neither. We're rich. So what now?

DANIELS

We'd better blow this town, cops will be lookin' for us for sure.

WEST

Where to?

DANIELS

I dunno. Why don't we just hit the road and see what we see?

WEST

Sounds good to me.

West and Daniels speed off down the highway.

INT. POLICE STATION - COLUMBUS - DAY

Captain Murphy is on the phone, surrounded by the hustle and bustle of a busy police station, phones ringing, typewriters and teletype machines rattling out their reports and messages, radio calls in the background. Detective Hoffman enters and quickly walks over to the Captain.

CAPTAIN MURPHY

(on phone)

Yes, Sheriff, that would be helpful. Do you have men out there now? Yes, any help you can provide is appreciated. Yes. Okay. Goodbye then.

DETECTIVE HOFFMAN

Hey, Cap.

CAPTAIN MURPHY

What's up, Glenn?

DETECTIVE HOFFMAN

We got a hit on that license from the Ambrose murder.

CAPTAIN MURPHY

Great. Who is it?

DETECTIVE HOFFMAN

Came back belonging to a Robert M. Daniels. Local address. Its not been reported stolen, either.

CAPTAIN MURPHY

You think this is one of our boys?

DETECTIVE HOFFMAN

Could be. Too early to tell. I sent a couple of the boys out to pick him up.

CAPTAIN MURPHY

Record?

DETECTIVE HOFFMAN

Yeah, some juvie stuff, and some petty stuff since then. Did a stretch at OSR, ended up on the honor farm. Just got out last September. Nothing since.

CAPTAIN MURPHY

Honor farm? Its a far cry from the honor farm to murder, don't you think?

DETECTIVE HOFFMAN

Yeah, but I've seen stranger things. Nothing surprises me any more.

CAPTAIN MURPHY

Okay, Glenn, stay on it.

DETECTIVE HOFFMAN

How's the manhunt going...anything yet?

CAPTAIN MURPHY

No, not yet. I have the Sheriff and the State Police in on it, but nothing yet. Yours is the best lead we have so far. Keep me informed.

INT. ROAD HOUSE - NIGHT

The road house is packed. The room is lively, noisy, full of smoke. The tiny dance floor is full. At a table sits West and two girls, MADGE and JOYCE, watching the performer on stage, clapping their hands and tapping their feet to the beat of the music.

On the stage is Daniels, once again sitting in with the BAND, playing his guitar and singing a popular hillbilly tune. He finishes to rousing applause and rejoins West, Madge, and Joyce at their table.

MADGE

That was great, Murl, you can really play.

JOYCE

And sing, too.

WEST

Yeah that's my pal, a real...a real...uh, what's that guys name? Uh, Hank, Hank Williams. Yeah, my pal's a regular Hank Williams!

DANIELS

Thank you, thank you.

MADGE

Yeah, you're real good. Cute, too.

DANIELS

You're kinda cute yourself, honey.

Daniels leans closer to Madge and kisses her, a long kiss that practically devours her. West looks on, Joyce giggles.

DANIELS (CONT'D)

Hey, let's get outta here.

The others agree and they all grab their things.

EXT. TOURIST CABIN - NIGHT

The gray Pontiac slurves up a dirt road and skids to a stop in front of a tourist cabin. Both doors burst open and the foursome spills out, laughing and passing a bottle between them. DANIELS struggles to get the key in the lock. He finally succeeds and the four stumble into the cabin.

INSIDE THE CABIN

Joyce grabs West by the lapels, kisses him on the mouth, strips off his jacket, pushes him backwards into a chair. She straddles his lap and kisses him hard on the mouth. He reaches up and paws at the buttons on her blouse trying to get it off.

Daniels puts his arm around Madge and pulls her close, kissing her long and hard. Locked together they stagger toward the bedroom, bumping into furniture and doorways, finally flopping onto the bed. Madge tears at Daniels' coat, ripping it off and pawing at his shirt and tie. Daniels frantically tears at Madge's blouse, ripping the buttons, tearing it open, burying his head between her breasts.

INSIDE THE CABIN - THE NEXT MORNING

It is quiet. The room is a mess. Clothes are scattered everywhere. Empty bottles scatter the room, and ashtrays are overflowing. Joyce, wearing nothing but her bra and panties, sits in a chair talking quietly on the phone.

JOYCE

Yes, Momma. I know, Momma. But he's real nice, Momma, and we're having a lot of fun. No, Momma, no one is making me go anywhere. I like him.

(MORE)

JOYCE (CONT'D)

I'll be home soon enough. Momma,
I'm fine, nothing's wrong.

Madge staggers into the living room, hair and make-up a mess, wearing a man's shirt several sizes too big, open at the front, wearing nothing underneath. Daniels staggers out of the bedroom. West walks in from the other bedroom wearing a paisley robe. All are clearly hung over.

Madge plops down in a chair and groans. West staggers into the kitchen area and opens the refrigerator and stares into it, holding his head. Daniels sits at the table.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

(covering the phone's
mouthpiece)

Hey, Johnny, my momma wants to talk
to you. Would you talk to her,
please, and tell her everything's
okay?

West spins quickly to face Joyce, a look of panic on his face, and emphatically shakes his head no. Joyce mouths the word "Please" but West shakes his head even harder, no. Daniels takes the phone from her, covering the mouthpiece

DANIELS

(whispering, to Joyce)
What's your last name?

JOYCE

McKenzie.

DANIELS

(into the phone)
Mrs. McKenzie? Hi...

MRS. MCKENZIE (O.S.)

Don't hi me, young fella. Is this
Johnny, that John West fella?

DANIELS

Yes, ma'am, this is John West. I
just want to say...

MRS. MCKENZIE (O.S.)

Don't you say nothing, young man. I
heard on the news about you, that
you're wanted for killing some man
in a robbery.

DANIELS

Well, ma'am, that's not true, its just a big misunderstanding, that wasn't us. We...

MRS. MCKENZIE (O.S.)

I don't care what it was, you're in trouble, and you can't be messing with no girls. The police are looking for you and it ain't nothing but trouble. Someone else's going to get hurt, or worse, and I don't want it to be my Joyce. You understand me, boy?

DANIELS

Now, Mrs. McKenzie, nothings going to happen to your girl, see. I'm gonna...

MRS. MCKENZIE (O.S.)

I don't give a hoot in hell what you're gonna do, young fella, but the police are after you and you can't be messing with no girls. You need to sort this out. So send those girls home, you hear me?

DANIELS

Yes, ma'am, I do.

MRS. MCKENZIE (O.S.)

Are you gonna send those girls home?

DANIELS

Yes, ma'am.

MRS. MCKENZIE (O.S.)

Good. Now put my Joyce back on the phone.

Daniels hands the phone back to Joyce.

JOYCE

(listens for a minute)

Yes, Momma. I understand, Momma. I will, Momma. Yes, Momma. I love you, too, Momma.

Joyce slowly hangs up the phone.

DANIELS

Well, looks like fun time is over for a while. Why don't you gals go and get cleaned up. Me and Johnny need to talk a spell.

Madge and Joyce walk slowly into the bedrooms. Water runs in the tub. West and Daniels sit at the table and drink from the whiskey bottle.

WEST

That was pretty slick. Good thing you're so smart, and good with words.

DANIELS

Yeah, lucky me.

WEST

So what now? Guess we have to send them home?

DANIELS

Yeah. Something else she said, though.

WEST

What?

DANIELS

She said she knew about the shooting and the robbery. Heard about it in the news.

WEST

They know it was us?

DANIELS

Yeah.

WEST

How?

DANIELS

I don't know. But they do.

WEST

So now what?

DANIELS

Well, we've had some fun. The police will be looking for us now, hard.

(MORE)

DANIELS (CONT'D)

We don't want to run up against the police before we have a chance to do what we set out to do. Maybe its time we did that.

WEST

You mean go back to Mansfield?

DANIELS

That's what we said we wanted, right?

WEST

Yeah. Damn right it is.

DANIELS

Find that son of a bitch Red Harris.

WEST

And bust his head. Yeah. Get him back for all the times he busted ours. When do we head out?

DANIELS

Well, we need to get ready, pack up, and drop the gals off. We'll head back then.

WEST

God, I hope I get rid of this headache by then.

Daniels takes another pull at the bottle.

INT. APARTMENT - EARLY MORNING

In a small apartment, shabby and in need of repair but spotlessly clean, ORVILLE TAYLOR prepares for work. He dons rough but clean work clothes and heavy work boots. He silently tip-toes into a bedroom where four small CHILDREN lay sleeping. He kisses each one in turn, whispering, "Daddy loves you." As he kisses the last CHILD, a tiny tow-headed little girl, she turns to him sleepily.

LITTLE GIRL

Where are you going, daddy?

ORVILLE

I have to go to work, sweetie. You go back to sleep. Daddy loves you.

LITTLE GIRL

I love you, too, Daddy.

Orville walks into the kitchen where his WIFE, a pretty blond woman, finishes putting several sandwiches in a paper bag. Orville pauses to admire his beautiful wife. She turns to Orville and hands him the bag. He embraces her.

ORVILLE

Just a few more runs and we'll be able to get a decent place of our own. No more rooming houses or apartments. A real house.

MRS. TAYLOR

We have a wonderful home, now, honey. With you and the kids, I don't need anything else.

ORVILLE

Maybe, but you and the kids deserve better. Just a few more runs.

MRS. TAYLOR

You're a good man, Orville Taylor. I love you.

ORVILLE

I love you, too.

MRS. TAYLOR

Be careful.

ORVILLE

I will.

EXT. TRUCK YARD - DAY

A beat up old pick-up truck that in years past might have been red pulls up in front of a truck yard. Orville Taylor steps out. Thanking the driver, he slams the door and the truck speeds away. Orville walks into the yard and spots a man with a big belly and a bigger cigar holding a clipboard.

ORVILLE

Hello there. I'm Orville Taylor, here for a pick-up.

CLIPBOARD MAN consults his clipboard, scanning the list of names and destinations.

CLIPBOARD MAN

Lemme see your license.

Orville hands him his license. Clipboard man compares the license to his list and hands the license back. He gestures to where a long line of trucks loaded with brand new Studebakers await.

CLIPBOARD MAN (CONT'D)
You're over there, number eighty two. Here, sign this.

Orville signs his name and clipboard man tears off a copy and hands the copy to Orville.

CLIPBOARD MAN (CONT'D)
There's your copy. Your itinerary and drop offs are listed on the sheet. You know where you're going?

ORVILLE
Yeah, I done this route before.

CLIPBOARD MAN
Okay then, better get a move on.

Orville walks over to the line of loaded trucks and finds #82. Tucking his trip sheet into his pocket, he does a quick walk-around, climbs into the cab, cranks up the engine, and rumbles onto the highway.

EXT. OSR HONOR FARM - DAY

John Niebel is talking to the OSR chief clerk, R. A. OSTER. Oster has a clipboard.

R. A. OSTER
(handing Niebel a slip of paper from his clipboard)
Here you go, John, a purchase order to repair the tractor.

JOHN
'Bout time. That tractor's been on the fritz for a week now.

R. A. OSTER
Well, you know John, we have to make sure we balance the budget, and we didn't plan on that tractor just quittin' like that.

JOHN

Yes, Mr. Oster, I do see. I also know that you can squeeze a nickel so hard you can make the buffalo squeal.

Both men laugh at the old joke. As they talk, LOYAL NIEBEL joins them.

JOHN (CONT'D)

You remember my son, Loyal. He's finally home from the Navy.

R. A. OSTER

(shaking hands with Loyal)
Hello, Loyal. Glad to have you back.

LOYAL

Thank you, sir. Good to be back.

JOHN

And it's his birthday today, too.

R. A. OSTER

Well, happy birthday, son.

LOYAL

Thank you, sir. Dad, you got a minute?

JOHN

Sure, son.

R. A. OSTER

I'd better get going, Nice to see you again, Loyal.

Oster walks away.

JOHN

So what's up, son?

LOYAL

Well, you know how we were supposed to move in with you and Mom today?

JOHN

Yes.

LOYAL

Well, Mabel's not feeling so good. She hasn't been feeling well for a couple of days now and she's just not up to moving. It'd be a little much for her.

JOHN

Well, I won't say I'm not disappointed. Your mother and I were looking forward to having you close at hand for a while after being away for so long.

LOYAL

I know. I feel real bad about this.

JOHN

Well, there's no need to feel bad. We understand. We can wait a few days until Mabel is feeling better.

LOYAL

Thanks for understanding.

JOHN

We were planning a little birthday celebration tonight. I think your mother has a cake just about ready. Do you have time for lunch?

LOYAL

Sure.

JOHN

Well, then let's go on up to the house and have some of that cake.

John and Loyal trod toward the Niebel house.

EXT. RINGSIDE CAFE - MANSFIELD, OHIO - NIGHT

West and Daniels pull up outside the Ringside Cafe, a two-story, slightly run-down, low-end dive squeezed into a long line of buildings in the downtown area. A sign out front reads "Floor Show 2-nite."

WEST

I know that bastard Harris hangs out here. I heard him say it lots of times. His favorite place he said.

DANIELS
Yeah, I heard him, too.

WEST
What if he's in there?

DANIELS
Well, we ain't gonna do nothing in there, see. So if we spot him we'll just watch him, see where he goes, wait for a chance at him.

WEST
I'm gonna bust his head. Maybe we can shoot him. Kill him, even.

DANIELS
Nah, we'll just bust him up, like he did us. But not in there where folks can see us. We gotta hang back, see?

WEST
I got it, I got it.

INSIDE THE RINGSIDE CAFE

Its noisy, crowded, smoky. A jukebox blasts in the corner. West and Daniels scan the joint, looking for Red Harris.

WEST
I don't see him.

DANIELS
Me neither.

A WAITRESS walks by carrying a tray of drinks.

DANIELS (CONT'D)
(To the waitress)
Hey, what's up them stairs over there?

WAITRESS
That's where the floor show is, honey.

DANIELS
What kind of show is it?

WAITRESS
The naughty kind, sweetie, with girls.

(MORE)

WAITRESS (CONT'D)

The kind your momma might not want you to go see. You know what I mean?

WEST

Ohhhh. When does it start?

WAITRESS

In a little while. Why, you wanna go see?

DANIELS

Maybe later. You know a guy name of Harris, goes by Red? Big guy, red hair, works out at OSR?

WAITRESS

Doesn't ring a bell, honey. Look, I gotta go. Maybe I'll see you later.

The waitress walks off.

WEST

So now what?

DANIELS

I don't know. Let's go drive around and see if we can find him.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

West and Daniels leave the Ringside Cafe and cruise the streets of Mansfield, passing bars, bowling alleys, apartment houses, empty streets. West slows the car to a crawl.

WEST

Looky there. See that guy?

West points to a tall, lanky MAN walking arm in arm with a WOMAN. West drives the car at a walking pace, a half a block behind the couple.

DANIELS

Yeah. What about him?

WEST

Don't you recognize him? That's Cowboy Lee. You remember him from OSR?

DANIELS

Yeah, I remember Cowboy Lee. You sure that's him?

WEST

Yeah, I'm sure. I didn't like him much. He was a mean sumbitch, too. Not like Harris, but still mean as a snake.

DANIELS

Yeah, yeah, I see now. That's him, for sure.

WEST

Maybe we could bust him up, too.

DANIELS

Let's watch and see where they go.

They watch and follow. The couple walks to the movie theater, buys tickets and strolls casually inside.

WEST

Shit.

DANIELS

They'll be in there a while.

WEST

I don't wanna wait.

MEMORY FLASH

We're inside the barn again. Red Harris brings down the halter, striking Daniels across the face and head.

HARRIS

I thought you said you couldn't find this, you little bastard!

The halter comes down again and again, lashing the defenseless Daniels over and over.

BACK TO PRESENT DAY

DANIELS

Yeah, me neither. Let's see if we can find Harris.

West and Daniels drive past the movie theater and drive around aimlessly, randomly turning down streets, until they spot the bus station.

DANIELS (CONT'D)
Hey, there's the bus station. Pull
in, I got an idea.

WEST
(pulling into the bus
station)
What's your idea?

DANIELS
See those phones over there?

WEST
Yeah, so? We don't know his number.

DANIELS
No, no, they got phone books. We
know his name, we'll look him up,
find out where he lives.

WEST
Oh. That'll work.

EXT. BUS STATION - NIGHT

West and Daniels pull up to a phone booth, exit the car and
grab a phone book. Daniels flips through the pages, scanning
down the columns.

DANIELS
Harris, Harris, Harris...here we
go, Harris. Jeez, there's a shit-
load of them. What's his first
name?

WEST
Uh, Red.

DANIELS
No, that's his nickname, not his
Christian name.

WEST
Hell, I don't know. Never heard no
one call him nothing but Red. Is
there a Red in the book?

DANIELS
No. Damn. Let's try calling and
asking if Red's at home. See if
anyone answers.

West grabs the phone and pulls a handful of change from his pocket.

WEST

Okay, gimme a number.

DANIELS

Okay...uh, 6 9 8 8 3.

WEST

(dialing)

...8 8 3...it's ringing. Hello? Uh, is Red there? No? Uh, do you know Red Harris? Oh, okay. Sorry.

(hanging up)

Not the right one. Gimme another one.

DANIELS

Uh, the next one is...4 4 3 7 3.

WEST

(dialing)

...7 3...it's ringing. Still ringing. No answer.

(Slams the phone down)

Okay, gimme another one.

DANIELS

(slamming the phone book closed)

This was a dumb idea. We ain't never gonna find him this way.

WEST

Gimme another number, I'll call every damn one if I have to.

DANIELS

Let's go on upstairs and see if he shows up.

WEST

Upstairs?

DANIELS

Yeah, upstairs at the Ringside.

WEST

Well, the Ringside is still his favorite place. He might show up there.

DANIELS

Yeah. Or maybe someone will know where he lives. Besides, I'm getting thirsty.

WEST

Yeah, I could use a drink, too.

INT. RINGSIDE CAFE - UPSTAIRS - LATER THAT EVENING

The room is large, crowded with tables, each one full and cluttered with bottles, drinks, and ashtrays. West and Daniels sit, drinking. At the far end is a stage. Several scantily dressed CHORUS GIRLS perform a very suggestive bump-and-grind dance routine to the enjoyment of the raucous CROWD. Daniels watches the show while WEST pouts.

DANIELS

Why ain't you watching the show? There's some pretty girls up there.

WEST

I didn't come here to watch no show. We ain't never gonna find Red. Hell, we ain't even looking.

DANIELS

Well, we're waiting.

WEST

For what?

DANIELS

Red to show up.

WEST

Well, he ain't showing up! Let's go find him.

DANIELS

Now how the hell are we gonna find him, we don't know where he lives. We only ever saw him up at the farm, and he don't live at the farm.

WEST

No, but old man Niebel does. We know right where he lives.

DANIELS

Old man Niebel? We ain't here to get old man Niebel.

(MORE)

DANIELS (CONT'D)

He might be a rotten bastard but he ain't never done nothing to us.

WEST

Who the hell cares? Do you think he knows where Red-man lives?

DANIELS

Heeeeey, that's not bad. I'll bet Niebel does know where Red lives. He won't just tell us, though.

WEST

I'll bet we stick a gun up his ass he'll tell us.

DANIELS

I don't want to hurt old man Niebel. We ain't here to get him.

WEST

We don't gotta hurt him, we just gotta get him to tell us where Red lives, and then we can go and get him.

DANIELS

You know, that's not a bad idea, not bad at all.

EXT. ROAD OUTSIDE THE NIEBEL HOUSE - MIDNIGHT

West and Daniels cruise slowly past the Niebel house, make a U-turn, and park by the side of the road. They sit, watching. The house is dark.

INT. CAR - MIDNIGHT

WEST

Don't look like nobody's up. What do we do now?

DANIELS

We wake them up.

WEST

Well, what then? I mean, when he tells us what we want to know?

DANIELS

I don't know. I guess we'll take them out somewheres and tie them up until we get Red. You got your gun?

WEST

Couple of them.

DANIELS

Okay then, let's go see what's what.

West and Daniels walk to the Niebel house. Daniels knocks on the front door. No answer. He knocks again, louder. A light comes on upstairs, and soon the porch light flicks on and the door opens. There stands John Niebel.

JOHN

Help you boys?

DANIELS

I'd like to use your telephone.

John looks West and Daniels over carefully.

DANIELS (CONT'D)

My car broke down, over there. Can I use your phone to call a garage? I know it's late and I'm sorry, but we're kinda stuck, see.

JOHN

(pausing and looking West and Daniels over carefully)

All right. Come on in, but be quick about it.

John opens the door and they enter.

INT. NIEBEL HOUSE - MIDNIGHT

JOHN

(pointing)

There's the phone. And there's a book in the drawer.

Daniels opens the drawer and grabs the phone book, looking up a garage. Grabbing the telephone, he dials and waits. No answer. He looks up another number, dials again, no answer.

DANIELS

Do you know of any place might be open this late?

JOHN

Maybe.

DANIELS

What about you calling? I'm a stranger around these parts and I don't know much about this telephone system.

JOHN

(looking at West)

This fellow here, don't look like he's a stranger around these parts. What's your name, son?

WEST

John LeVond.

JOHN

Wait here until I go upstairs and get my glasses, I'll call for you.

John turns and walks upstairs. As he gets to the top of their stairs Phyllis peeks her head out of her room.

PHYLLIS

Daddy, who's in the house?

JOHN

Just some boys. Their car broke down. Go back to bed.

John walks down the hall and enters his bedroom. His wife, Nolana, is in bed but awake. He crosses to the dresser and reaches for his glasses.

NOLANA

Who's that I hear, John?

JOHN

Just some boys. Their car broke down. They need to call a garage. Go back to sleep, honey.

DOWNSTAIRS

West and Daniels both stare nervously at the stairs, waiting.

WEST

Do you think he went for a gun?

DANIELS

I don't know. Maybe.

WEST

You think there's anybody else in the house?

DANIELS

Maybe. Probably. The wife, for sure. Might be a problem if he has sons here.

WEST

How long are we gonna mess around like this?

DANIELS

I don't know. We need to know if he has anyone else in the house.

WEST

What difference does it make? We got the guns, we can take them.

DANIELS

Okay. If there's nobody with him when he comes down, we'll jump him.

WEST

He'll tell us where that bastard lives.

Footsteps on the stairs and John appears, glasses in hand. He walks to the phone. As he passes between West and Daniels, they exchange a nervous look. John picks up the phone book and looks up at West and Daniels, both of whom have now drawn their guns.

DANIELS

Now don't you do anything and you won't get hurt.

JOHN

What do you boys want?

DANIELS

Who else is in the house?

JOHN

My wife and daughter, they're upstairs.

DANIELS
Are they asleep?

JOHN
I don't know.

DANIELS
What about guns, you got any guns
in the house?

JOHN
Yes, a few.

DANIELS
Where?

JOHN
In that drawer over there.

DANIELS
(to West)
Keep an eye on him, Johnny.

Daniels looks in the drawers, finds a handgun. As Daniels covers John, West retrieves three long guns standing in the corner. They pile their discoveries on a chair near the front door.

DANIELS (CONT'D)
Okay then. You know where Red
Harris lives, right?

John hesitates, confused, and nods.

DANIELS (CONT'D)
Where's he live?

JOHN
He's the next house over.

DANIELS
Write it down, write down the
address.

John looks around, pats his pockets, comes up with a slip of paper and writes on it. He hands it to Daniels who shoves it in his pocket.

DANIELS (CONT'D)
Okay, now let's go upstairs.

JOHN
I'm not going to try anything, so
just don't shoot.

DANIELS

Go on. Get up them stairs.

John slowly walks upstairs, followed by Daniels, then West. At the top, Daniels pokes him in the back with his gun.

DANIELS (CONT'D)

Okay, get them up.

JOHN

(calling out)

There's some men here and they want you to get out of bed. Now get up.

Daniels shoves John the rest of the way up the stairs and into the small hallway between the rooms. West pushes John at gunpoint into Phyllis' room. Phyllis sits up in bed, the sheet pulled up around her. West stares. Nolana stands in the bedroom doorway.

DANIELS

(to Nolana)

Now you go on and get something on, lady.

Nolana grabs a robe and dons it. West comes out of Phyllis' bedroom and Daniels spots Phyllis through the door. He stares at her.

DANIELS (CONT'D)

Johnny, you go on and take Niebel here and his misses downstairs.

WEST

What are you gonna do, Murl?

DANIELS

Go on, I'll be down directly.

WEST

Okay you two, go on downstairs.

John and Nolana exchange nervous glances, but John nods and they go downstairs. As they head down the stairs Daniels slowly walks into Phyllis' bedroom.

DOWNSTAIRS

John and Nolana come down the stairs followed by West.

WEST

Get in the front room there, and be quick about it. Now you just wait right here.

West keeps his gun trained on John. His eyes gleam with excitement.

JOHN

There ain't no call to hurt anyone, son. We not going to try anything.

WEST

I ain't your son, you rat bastard.

UPSTAIRS - PHYLLIS' ROOM

Daniels is in Phyllis' room, his gun aimed at her.

PHYLLIS

Wha...what do you want?

DANIELS

You're a cutie, you know that? I bet you do. I bet you tease all the boys.

PHYLLIS

You leave me alone.

DANIELS

Looky here, cutie, I got the gun. I'll do what I damn please. I'll do whatever I damn please from now on. No one is ever going to say no to me again.

Daniels advances toward Phyllis. She squirms away, her back against the wall. Daniels is on her, tearing at her clothes. She crawls away, but he grabs her and pins her face down on the bed, his weight on top of her as he claws at his belt.

DOWNSTAIRS

The sounds of the struggle can be plainly heard. John starts toward the stairs. West lurches forward, sticking his gun in John's face.

WEST

You stay right there, old man.

JOHN

You got no right, coming in here
and hurting my family. That
bastard's hurting my little girl.
You gonna let him do it?

WEST

I don't give a damn what he does to
your little girl. You all gave us a
hard time when we was here.

JOHN

You son of a bitch!

John rushes West, but West is quicker and smashes the barrel of his gun down on John's head. John crumples to the floor, dazed, but not unconscious. West strikes him again and again. Nolana shrieks and runs to John.

John attempts to get up but she holds him back. West's eyes blaze with exhilaration. He takes a small handgun out of his pocket and throws it on the floor in front of John.

WEST

There you go, old man. Pick it up.
Let's see who the better man is
now, you son of a bitch.

WEST steps closer and points his gun directly at John's face.

UPSTAIRS - PHYLLIS' ROOM

Phyllis lies sprawled on the bed, face down, her nightgown pulled up to her waist, sobbing. Daniels stands, his pants around his knees. He pulls them up and fastens them, picking up his gun.

DANIELS

Okay, cutie, let's go. Downstairs.
With the others.

Phyllis doesn't move, but continues to sob. Daniels grabs her by her arm and drags her to a standing position. Phyllis pulls her nightgown down and, grabbing a robe from the foot of the bed, tries to cover herself. Daniels shoves her roughly toward the door.

DANIELS (CONT'D)

I said let's go, bitch.

DOWNSTAIRS

Phyllis comes down the stairs, followed by Daniels. In the front room, John sits on the floor holding his head. Nolana sits next to him. West covers them. The small gun still lies on the floor. Daniels shoves Phyllis in their direction.

DANIELS

Get over there with them. What happened here, Johnny?

WEST

Old man Niebel here tried to be a hero. I put him in his place. What now?

DANIELS

We should tie them up. Find some rope.

West picks the gun off of the floor and ransacks the house, opening drawers, cabinets, spilling the contents on the floor. Daniels keeps the Niebels covered. West opens a door.

WEST

Hey, where does this go? You, old man.

JOHN

Basement.

WEST

Hey, Murl, maybe we should lock 'em in here. That'll keep 'em for a while.

DANIELS

We'd still need to tie them up. See if there's any rope.

West goes into the basement. More ransacking. He reappears.

WEST

No rope.

DANIELS

Shit. We gotta take them somewhere.

WEST

Where?

DANIELS

I don't know. Just somewhere we can leave them and they can't tell nobody what happened until we can get to Harris.

WEST

So where's that?

DANIELS

We'll find a place, but we need to get out of here now. Go get the car and bring it closer to the door.

West runs out the front door.

DANIELS (CONT'D)

Okay, everybody out the back.

The Niebels walk through the kitchen to the back door, followed by Daniels. Phyllis opens the door, West is standing outside. They all parade out the back door and around to the driveway.

OUTSIDE

There sits the Pontiac, driver's door open.

DANIELS

All right, everyone in the back.

Nolana and Phyllis hesitate.

DANIELS (CONT'D)

Look, if you do what I tell you to now you probably won't get hurt, see. There's just one fella here in this town I want to get and now I've got the information where he lives and I'm gonna get him. So just get in and go with us and you won't get hurt.

JOHN

Do as these fellows want and I'll take care of everything. It'll be all right.

The Niebels climb in the back seat, West slides in behind the steering wheel. Daniels gets in the passenger seat, turning to cover the Niebels with his gun. The car takes off and turns onto the main road.

EXT. ROADS NEAR MANSFIELD, OHIO - NIGHT

The Pontiac cruises down a country road and into Mansfield. There are few cars and no pedestrians. Eventually they find themselves on a dark, lonely country road, corn fields on either side. They drive to the end of the road, make a U-turn, and drive back a short distance.

DANIELS

This looks good.

West pulls the Pontiac to the side of the road and shuts off the car. It is dark and silent, the only sound the ticking of the warm engine, the only light that of the nearly full moon. Daniels gets out.

DANIELS (CONT'D)

Okay, come on out now.

The Niebels climb out of the car, West slides out of the driver's side and joins the group, pulling his gun.

DANIELS (CONT'D)

(gesturing into the corn
field)

Now you go on in there.

They hesitate.

DANIELS (CONT'D)

We ain't gonna hurt you, see. We're just gonna leave you here so we can go take care of what we gotta take care of.

The Niebels walk slowly into the cornfield, followed by Daniels, then West.

DANIELS (CONT'D)

Okay, this here's good. Now, take off your clothes.

Again, the Niebels hesitate.

DANIELS (CONT'D)

Now look here. We ain't gonna hurt you, we just want to tie you up so we can do what we came here to do, so's you can't get away right away. Now go on, take off your clothes.

JOHN

Go on, do as he says. I'll take care of everything. It'll be all right.

The Niebels undress, tossing their clothes in a pile in front of them. The women attempt to cover themselves as best they can; John covers his groin with both hands.

DANIELS

Johnny, take these clothes to the car now and bring back a piece of rope or something we can tie them up with.

West grabs the pile of clothes and hurries off. Daniels watches the family as they nervously stare down at the ground. Soon West returns empty-handed.

WEST

There ain't no rope.

DANIELS

There ain't nothing to tie them up with?

WEST

Nope, nothing.

DANIELS

Shit.

WEST

What do we do now?

There is nervousness in West's voice, but excitement, too.

DANIELS

I guess there's just one thing left to do.

PHYLLIS

Look, my dad can't help it he works for the state.

DANIELS

Well, he might not can help it if he works for the state, but he can help it because he's such a rotten rat.

Nolana sobs. Daniels slips a blackjack out of his pocket.

DANIELS (CONT'D)

Look, I'm gonna hit you in the head, just to knock you out. It won't hurt you, but it might kill you, so tip your heads forward a little and stand still.

John and Phyllis tip their heads forward, while Nolana closes her eyes and sobs even louder, openly crying now. Daniels walks around behind the family, staring blankly, gun in one hand, blackjack in the other.

WEST

Shut up, lady! Just shut up.

It is deathly still, only the sound of Nolana's crying can be heard. Suddenly, West steps closer to Nolana.

WEST (CONT'D)

I said shut the hell up!

West points his gun, the small .25 caliber auto, at Nolana and pulls the trigger. Nothing. Misfire. Daniels watches as if in a dream. West jacks the slide, points the gun, pulls the trigger, his eyes bright with excitement. Again, nothing.

JOHN

Look here...

MEMORY FLASH

The barn again. Harris lashes Daniels with the halter again and again.

HARRIS

Lyin' little piece of shit! I'll show you.

The halter comes down again and again, over and over.

BACK TO PRESENT DAY

DANIELS

(softly, to himself)
Fuck it, you'll have to do.

Suddenly Daniels raises his gun and fires two quick shots; John falls to the ground. The shots echo across the corn field.

Daniels fires two more shots and Phyllis falls to the ground and lies motionless. Nolana screams.

Daniels fires two more shots quickly and Nolana falls to the ground. She screams and lies writhing on the ground moaning loudly as Daniels stares down at her, blood pouring from a head wound.

West stares down at Nolana and pulls out another gun from his waistband.

WEST

Goddamn it, bitch, I said shut the hell up!

Stepping close and standing over Nolana, he fires a shot into her as she lies on the ground. She stops moaning and lies still. The gunshots echo through the empty night. As the echoes fade, the silence is complete. West and Daniels stare at the bodies for a long time.

WEST (CONT'D)

Guess we showed them.

DANIELS

Guess we did.

West and Daniels walk quickly to the car and get in. Daniels is driving. The Pontiac takes off in a squeal of tires.

WALTER HOMERICK stands on his front porch, looking out at his yard and the road beyond, smoking a cigarette. As he smokes, a car speeds down the winding country road. The Pontiac zooms past and continues down the road.

The Pontiac swerves onto a larger road and passes a sign, "CLEVELAND".

INT. OSR HONOR FARM MEETING ROOM - MORNING

A briefing room full of GUARDS. Red Harris stands by the door next to another GUARD. He glances at his watch.

HARRIS

This ain't like John. He ain't never late. Never.

GUARD SERGEANT

You're right about that. I can't even remember when he ever missed work, and he ain't never late.

HARRIS

I'm a little worried. He ain't called or nothing.

GUARD SERGEANT

Maybe somebody should go check on him.

HARRIS

And by somebody I suppose you mean me?

GUARD SERGEANT

Well...

HARRIS

Okay. You get everybody started and I'll go check on him.

INT/EXT. NIEBEL HOUSE - MORNING

A beat-up old pick-up truck speeds up the dirt driveway to the Niebel house and skids to a stop. Red Harris jumps out, slams the door, walks quickly onto the porch. The front door is ajar. Harris peers inside, then knocks on the door frame.

HARRIS

John? John, you home? Anybody?

He knocks again, louder.

HARRIS (CONT'D)

John, you home? Nolana? Phyllis, you in there?

He pushes on the door and slowly walks in. It's a mess. Drawers and cabinets are open, cigarette butts are laying all over the floor, chairs and lamps are tipped over. Harris walks up the stairs, hesitantly.

HARRIS (CONT'D)

(loudly)

John? John, you here? Anybody up here.

Harris walks back down the stairs to the kitchen where he sees the back door standing wide open. He pauses, then quickly returns to the living room and picks up the phone.

EXT. TRUCK STOP - DAY

West and Daniels wake up in their car. They get out and stretch their cramped limbs. Daniels pulls a half-full bottle of Four Roses whiskey out of the backseat and takes a long pull before handing it to West.

WEST
I'm tired.

DANIELS
Yeah, me, too.

WEST
You really did it. You really shot
them people.

Daniels is silent.

WEST (CONT'D)
You know, you're ahead of me now.

DANIELS
What?

WEST
Yeah, you're ahead of me. You got
them three last night, but I only
got that guy in the tavern. You got
three and I only got one.

DANIELS
Yeah, I guess so.

WEST
So how did it feel?

DANIELS
What?

WEST
How did it feel to shoot them, to
kill them like that?

DANIELS
I don't know. Weird, like it wasn't
even me doing it. Like I was in
control, but not. Like I could
decide to do whatever I wanted.

WEST
What now?

DANIELS
I don't know. Let's get something
to eat and get cleaned up some.
Maybe get a paper and see if
there's anything about the Niebels.

WEST
What about then?

DANIELS

Probably shouldn't stick around too long. Might want to skip town, maybe even skip the state, til things cool down.

WEST

Hey, can we go to Akron? Akron's a nice place. I been there before. Maybe we can have some fun before we go.

DANIELS

Sure, Akron sounds good. Let's go, I'm hungry.

EXT. NIEBEL HOUSE - MORNING

Several prison vehicles are parked in front of the Niebel house, including Red Harris' pick-up truck. Armed GUARDS have set up a perimeter around the house and fan out from the house into the adjoining fields.

A police car drives up. Inside is SHERIFF FRANK ROBINSON, 60, a stocky, veteran officer. A GUARD flags the vehicle down and looks inside, recognizing Robinson.

GUARD 1

Oh, it's you, Sheriff. Go on in. They're expecting you.

SHERIFF ROBINSON

What's happened here?

GUARD 1

Mr. Niebel, the superintendent, and his family, they've disappeared. You better hurry.

Robinson drives to the house and joins a group of MEN standing on the porch, including Red Harris and the Guard Sergeant. A large, beefy man in a suit, Assistant Prison Superintendent GEORGE ALARDING, 50s, sticks his hand out as Robinson approaches. They shake hands.

SUPERINTENDENT ALARDING

Thanks for coming, Sheriff. We're kind of worried. The whole Niebel family seems to have disappeared.

SHERIFF ROBINSON

What happened?

SUPERINTENDENT ALARDING
 Mr. Niebel failed to show up for
 the six a.m. roll call. He always
 attends the roll call in case
 someone is missing. Red Harris here
 came over and he found the front
 and back doors open. Niebel and his
 wife and daughter were gone. You'd
 better take a look.

SHERIFF ROBINSON
 Anybody missing at roll call? Any
 inmates?

SUPERINTENDENT ALARDING
 Nobody. All accounted for.

INT. NIEBEL HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Robinson and Alarding enter the house and view the mess.

SHERIFF ROBINSON
 Some kind of fight.

SUPERINTENDENT ALARDING
 That's what I thought at first, but
 it looks more like a case of
 robbery when you see the rest of
 the house.

SHERIFF ROBINSON
 We'd better get some help.

Robinson picks up the phone in the hallway and dials.

EXT. CORNFIELD NEAR MANSFIELD - AFTERNOON

A large troop of BOYS march in a long line on a winding
 country road, cornfields on either side. The group is led by
 REVEREND HERBERT VELER, an unassuming man in his early 40s.
 One boy, TOMMY, walks with Reverend Veler.

TOMMY
 So how come we have to walk all
 this way, Reverend?

REVEREND VELER
 Walking is good for you, Billy.
 Exercises your legs, gets some good
 country air in your lungs.
 (takes a deep breath)
 (MORE)

REVEREND VELER (CONT'D)

Does a boy good to get out once in
a while, see the countryside.

TOMMY

All I see is a bunch of crummy
corn, Reverend, and I see that all
the time at home.

An older boy, ROBERT ZOELLER, walks by himself at the rear of the long column, herding the younger boys along. Suddenly something catches his attention and he stops and stares down a row of corn. Slowly he walks out into the cornfield. He sees what looks like an arm sticking out from a row of corn.

As he approaches he sees the arm is attached to the nude body of Phyllis Niebel. He gazes down the row of corn and spots the nude bodies of John and Nolana Niebel. Zoeller stares, his mouth agape, listening to the flies buzzing, then turns and sprints out of the cornfield.

INT. STATE POLICE COMMAND CENTER - DAY

The Ohio State Police Command Center is abuzz with activity. Uniformed and plainclothes OFFICERS coming and going, some on the phone while others read through bulky files. WITNESSES thumb through thick binders of mug shots. Phones ring. Over the dull roar of the busy police hub is the chatter of a teletype.

Standing in the midst of the organized chaos is a distinguished man wearing a natty sport coat, sporting round wire-rimmed glasses, cutting an imposing figure - COLONEL GEORGE MINGLE, 40s, Superintendent of the Ohio State Police. He is on the phone. As he speaks, Sheriff Robinson walks into the room and strides toward Colonel Mingle.

COLONEL MINGLE

...Yes, that's right. No, I'll let
you know. Keep me informed. Thanks.
(hanging up)
Hello, Sheriff.

SHERIFF ROBINSON

Colonel. I suppose you've heard, we
found the Niebels.

COLONEL MINGLE

Yes, I heard. I knew John Niebel
pretty well. He was a fine man.

SHERIFF ROBINSON

I came here in person to ask for
help. This is about one of our own.
(MORE)

SHERIFF ROBINSON (CONT'D)

None of this jurisdictional nonsense. I need all the help I can get.

COLONEL MINGLE

I think I can help already. We've tied some former Reformatory inmates to several crimes in the Columbus area, couple of armed robberies and one murder, Earl Ambrose.

SHERIFF ROBINSON

I heard about that. Do you think they're connected?

COLONEL MINGLE

I'm certain of it. Our crime lab tied the bullets from the robbery at Joe's Grill to the murder of Ambrose. The license number of the getaway car came back to one Robert Daniels, a former OSR inmate. Guards up at the Reformatory tied a guy name of John Coulter West to Daniels. Apparently they were inseparable up there. So far we have four witnesses who picked either Daniels, West, or both from their mug shots.

SHERIFF ROBINSON

Why do you think they're involved with the Niebel killings? I mean, just because they're former inmates...

COLONEL MINGLE

The car. A late model Pontiac, '46 or '47. Two door, two-tone gray. That was the getaway car at the robberies and that's the car some of your witnesses spotted near the Niebel house last night.

SHERIFF ROBINSON

Stands to reason, but that's not proof.

COLONEL MINGLE

No, but if you get the bullets from the Niebels to our crime lab, we'll know for sure.

SHERIFF ROBINSON
I'll send them over right away.

COLONEL MINGLE
In the meantime, I've got every
available patrol looking for that
car and those men.

SHERIFF ROBINSON
Give me what you've got and I'll
get my men on it, too.

MONTAGE

Scenes of police cars everywhere, patrolling the streets, uniformed OFFICERS and plainclothes DETECTIVES go in and out of stores, bars, road houses, and auto shops armed with photos of West and Daniels, interviewing anyone who might know anything. Police interview Reformatory INMATES and GUARDS, anyone who might have a lead. State-wide, police hit the streets, looking hard for any break in the case.

INT. AMERICAN CAFE - TIFFIN, OHIO - NOON

West and Daniels sit in a booth overlooking the street, devouring huge plates of food. The cafe is nearly deserted, but even so they talk quietly.

WEST
Damn, I didn't realize how hungry I
was. Don't even remember the last
time we ate.

DANIELS
Yeah, I feel a lot better now that
we found a room and had some sleep.
I was dead tired.

WEST
Dead tired. That's funny. Dead.
Tired. Get it?

DANIELS
Yeah, I get it.

WEST
You know, you're up on me now. You
got three to my one.

DANIELS
Yeah, so you said. It ain't a
contest, you know.

WEST

Yeah, I know. But I want to show you I got guts, too.

DANIELS

I know you got guts. You got that guy at Ambrose's. Nailed him with every shot. Saved our asses. He was going for a gun, sure as shit.

WEST

Yeah, that was a hell of a thing. We ain't gotta take shit from anyone any more. Not no one. What now?

DANIELS

Well, we probably need to keep moving, get out of the state.

WEST

Ain't we gonna go back and get that Red man? I thought that was the plan.

DANIELS

We are, and we will. We just ain't gonna get him yet. Things'll be hot, see, with the Niebel thing. Cops'll be looking for us all over. We'll have to do what we done before, get outta town for a spell and wait til things cool off. Then we can come back.

WEST

Well, for how long?

DANIELS

I don't know. Just a spell.

WEST

Well, where do we go?

DANIELS

St. Louis been a good place for us. We might should head that way.

WEST

Okay. So we'll just go grab our stuff from the room and go?

Daniels looks out of the front window as a state police car drives by. He watches intently as it cruises slowly up the street.

DANIELS

Been thinking about that, too. Our car will be hot. People will have seen it around, cops might even have a description.

WEST

So we'll just change the plates, like we done before.

DANIELS

No, not this time. They'll be looking for the car itself. We might should steal us another one.

WEST

We gonna look around a parking lot like we done before?

DANIELS

Hell, we'll just drive around til we find one we like and take it.

WEST

Murl?

DANIELS

Yeah?

WEST

Do you think we'll get caught? I don't want to go back to prison. I can't take it again.

DANIELS

I ain't ever going back.

Daniels raises his hand, points his finger like the barrel of a gun at the police cruiser, cocks his thumb, and pulls an imaginary trigger.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Four people, an older couple in their late 40s, MR. and MRS. STRAUSBAUGH, and a younger couple in their 20s, JAMES and RITA SMITH, stand on the porch of a small neat frame house. They have obviously spent a pleasant evening together. They stroll toward the Buick Roadmaster parked in the driveway.

JAMES SMITH

I don't know how we're ever going to beat you.

MR. STRAUSBAUGH

Well now, son, once you been married to our little girl here as long as the missus and I, you'll get to play real well together, too.

MRS. STRAUSBAUGH

It takes while to get to be good canasta partners, kinda like it does a marriage.

RITA

Oh, Mom, not more marriage advice.

MRS. STRAUSBAUGH

Now Rita, that's what parents do, we meddle.

JAMES SMITH

Well, we've got a long way to go to catch up to you two. I only hope we can have as long and as happy a marriage as you have.

MR. STRAUSBAUGH

Oh, you will, son, or I'll have to track you down and do something about that.

They laugh at what is obviously an old joke between them. James and Rita get into the car and drive away. The Strausbaugh's smile and wave.

INT. SMITH CAR - NIGHT

RITA

I had fun tonight.

JAMES SMITH

Yeah, me too. I kinda like your parents. Although, I think your dad is only half joking about getting rid of me. He's a little scary.

RITA

Daddy? He's a big softie. They both really like you.

JAMES SMITH

Speaking of softie, how about some ice cream before we go home?

RITA

Second best idea you had all night.

JAMES SMITH

Second best?

RITA

Yes, you're going to have another one when we get home.

EXT/INT. ROAD - NIGHT

West and Daniels drive aimlessly through the streets of Tiffin, searching. With very little traffic, there are not many cars to choose from. They spot a large Buick sedan with a WOMAN and a small BOY inside. West follows.

WEST

Looky there, what about that one?

DANIELS

Kinda big, don't you think?

WEST

Yeah! Big like a gangster car.

DANIELS

You sure you like that one?

WEST

Yeah, I like that one a lot.

DANIELS

Okay, follow it and let's see where it goes.

They fall in behind the Buick. Almost immediately the Buick turns into a drive-through root beer/ice cream stand.

EXT. DRIVE-THROUGH ICE CREAM STAND - NIGHT

West and Daniels sit in their Pontiac, taking slugs from a whiskey bottle and staring intently at the Buick.

WEST

I like that car. That's the one we should take, for sure.

DANIELS

Okay. We'll just wait until they leave and then follow them.

As they wait, James and Rita Smith drive into the drive-through stand and pull in to a parking space.

WEST

Oh, hey. Look at that one. I like that car.

DANIELS

I thought you liked that car over there.

WEST

Yeah, but look how much newer that one is. All nice and shiny, not all beat up. I like that one better.

DANIELS

Yeah, it is newer. And the cops won't be looking for a big four-door sedan like that. They might figure we'll go for something sporty.

WEST

We'll look like John Dillinger driving around in that.

DANIELS

You know Dillinger was shot dead, right?

WEST

Yeah, I know, but he wasn't in his car, was he?

DANIELS

Well, can't argue with that.

EXT. ICE CREAM STAND/ROAD - NIGHT

The Smith's Buick pulls out onto the main road. West and Daniels follow at a discreet distance. Soon the houses and buildings grow fewer and farther in between.

INT. WEST AND DANIELS CAR - NIGHT

WEST

This here good enough? Ain't
nothing much around.

DANIELS

Yeah, this'll do.

Daniels pulls a large flashlight from the glove box.

DANIELS (CONT'D)

Pull up alongside, I got an idea.
Let's play some cops and robbers.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

West accelerates and swerves into the oncoming lane, pulling alongside the driver's side of the big Buick. Daniels waves the flashlight out the window, flashing it at the driver, James Smith.

DANIELS

Hey you, pull it over. Police. Pull
over.

Smith's face is illuminated by the flashlight beam as he slows down. West accelerates again, pulling ahead of the Buick and crowding it to the shoulder of the road, swerving in front and blocking it in. West walks to the driver's door and Daniels walks to the passenger side of the Buick.

WEST

Driving pretty fast, buster. Lemme
see your license.

JAMES SMITH

No, I wasn't driving fast at all.
What are you pulling us over for?

Smith reaches for his wallet.

WEST

Don't you know we're looking for a
couple of killers?

Smith takes the license out and shows it to WEST.

WEST (CONT'D)

Gimme that.

JAMES SMITH

No. You can see it but I won't give it to you.

Daniels opens the passenger door.

DANIELS

Ma'am, you need to step out here, please.

JAMES SMITH

(to Daniels)

Hey, what are you doing? You leave her alone, bud.

WEST

I said gimme that license.

JAMES SMITH

And I said no. I don't even think you guys are cops.

WEST

Okay, buster, then this is for you.

West pulls his gun. Smith's eyes go wide as he stares down the barrel. West pulls the trigger. The gun roars. Blood and brain matter spray everywhere. Smith's body slumps toward the passenger side of the seat.

Rita screams, jumps out of the car and tries to run, but she runs smack into Daniels. Daniels grabs her and shoves her in the back seat of the Buick, climbing in beside her. She screams and cries hysterically as Daniels grabs her and tries to control her, clamping his hand over her mouth.

DANIELS

Shut up, lady. Shut the hell up!
Damn it, lady, shut the hell up. If you don't shut up I'm going to kill you!

Daniels struggles to quiet Rita. West runs to the Pontiac, drives ahead, stops. After several seconds Rita stops screaming, but sobs uncontrollably.

Daniels leans over the front seat and tries to move Smith out of the way, but he is too heavy and there is too much blood. Daniels is unable to budge Smith's body. Thick blood is everywhere, on the front seat, the steering wheel, the dashboard.

DANIELS (CONT'D)

Jesus, what a bloody mess.

Daniels steps out of the car and flashes the flashlight at the Pontiac. The Pontiac makes a squealing U-turn, fishtailing back toward the Buick.

Rita seizes the opportunity and leaps out of the car and runs across the street toward the nearest house, where the front porch light clicks on.

RITA
(screaming)
Help. Oh God, help me please. They
killed him. They killed my husband.
Help, please.

The Pontiac pulls alongside the Buick and makes another swerving U-turn, stopping beside Daniels who jumps in.

INT. WEST AND DANIELS CAR - NIGHT

DANIELS
Go, go, go, dammit!

West punches it and the Pontiac squeals off.

WEST
What the hell, you were supposed to
take the car.

DANIELS
Jesus Christ, what the hell did you
do?

WEST
Why didn't you get the car? That's
why we stopped them.

DANIELS
I didn't get the car because you
shot that guy in the head and there
was blood every goddamn where.

WEST
So move him over and take the car.

DANIELS
I couldn't move him, he was too
heavy. Jesus, like a slaughterhouse
in there, blood everywhere. I
couldn't get the goddamn car.

WEST
What about the woman?

DANIELS

What about her?

WEST

Where is she?

DANIELS

She got away. I can't signal you and hold her, too. I can't do everything myself.

WEST

So now what?

DANIELS

Jesus. Now we really have to find something else. People saw us, and that woman can describe the car. We still need another car. And fast.

WEST

Okay, so we'll find another car.

West and Daniels drive around in silence, searching. They spot a large haulaway truck loaded with new Studebakers, parked, the driver's door slightly ajar. As they drive slowly past, we see it is the same haulaway we saw earlier, #82.

WEST (CONT'D)

Hey, look.

DANIELS

Yeah, so? It's a big truck.

WEST

No, I know what he's doing. He's sleeping. That's what they do, pull off to the side and sleep in the cab for a while. I used to do that, too.

DANIELS

You?

WEST

Yeah, I did some driving. Nothing that big, but almost. I could drive that.

DANIELS

You sure?

WEST

Yeah, I'm real sure.

DANIELS

No one will be looking for a truck,
specially not a big one like that.
You sure you can drive it?

WEST

Yeah.

DANIELS

Okay, then let's go back and get
it.

West swings a U-turn and drives back to the parked haulaway
and, after another U-turn, slides quietly in behind it,
cutting the engine.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

West and Daniels creep toward the driver's door, guns drawn.
West snatches the door open. Inside Orville Taylor is laid
out across the seat, sleeping.

WEST

Hey, buddy. Get up!

ORVILLE

Wha...what?! What the hell?

WEST

Get up! We're taking this truck.

DANIELS

Get on out here.

Orville climbs out of the truck, rubbing his eyes.

ORVILLE

What the hell you boys want?

DANIELS

We want this here truck, see. Now
you just be quiet and everything'll
be okay.

WEST

I'll take care of him.

Daniels looks inside the cab and pulls out a length of rope,
tossing it to West.

DANIELS

Here.

West marches Orville into the nearby woods as Daniels transfers their belongings to the truck. Two shots ring out from the woods, piercing the still night. Daniels stops and looks toward the woods, then continues to transfer their belongings. West walks out of the woods.

DANIELS (CONT'D)

What happened?

WEST

I took care of him.

DANIELS

I thought you were gong to tie him up.

WEST

Why did you think that?

West hands Daniels Orville's wallet.

DANIELS

I gave you rope.

WEST

Shooting him seemed easier. Anyway, we're tied now.

DANIELS

Tied?

WEST

Yeah. You got three and now I got three.

DANIELS

Jesus, Johnny, sometimes I worry about you.

They climb into the truck. West fires up the engine and grinds loudly into gear. The truck starts off, jerking, nearly stalling. The truck weaves out onto the main road, swerving and crossing lines.

INT. STATE POLICE COMMAND CENTER - NIGHT

Colonel Mingle sits at a long table reading through one of the many reports stacked on the table. All around him is the chaos of a busy police investigation, OFFICERS coming and going, phones ringing, a teletype clattering in the background.

A uniformed OFFICER sits at the teletype machine reading a report as it types, waiting for it to finish. When it does, he rips the report off the machine, and hands it to Colonel Mingle.

COLONEL MINGLE

Jesus, another killing. In Tiffin. Am I reading this right, is this the description of that Pontiac?

TELETYPE OFFICER

Yessir. Same vehicle. Two-tone gray two-door Pontiac, late model. Same one all right.

COLONEL MINGLE

Okay, boys, listen up. Looks like we got a report of those two boys in Tiffin. One dead farmer. When did this happen?

TELETYPE OFFICER

Report says around ten thirty, sir. Apparently there's a witness that got away.

The teletype rattles away again.

TELETYPE OFFICER (CONT'D)

Sir, another report coming in.

(pause, reading from the report)

Another body...shot...they found the Pontiac...abandoned...no sign of West or Daniels.

COLONEL MINGLE

Must be them. And we're sure it's the same vehicle?

TELETYPE OFFICER

Yes, sir, positive ID.

LT AUGENSTEIN, 30s, crisp uniform, studies a large map of Ohio and several surrounding states mounted on the wall. The map is subdivided into multiple subsections and labeled Blockade Plan.

LT AUGENSTEIN

Sir, if we think they were in Tiffin as of ten thirty, we might try blockading them. We've got this new plan.

Colonel Mingle joins Lt Augenstein at the map.

COLONEL MINGLE

True, but we've never actually used it. Never even practiced it.

LT AUGENSTEIN

If we put up M-fifteen and M-sixteen we can bottle up the entire state and parts of three others. No way they can get away.

COLONEL MINGLE

Well, no time like the present. Make it so, lieutenant.

Two huge binders appear and are divvied up amongst the many OFFICERS. Everyone grabs a phone and starts to dial.

MONTAGE

The police blockade plan springs into action. OFFICERS in four states answer their phones and dispatch squad cars to intersections in Ohio, Indiana, West Virginia, and Michigan. Squad cars block intersections, bridges, interstates, and back country roads alike. Uniformed OFFICERS shine flashlights into cars, backseats, and trunks. IDs are checked and rechecked. No stone is left unturned.

INT. SHERIFF ROY SHAFFER'S RESIDENCE - LATE NIGHT

Van Wert County SHERIFF F. ROY SHAFFER, 60, and his WIFE lie asleep in bed in the stifling summer heat when the silence is pierced by the shrill ringing of the phone by the bed. After years of such calls, Sheriff Shaffer is instantly awake, swinging his feet to the floor and picking up the phone in one motion.

SHERIFF SHAFFER

Shaffer here.

DISPATCHER (O.S.)

Sorry to bother you so late, Sheriff, but the State Police called and told us to execute blockade plan M-fifteen and M-sixteen.

SHERIFF SHAFFER

Damn, who are they looking for?

DISPATCHER (O.S.)
Two young men they think are
responsible for the Niebel murders
down in Mansfield.

SHERIFF SHAFFER
Yeah?

DISPATCHER (O.S.)
Yes, Sheriff. And there were two
more murders in Tiffin earlier
tonight. The State Police think
they are connected to those
murders, too.

SHERIFF SHAFFER
Did you look up that blockade plan?
Where are we supposed to go?

DISPATCHER (V.O.)
We have two intersections we have
to blockade, Sheriff, U.S. 30 North
at Delphi and the junction of 224
and 637.

SHERIFF SHAFFER
Who do we have on the road tonight?

DISPATCHER (O.S.)
Just Vaughn and Harry, Sheriff.

SHERIFF SHAFFER
Okay, send them to the bridge and
I'll take the junction.

DISPATCHER (O.S.)
By yourself, Sheriff?

SHERIFF SHAFFER
No, I've got somebody in mind. I'll
call back on the radio on my way
out and get descriptions from you
on those two boys.

As he hangs up, his wife rolls out of bed. After years of
being a cop's wife, she is used to such calls.

MRS. SHAFFER
I'll go make you some coffee,
honey.

SHERIFF SHAFFER
Thanks.

Shaffer hits the cradle and dials the phone.

SHERIFF SHAFFER (CONT'D)
 Hey, Len, its Roy. Yeah, I know
 what time it is. I don't want you
 to miss out on the party. I need
 someone to man a roadblock with me,
 wanna come along? No, I'll pick you
 up. And bring that Reising.

EXT. ROAD JUNCTION - THE WEE HOURS OF THE MORNING

A car pulls up at a lonely intersection. The area is deserted, the only building visible an abandoned barn. Sheriff Shaffer and Van Wert Police Department SERGEANT LEONARD CONN, 30s, exit the vehicle. Sgt Conn carries a Reising M-50 .45 caliber submachine gun. Shaffer stands in the middle of the road with a flashlight while Conn stands to the side. Shaffer flags down an oncoming vehicle.

EXT. TRUCK STOP - EARLY MORNING

The haulaway sits quietly in a back corner of the truck stop. The door on one of the cars opens and West and Daniels crawl out, rubbing sleep from their eyes. Daniels is carrying a bottle of whiskey and they take turns drinking.

DANIELS
 Damn, I still feel tired.

WEST
 I don't think we got much sleep.
 Them cars ain't very comfortable.
 And I got a headache.

DANIELS
 Damn, Johnny, anything else you
 wanna bitch about?

WEST
 No, I think that'll do it. Gimme
 that.

West takes a pull from the bottle.

WEST (CONT'D)
 So what now?

DANIELS
 Get outta the state, quick as we
 can, that's what.

WEST

Which way?

DANIELS

West, I think. They won't think we'll go back that way. And they ain't looking for a big truck like this.

WEST

Maybe one of us should ride in one of the cars. They're looking for two of us, won't be as suspicious that way.

DANIELS

Good idea. That's a pretty good spot to shoot from, too. I can't drive this truck, so that'll have to be you.

WEST

Okay. What do we do if we run into a cop or something?

DANIELS

Don't do nothing unless you're sure they made you. Don't just start shooting everything up, like before. They might not even know its us and just let us keep on going.

WEST

Okay. But I ain't going back, I told you that. I'd rather shoot it out and get killed than go back.

DANIELS

I ain't either. Don't worry, we'll just drive straight on through. By tonight we'll be living it up in St. Louis.

WEST

And if they do figure out it's us?

DANIELS

Then we'll shoot our way through, guns blazing, and kill 'em all.

West and Daniels take one more pull at the bottle. Daniels tucks one handgun into his back pocket and another into his belt, grabs a rifle, and climbs up into the first car on the top rack.

West tucks the .45 into his belt, grabs a rifle, climbs into the driver's seat, and cranks the truck up. The sound of grinding gears breaks the early morning silence and the truck lurches away and careens onto the main road.

EXT. ROAD JUNCTION - MORNING

Sheriff Shaffer and Sgt Conn are still at the road block, following the same pattern - Shaffer flags down and checks out a vehicle while Conn stands back, providing cover. Shaffer finishes checking out a car, another approaches driven by a lone man. Shaffer flags it down and approaches. He recognizes Conservation Officer FRANK FREIMOTH, 50s.

SHERIFF SHAFFER

Well, hello there, Frank.

FREIMOTH

Hey there, Roy. What the hell is going on here?

SHERIFF SHAFFER

Got us a road block. Some real desperados on the loose.

FREIMOTH

Seriously?

SHERIFF SHAFFER

Yep. You heard about the Niebels, right?

FREIMOTH

Yeah. Real shame, that.

SHERIFF SHAFFER

Well, them boys they think done that also killed a farmer up in Tiffin last night, so we're putting up roadblocks.

FREIMOTH

They think they might come this way?

SHERIFF SHAFFER

I don't think so, but you never know. Be stupid to head back this way. They're probably long gone.

Sgt Conn walks over and stands by Freimoth's car.

FREIMOTH

Hey, Len.

SGT CONN

Morning, Frank.

Another car drives up behind FREIMOTH's.

SHERIFF SHAFFER

Pull over there, Frank, and let me get this car.

Freimoth pulls his car to the shoulder while Shaffer and Conn resume their routine. Freimoth exits his car and stands beside it. As Shaffer clears the car, the sound of a large truck is heard. Shaffer, Conn, and Freimoth all look up as a large haulaway truck grinds and stutters to a stop several car lengths away. Seconds pass as they stare at the truck.

Inside the truck, West sits, nervously licking his lips, waiting. He pulls the .45 from his belt and slides it between his legs, out of sight.

Shaffer walks to the truck and climbs on the running board, his face level with West's.

SHERIFF SHAFFER (CONT'D)

Morning, son.

WEST

What do you want?

SHERIFF SHAFFER

How far you come this morning?

WEST

I left Tiffin this morning.

SHERIFF SHAFFER

Tiffin, you say. Have you been stopped and checked since you left Tiffin?

WEST

Yes, sir, couple of times.

SHERIFF SHAFFER

Is there anyone else with you?

WEST

No, I don't think there's anyone with me.

SHERIFF SHAFFER

You don't think there is?

WEST

No, sir, I'm sure there ain't.

SHERIFF SHAFFER

Well, hold on a minute till I look around.

Shaffer walks back to Conn.

SHERIFF SHAFFER (CONT'D)

Len, you be careful and watch this fellow. I think this might be one of them. I'm going to search this outfit.

CONN

Okay, but why do you think so?

SHERIFF SHAFFER

This fellow doesn't look like any truck driver I ever seen. And he's real jittery.

CONN

Aren't those Studebakers on that rig?

SHERIFF SHAFFER

Looks like, yeah. Why?

CONN

Well, they're new and new ones come from the factory in Indiana.

SHERIFF SHAFFER

Yeah?

CONN

Well, this rig is headed back in the direction of the factory. Seems kind of odd.

SHERIFF SHAFFER

We might have us a winner, Len.
Like I said, you be careful. And
keep him covered.

Shaffer walks back to the truck. Conn follows and takes up a position covering the driver's door, his submachine gun at the ready position.

SHERIFF SHAFFER (CONT'D)

(to West)

You sit tight, son, I'm going to
have a look around.

West nods and turns the truck off. Shaffer slowly walks down the length of the truck on the driver's side, looking carefully at the cars on the lower rack. All have tarps covering the car, securely tied down. Shaffer searches under the tarps.

West watches Shaffer in the rear view mirror, alternately glancing over at Conn.

Reaching the rear of the truck, Shaffer climbs up onto the upper rack and walks even more slowly down the line of cars on the upper rack on the passenger's side.

West shifts his view to the passenger side rear view mirror to watch Shaffer's progress, still glancing over at Conn, who watches West keenly, his weapon at the ready.

Shaffer approaches the first car on the top rack. The tarp is loose and pulled back. He stares into the back window, spots a hat on the back seat. Slowly Shaffer reaches back and pulls his service revolver from the holster. Crouching low he spots Daniels in the front seat of the vehicle.

West sees Shaffer pull his handgun in the mirror and slowly reaches between his legs and grabs the .45, glancing over at Conn. His other hand gropes for the door handle.

Shaffer creeps slowly and quietly closer to the passenger door of the car. He places his hand on the door handle and readies himself. Suddenly, Shaffer jerks the passenger door open and aims his gun at Daniels.

SHERIFF SHAFFER (CONT'D)

Hold it right there, mister!

West sees Shaffer whip the door open in the rear view mirror.

SLOW MOTION SEQUENCE

Pulling the door handle West throws the door open, steps out onto the running board and, using the door as cover, fires at Conn, striking him in the chest.

Conn staggers backwards from the force of the bullet, drops to his knees, seriously wounded. Bringing the Reising to bear he pulls the trigger and unleashes a fusillade of .45 caliber slugs at the truck. At 500 rounds per minute, CONN expends his entire 20-round magazine in 2.4 seconds, but it seems like much longer. Rounds pelt the cab of the truck, pierce the door, shatter the window.

West fires a second round at Conn -- misses wildly. Bullets pepper the truck all around him.

Freimoth ducks, whipping his head in the direction of the gunfire. He drops to one knee, clutching his arm, as a stray bullet catches him.

On top of the haulaway, Shaffer drops to one knee, instinctively taking cover behind the door of the car. Daniels' head whips back to look at what is happening on the roadway.

Bullets still pepper the cab of the truck. West fires a third shot. As he does a .45 slug from the Reising hits him squarely between the eyes. Blood and brain matter spray into the cab of the truck. West crumples to the roadway, unmoving.

END SLOW MOTION

Conn, the Reising's magazine expended and barrel smoking, collapses to the ground. The sounds of the gunfire echo across the cornfields. Gasping, Conn crawls toward the squad car.

Daniels' hand creeps towards the gun on the seat beside him as he steals a furtive glance at Shaffer, who still has him covered with his service revolver.

SHERIFF SHAFFER (CONT'D)

Don't try it, son, you won't make it. Get your hand away from that gun.

Daniels hesitates, then pulls his hand away from the gun.

DANIELS

You got me, don't shoot. I'll do anything you say.

Shaffer, aided by the wounded Freimoth, drags a handcuffed Daniels to the squad car where the badly-wounded Conn lays, halfway inside the squad car, radio mike in hand.

Shaffer throws Daniels to the ground...

SHERIFF SHAFFER
 (to Freimoth)
 Watch him.

...and runs to Conn who is bleeding from a chest wound, his breathing labored. Shaffer immediately places his hand over the wound and applies pressure to stem the bleeding.

SHERIFF SHAFFER (CONT'D)
 Hang in there, Len. Hang in there.

With his free hand Shaffer grabs the radio mike.

SHERIFF SHAFFER (CONT'D)
 This is Shaffer -- have apprehended
 the car -- one killed -- one
 patrolman injured badly -- send
 ambulance and help.
 (to Conn)
 Hang in there, buddy, help is on
 the way. Hang in there.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PRISON EXECUTION CHAMBER - NIGHT

Guards finish strapping Daniels into the electric chair, jerking the straps tight. Daniels winces. Guards place electrodes on Daniels' head and ankle as he and Father Lucier continue to recite the Lord's Prayer. Guards cover Daniels' head with a heavy leather mask, muffling the words.

The guards step away from the chair. Father Lucier stands directly in front of Daniels as he continues to pray.

The warden checks the time on his pocket watch, looks at the clock on the wall. Eight o'clock. Snapping his pocket watch shut, he looks into a darkened corner of the room and nods, once, sharply.

A switch is thrown. A dynamo hums loudly. The lights dim and flicker. Daniels jerks upright, his body taugth, muscles straining at the bonds, a scream muffled by the heavy mask.

As the lights flicker and flash like a nickelodeon, witnesses glimpse Daniels straining at the straps and hear his muffled groans as a thin blue wisp of smoke curls up from his ankle.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE OVER BLACK:

Murl Robert Daniels was executed at 8:03 p.m. on January 3rd, 1949.

Sergeant Leonard Conn, the Van Wert Police Department officer critically injured in the shootout, said Daniels' death was, "A lot more merciful than the way the Niebels were killed.

A total of \$5,250 was offered as a reward for the capture of West and Daniels. The money was awarded to Rita Smith, the wife of victim #5, James C. Smith.

Mrs. Smith donated the reward money to the family of Orville Taylor, West and Daniels' sixth and final victim.