

S T E A L E R S

by

A. T. Barker

ZHURA
18 Tremont St, Suite 310
Boston, MA 02108
www.zhura.com

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FADE IN:

INT. STEEL FACTORY - DAY

An oily steel manufacturing plant.

Flowing, creaking, a conveyor belt chugs along.

A piece of steel treks through the factory, through fire and blades. Stamped. Molded.

Machines drip grease, workers drip sweat, air ducts drip water.

A constant chaos echoes in the background as a wheel comes to a rest. The finished product.

The wheel is attacked by a machine, then transferred to a pallet with four others.

A forklift hauls the load to the stocking area and drops it amongst thousands of finished wheels.

As the forklift slowly rolls away, the relentless mechanic roar of this place is overpowered by the deep, withdrawn words of--

WARNER SHAW (V.O.)

As you grow older, you learn that
childhood is like a dream.

-At a workstation -- a man in a welding mask, CLAREMONT RAMSEY (27), paces himself as he works to grind the surface of an imperfect wheel.

WARNER SHAW (V.O.)

Childhood was a dream. As a boy,
you... *awaken* into manhood.

-Another workstation -- FARRIS LANDON (26) heaves wheels to be loaded onto a pallet. His braun readily on display. An eyepatch adorns his face, the result of an on-job injury.

WARNER SHAW (V.O.)

Cold- Unexpected- Manhood. As a
man, you find that this world is
not a dream.

-RANDALL PERCH (24) monotonously checks the surface of each wheel for imperfections. An emptiness hollows his eyes.

WARNER SHAW (V.O.)

This world does not support
dreams...

-In an oil-covered water treatment pit, a young man removes

his hardhat and wipes the sweat from his brow.

Hold on him. He is worn. He is tired. He is WARNER SHAW.

At only 24, his eyes are nearly vacant, the look of an old man beaten from experience.

He wipes the oily smudges from his watch. Lunch.

He replaces the hardhat. Begins his ascent up the ladder.

-boom-

... A menacing drum beat resounds amidst screams of machinery.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Warner follows the crowd toward the cafeteria.

As others enter, he turns to another direction.

Following closely behind are Claremont, Farris, and Randall.

-boom-

INT. LOCKERROOM - DAY

They open their respective lockers, each retrieving a brown bag.

They exit the room.

-boom-

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Claremont and Farris walk toward the cafeteria.

Randall and Warner move in a different direction.

-boom-

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

Inside, nearly thirty WORKERS are dispersed amongst the tables.

Claremont and Farris enter and sit together at the first table.

They remove sandwiches from their bags and begin eating.

Then...

GUNSHOTS

All are wide-eyed, panicked. All, but Claremont and Farris. They pull handguns from their bags and open fire on their coworkers.

INT. OFFICE CUBICLES - DAY

In the management offices, Randall and Warner are cutting down the STAFF.

The employees run and dive for safety.

All are expired as the boys fire and reload with steady hands.

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

Claremont and Farris are now guarding the only exit.

The workers cower under tables, behind vending machines.

Someone is screaming. Many are crying.

A WOMAN is praying beside a coffee machine. Her eyes closed, her hands shaking.

Claremont aims at her, trying for a killshot.

He pulls the trigger. Misses.

The bullet hits a coffee pot, spattering brown liquid over the woman.

She wimpers. Her praying intensifies.

Warner and Randall enter wildly, moving from table to table, taking lives.

One frustrated, courageous WORKER dives for Randall from behind a vending machine.

Warner takes him down with a shot, then takes him out with a knife and a rage unparalleled.

They proceed to fill the room with shells, emptying it of all life, save for their own.

All else expired, one worker is left, a HISPANIC WOMAN.

Warner nods to Randall.

Randall holsters his gun, pushes her against a wall. He kisses her with a grossly passion.

He finishes, backs up, saving this moment for later. He turns, passes Warner.

Warner fires two shots.

All is silent as the shells dance to a stop on the floor.

-boom-

They exit.

INT. LOADING DOCK - DAY

Randall and Claremont open the loading dock doors.

Farris steadies a load of wheels on a forklift as a semi is backed to the dock.

Claremont and Randall man two other forklifts. They quickly load the trailer with wheels as another semi backs to another dock.

INT. LOADING DOCK - DAY (LATER)

At four docks, four semi trailers sit filled to the cusp with stacked wheels.

The doors to the trailers are shut and locked as the doors for the docks are lowered.

EXT. STEEL FACTORY - DAY

The semis pull away from the docks and accelerate toward the exit.

One by one, they pull onto a road and leave the plant behind.

The factory looms in the boys wake. It is still, quiet, haunting.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

In one unbreaking line, the four semis drive just under the speed limit.

EXT. RIVER - DAY

The semis enter the loading area for a large barge.

Warner pulls to the loading dock, downshifts, parks.

He saves one last draw from a cigarette. Tosses it from the window.

EXT. BARGE - SUNSET (LATER)

The wheels have been securley loaded into several metal containers.

The four boys greet the captain, LON (50s), as they board the towboat. His gaunt figure harbors a wreckless excuse for hair.

Last on, Warner shakes Lon's hand and slips him a thick roll of bills.

The four sit near the bow.

FARRIS
Got that beer, Cap?

LON
Aw. Yeah, just a sec.

Lon retrieves a cooler from the cabin.

LON (CONT.)
Here ya go, boys.

CLAREMONT
Fuck yeah.

Warner's eyes pierce through Claremont.

Claremont hesitantly nods.

CLAREMONT (CONT.)
Sorry.

WARNER
Lon here's a religious nut. Aren't you, Lon?

LON
I'm a Christian, yes.

WARNER
That's good.
(To the boys)
Ain't that good?

RANDALL
Aw yeah.

Claremont and Farris nod as they drink from their cans.

LON

So, how long you figure we got til
ya'll get found out?

RANDALL

Good while, I reckon.

LON

That's good. What if one of them
kept a cell phone on them, or make
it out of the room fore you
figured.

WARNER

Won't be a problem.

LON

No one got hurt, did they?

WARNER

Nothin past necessary.

LON

Well, good. Most of them folk are
good people, War. Good hard workin
people.

Warner nods distantly.

WARNER

I know.

He washes down his thoughts with a swig.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - NIGHT

Two cops, TERRY PHELPS (45) and CLINT PHELPS (25), father
and son, work their patrol.

CLINT

She's nice and all, but I don't
see it goin anywhere.

TERRY

Ya know, when I first started
dating your mother I didn't think
it would last.

CLINT

Bullshit.

TERRY

I wasn't ready for anything more. She was beautiful, sweet, everything you'd want in a wife. But I didn't want a wife. I didn't want anything. I didn't know what I was doing, where I was going. I was just a cop. I was a person with a job, and that was it. Then, I don't know, it all came together. I fell for her, I guess. And, now I'm a man with a career, a wife, and a family. A good life. A good family. I guess what I'm saying is, I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for your mother. Every man needs a woman. A good woman. That can keep their head on straight, and let them know when they fuck up or when they're being hard-headed or when-

An interruption from the CB radio --

OPERATOR (V.O.)

-Dispatch to six-oh-one. Dispatch to six-oh-one. Over.

Terry picks up the mic. Holds the button.

TERRY

Six-oh-one, here. What's the news, Kathy?

KATHY (V.O.)

Terry, I just got a report of a shooting at the old steel plant. Off Stromeyer Road. It's a big one. They're sayin' be on the lookout for a few unmarked semis. Towed by yard dogs and chaulk full of those wheels they make.

TERRY

Affirmative, Dispatch. They need any help at the factory? Anyone hurt?

KATHY (V.O.)

Um. Well. No, they don't need backup. They're callin' in no survivors, as of yet. First on the scene was Charlie P. Called it in in a panic. Said it's just a massacre. Somethin' ugly. Said to

(MORE)

KATHY (CONT'D)

look for a group of four twenty-somethings. Terry, these boys got a mean streak in 'em you don't want to get in the way of. Stay alert out there, will ya.

TERRY

Will do, Dispatch. Any speculation as to the suspects. Any names?

KATHY (V.O.)

Nothing so far. We'll update as the word comes in. Keep those eyes peeled, Terry.

There's a faint sound of talking in the background, then nothing.

Terry and Clint savor a moment of contemplation.

KATHY (V.O.) (CONT.)

Right. Okay. Six-oh-one, just got word on those suspects. Over.

TERRY

Go ahead, Dispatch.

KATHY (V.O.)

Okay. They're all employees. Four of em. We've got one Farris Landon. Twenty-six. One Claremont Ramsey. Twenty-seven. Says here, he's got an extensive record. Petty crimes to felonies. A Randall Perch. Twenty-four. And, then there's a Warner Shaw. Also twenty-four. No priors but a DWI, it looks like.

TERRY

You say Warner Shaw?

KATHY (V.O.)

That's right. You know him?

TERRY

Oh. No. No. Dispatch, we'll be on the lookout. Keep us updated. Over.

KATHY (V.O.)

Alright, Terry. And be cautious, would you? Your boy don't need somethin like this his first week, you know.

TERRY

Don't worry bout us, Kathy. Six-oh-one out.

Terry settles the mic on its holster.

He continues driving, thinking.

INT. PAWN SHOP - SUNSET

A scrawny man, ALLEN LAWSON (36), is in the midst of a debate with a Mexican PAWNBROKER (50s) over a wedding ring.

ALLEN

It's twenty-four carat. It is twenty-four carat!

PAWNBROKER

No. No, I can't see that. This is twelve carat, the most.

ALLEN

Look. I bought this for two thousand dollars. You hear me? Dolares. Dos mil dolares. Comprende?

PAWNBROKER

No. No way. I can give, three hundred, the most. Three hundred.

ALLEN

Look, Cholo, you wanna fuck me, you gotta pay me. One thousand is as low as I'm going. Uno de miles. Uno-de-miles!

PAWNBROKER

(Sighs)

Six-hundred. I can't do thousand. Six-hundred right now.

ALLEN

You fuck. Give me my ring- Give me my ring.

Allen reaches for it. Takes it. He turns. Heads for the door.

PAWNBROKER

Wait, wait. Hold on. Wait.

Allen stops. His hand slips unnoticed into his pocket.

It comes out with a duplicate ring.

He smirks, pulls back into character. Walks back to the window.

PAWNBROKER (CONT.)

Eight. Eight-hundred.

Allen laughs, shakes his head.

ALLEN

You don't get it, Mexi. One-thousand. Final offer.

PAWNBROKER

(Sighs)

Nine-fifty. I can't do more. I can't! Nine hundred is too much. I'm doing you a favor. Extra fifty for you. Go get high, get drunk. Whatever.

ALLEN

Great minds think alike. See, I knew we'd do some business together.

He hands over the fake duplicate. The Pawnbroker counts out \$950. He hands it over reluctantly.

PAWNBROKER

You robbing me blind.

ALLEN

Maybe. You have a good one. And don't overdo it on the fajitas, Taco John.

PAWNBROKER

Screw off, white trash. Go smoke outside with shirt off, get tan.

Allen pushes through the front entrance. A bell dings.

EXT. PAWNSHOP - SUNSET

Allen dances down the sidewalk, counting his money. He replaces the ring to his finger.

Bursting from the pawnshop entrance, the Pawnbroker chases after Allen with the duplicate in hand.

PAWNBROKER (CONT.)

Pedazo de mierda! Pedazo de mierda! (You piece of shit!) I'll find you! Piece of shit. I seen you before!

Winded, he slows his chase. He rests on his knees. Allen laughs as he slows his jog.

ALLEN

You'll find nothing. You couldn't-

Allen's eyes widen. He darts off the road.

The Pawnbroker looks behind him. There's a police cruiser heading his way.

He waves it down. It stops.

Inside are Terry and Clint.

TERRY

What's the problem-

PAWNBROKER

-That guy.

(points)

That guy sold me fake ring!

TERRY

Oh. I see. Well-

PAWNBROKER

-He switch real one with this one!

TERRY

Okay, sir. Calm down. Okay. Go back to your shop. We're on it.

PAWNBROKER

Beat him up real good, too.

TERRY

Of course, sir. Now, please, get off the road. Wait in your shop.

The pawnbroker backs up to the sidewalk. The cruiser peels out.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - SUNSET

Allen sprints through yard after yard. His clothes flapping with the wind, jumping fences, running through baby pools.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - SUNSET

Terry drives past each row of houses.

He and Clint scan the roads and yards for any sign.

They spot him.

The cruiser speeds a few rows down. Terry parks. They exit the vehicle.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - SUNSET

Terry and Clint hide around the corner of a house, awaiting Allen's arrival.

Allen sprints through a yard, knocking over a trashcan. He's winded and barely keeping his feet under him.

He runs between two houses before he's tackled forcibly by Terry.

ALLEN
(Breathing
heavily)
What are you doing!

TERRY
Hands behind your back!

ALLEN
You got the wrong guy!

Terry shoves Allen's face into the ground. Allen stops struggling.

TERRY
Hands-behind-your back.

Allen obliges. Terry cuffs him. Pulls him to his feet. Escorts him toward the cruiser.

ALLEN
What kind of world do we live in?
Man's on his afternoon jog and you
attack him? And arrest him? Shit.

Terry holds Allen's cuffs by one hand as he opens the cruiser door.

TERRY
(To Clint)
Pat him down.

Clint kneels to start at Allen's ankles.

Allen knees him in the face and pulls himself free from Terry. He escapes with a sprint, but he's just as soon brought back down by Terry.

Terry rests on top of Allen, his elbow between his shoulder blades.

TERRY (CONT.)
Yeah. I'd say he's guilty.

He brings Allen to his feet again.

TERRY (CONT.)
Try it again and I'm gonna shoot you. I don't got anything left in me.

He escorts Allen to the cruiser, lowers his head, closes the door.

TERRY (CONT.)
Like a Goddamn rabbit on speed.
Where were you?

Clint holds his nose in the air, blocking the bloodflow with two fingers.

CLINT
Looked like you had him.

INT. TOWBOAT - NIGHT

Lon is steering the barge through a thick fog.

He takes a hard swig from a flask.

EXT. TOWBOAT - NIGHT

On the deck, Warner stands enveloped in the fog.

He stares with wonder at his surroundings. He holds his hand in the air, far away from his face. He brings it closer... closer... closer.

He runs his fingers over his brow, his nose, as if foreign to him.

The barge slows to a still wake.

INT. TOWBOAT - NIGHT

Warner grabs his bag. He knocks loudly on a door.

WARNER

Get up!

Farris sleeps on the floor, Claremont on a bench.

Warner kicks Farris. Claremont rises.

Warner exits the towboat cabin as Randall exits from Lon's sleeping quarters, stretching, yawning.

The three boys get their bags and exit.

EXT. RIVER - NIGHT

Warner is already manning a crane.

He moves the metal storage containers to the trailers of four more semis.

The boys load their bags into the truck cabs.

EXT. RIVER - NIGHT (LATER)

The last of the containers are dropped into position.

Warner exits the crane. The boys are waiting next to their respective trucks.

Warner raises a finger to Randall.

He walks the plank back to the towboat. Lon stands in the doorway.

LON

You're off then?

WARNER

Yeah.

LON

You were always such a good boy.
Ain't bad I guess, but- Things
change, I suppose.

Warner nods. A patient pause.

WARNER

They sure do.

Warner draws his gun. He shoots Lon once in the chest, dropping him to the ground.

Warner stands over him.

WARNER (CONT.)

I was never a good boy, Lonny.

He shrugs, raises the gun half-heartedly and pulls the trigger.

He searches Lon's pockets, removes the money he'd given him earlier, and backs away.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - NIGHT

The patrol car is pulling out of the neighborhood.

Allen sits handcuffed in the back, his head against the wire separator.

Clint is sulking. His nostrils wide with dried blood. His nose bruised.

Terry handles the mic, holds the button.

TERRY

Six-oh-one to Dispatch. Six-oh-one to Dispatch. Over.

KATHY (V.O.)

Go ahead, six-oh-one.

TERRY

We've picked up a runner. We're bringing him in now.

KATHY (V.O.)

Affirmative, six-oh-one.

TERRY

Kathy, any word on the factory suspects?

KATHY (V.O.)

Not yet, Terry. The news stations are all over it already. I'm sure we'll get some call-ins soon. I'll let you know first thing.

TERRY

Alright. We'll be in there soon. Six-oh-one out.

He hangs the mic on its holder. Continues driving.

ALLEN

That factory thing-

CLINT

-Shut the fuck up! I've half a mind to ride back there and beat on you til we reach HQ.

ALLEN

Look, I'm real sorry about your face, buddy. I went a little nuts. I was a cornered animal, and I responded accordingly. But, that factory thing you was conversing about. That the steel factory she was talkin?

TERRY

Yeah. You see it on the news already?

ALLEN

Naw. What happened?

TERRY

Few fucknuts went trigger happy on the whole place. "Cornered animals."

ALLEN

Say I had some information about it-

CLINT

-About what?

ALLEN

Well, the steel plant and all. Say I had some useful information. You go easy on me?

TERRY

I suppose-

CLINT

-Far as I figure, if you have information about this crime and you withhold it, you're getting more time than you're already looking at, you fuck. Don't look to us for a handout. You won't get it.

TERRY

Clint, now calm it down, son. Yes, if you have *valuable* information for us and you're *willing* to cooperate, then we might be willing to work with you.

ALLEN

You're not fucking with me, are you?

TERRY

What's your name again?

ALLEN

Allen. Allen Lawson.

TERRY

Allen, I'm not fuckin with you. But if you don't cooperate, then Officer Phelps over here is right. We will be harder on you. We'll make it hard on you. So, you've got two choices. Tell us and be better off than you are now. Or, don't and be worse off.

ALLEN

Okay. Well, I might happen to know where those boys shot up the place are goin.

TERRY

That right?

ALLEN

Yeah. Here's the thing. I was at Sears the other day, right. You know, when they got robbed. It was one of those boys did the robbing.
(Trailing off)

I had just walked in, and I was just browsin for a new Sunday best, you know. And then, uh...

EXT. SEARS - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Allen is walking through the parking lot. A deep hood from his sweatshirt covers his head. He accidentally walks in front of a car passing over the crosswalk.

The driver honks. Allen waves an apology.

He walks toward the entrance and holds a door for two ELDERLY LADIES.

ELDERLY LADIES

Thank you/So sweet.

Allen gives a short nod. He proceeds inside.

INT. SEARS - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Allen passes the shoe department, the women's department, on to the main checkout.

He stands in line. Waits.

He steps to the register. His turn.

Slowly, he pulls a gun from his pocket.

He begins to raise it toward the CASHIER, but a shotgun shows just over his shoulder.

WARNER (O.S.)

(To cashier)

Empty the register. Fill the bag.

Allen looks to the man. He wears a white ski mask. Warner Saw.

Warner throws an empty duffle bag on the countertop and waits for her to fill it.

He looks at Allen. Checks him over.

He sees the gun. He laughs slightly.

WARNER (CONT.)

You're shittin me.

He puts the shotgun to Allen's neck.

WARNER (CONT.)

Drop it.

Allen is sweating. He seems on the verge of a panic.

ALLEN

No.

WARNER

What?

ALLEN

No. I- I need this money.

Warner laughs.

ALLEN (CONT.)
I'm not leaving- I'm not leaving
without this money!

Allen tenses, half waiting to be shot.

WARNER
You got fire. You-got-fire. Well,
go on then. You take this one.

As Allen points his gun at the cashier, Warner moves down to another register.

WARNER (CONT.)
Open it.

An OLDER CASHIER taps the button without question. The register opens with a *ding*.

Warner fills his pant and coat pockets.

At the other register, the Cashier has stuffed the money into the sack. Allen takes it and backs out with Warner.

Warner exits first. Allen backs out behind him.

EXT. SEARS - DAY (FLASHBACK)

They both run into the parking lot.

Allen takes a look in the sack.

ALLEN
Aw, man! Yes! YES!

Allen runs toward his car.

WARNER
Whoa, now! Get back over here!

He aims his shotgun at Allen.

ALLEN
Ah, what are you doing? Come on.
What are you doin! You're gonna
get us caught, Goddamnit!

WARNER
That's my money you got there.
Toss it over. Go on. Toss it here.

Allen reluctantly swings it to him.

WARNER (CONT.)

Now, you need money, I got a job for you. You want money, right?

ALLEN

I'd like that money right there, yeah.

WARNER

I got a job I'm gone need more guys for. Get you a lot more than this. You want in, meet me at Tucky's at nine.

ALLEN

How much?

WARNER

Never enough... Is it Allen?

ALLEN

How do you-

Sirens echo in the distance.

WARNER

Bout that time.

Warner walks to his truck. Allen retreats to his car.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - NIGHT

Allen is finishing his explanation to Terry.

ALLEN

Then he took off in his truck.

TERRY

He *forced* you to help him?

ALLEN

If you consider holding a shotgun to my head being forced, then yes, I'd say he forced me. I don't know about you.

TERRY

You're sure it was Warner Shaw?

ALLEN

Yeah, I'm sure. I met him at Tucky's like he said, and all he wanted me to do was meet him out at this old house tonight.

TERRY

What time?

ALLEN

Not long. Ten o'clock.

TERRY

Anything else?

ALLEN

No. I don't think. Said he'd let me know more tonight. You think you can get me out of this, Officer? I really didn't know that ring was fake. I'll help you as much as I can. Anything you need.

TERRY

Allen, I think we can work something out. But you're going to have to keep your date tonight.

ALLEN

Yeah? How am I gonna do that?

TERRY

First off, what is he expecting from you?

EXT. STOCKYARD - NIGHT

The four trucks pull into a waterfront stockyard.

They stop. Warner exits the lead truck.

He meets with a STOCKYARD EMPLOYEE. He hands him a portion of the same wad of cash he had given and taken from Lon.

He pats him on the back, climbs back into the truck.

They continue through the miles of stacked storage containers.

They stop. One-by-one, their steel containers are raised by crane and stacked with one another.

They park the semis nearby, along side a few others, and walk back toward the containers.

WARNER

Check the load.

He jogs back to his semi, climbs in the door, retrieves something, pockets it, walks back.

Standing in front of the locked door to one of the

containers, Claremont looks to Warner.

Warner tosses a key to him. Claremont opens the lock, and he and Farris swing the doors open. They check over the surface of the showing wheels.

Randall steps back by Warner.

CLAREMONT

Looks good to me.

He and Farris turn to Warner. He's just finished screwing a silencer to his gun.

FARRIS

Aw! The fuck, War? What the fuck!

Claremont draws his weapon. Warner drops him with one shot. He aims at Farris. He's drawing for his gun, but he doesn't have it.

WARNER

Told you to keep it on you, didn't I?

One to the chest. One in the head.

Claremont is still moving, reaching for his gun that has fallen into the open storage container. Blood is puddling underneath him.

WARNER (CONT.)

You never liked me, did you Claremont?

CLAREMONT

Naw. I never did.

WARNER

I suppose that's justified. Never really liked you much neither.

He bends down beside Claremont, picks up his gun. Warner holsters it in his belt.

WARNER (CONT.)

Tell me, was it because of my personality, or did you know I was fuckin your wife?

Claremont's eyes fade. He's passed.

WARNER (CONT.)

Always thought you knew. But then,
I guess I never cared much. I'll
send her a little of your share.
She's a good woman. You just
didn't see it.

He lifts Claremont's upper body and drags him into the storage container. Then, he helps Randall raise Farris and toss him on top of Claremont's corpse.

Warner picks up the dropped lock and key, and replaces it to the closed container doors. He locks up, puts his silencer away, and he and Randall walk back to his semi.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - NIGHT

Clint is cleaning the excess blood from his nostrils. He blows his nose profusely into a cloth.

Terry picks up the mic, holds the button.

TERRY

Six-oh-one to Dispatch.

KATHY (V.O.)

Go ahead, Terry.

TERRY

Dispatch, well, this is a little embarrassing. But we've just lost our runner. Over.

Allen is still seated in the back.

KATHY (V.O.)

Lost him? How'd you manage that?

TERRY

Ah. Guy was bitching a storm, so we let him piss and he kicked Clint and ran. Must be a Goddamn track star.

KATHY (V.O.)

Oh, no. Is Clint okay? Do you need backup?

CLINT

What are you-

Terry ignores Clint, continues to Kathy.

TERRY

(Into mic)

- No, no. He's fine. We're fine. We're patrolling the area. Perp should be within a mile of the Interstate exit.

KATHY (V.O.)

Okay. I'll call it in. What's the guys ID?

TERRY

Well. We've got a problem there, Dispatch. He got his ID from Clint in the rustle. I'm just going off memory here, but I think his name's Clark or Grant or-

CLINT

-What are you doing?

Terry lets off the button.

TERRY

Shut up.

He holds it again.

TERRY (CONT.)

(Into mic)

I'm not sure. I think his last name's Parker, though. But don't hold me to it. He's about six-three, one-ninety, gray hair, mid-forties.

KATHY (V.O.)

Okay. Sounds like he really did a number on you two. I'm calling it in right now. Is he armed?

TERRY

No, no. Don't seem like the criminal type. He's just desperate.

KATHY (V.O.)

Okay. Well you might think about getting Clint to the hospital.

TERRY

He'll be fine. Get back to us with updates.

KATHY (V.O.)

Okay. I'll let you know as it comes in.

Terry replaces the mic.

CLINT

What are you doing? Was that a joke?

TERRY

Settle down. If we're gonna take Allen here to this meet-up tonight, HQ can't expect us to bring him in.

CLINT

Why does that matter? If he's got a lead, we can take him in and report it same time.

TERRY

Yeah. We could. But you want to report this information and let somebody else make the bust? Or you want to nail these guys ourselves?

Clint thinks.

TERRY (CONT.)

We get these guys your first week on the force, and your career's set, son. You understand that? You'll never get a chance like this again.

CLINT

Right. Right. Okay.

He takes a deep, shaky breath.

CLINT (CONT.)

Okay.

EXT. ROADSIDE DINER - NIGHT

The semi is pulling into a gravel parking lot next to a rundown diner.

Warner and Randall climb down from the truck cab. No weapons, no masks.

They enter the restaurant.

INT. ROADSIDE DINER - NIGHT

Inside, a few TRUCKERS sit at the counter, a BLACK COUPLE in a booth, and a FATHER with TWO SONS.

The door announces Warner and Randall's entrance.

The boys stand, scanning the room. The customers' eyes assault them. With their untamed hair, dirty clothes, menacing stares, Warner and Randall stand out amongst the roughest of strangers.

They take their seat at the counter, keeping to themselves.

Randall waves down a waitress (late 20s). Her nametag reads TESSA.

RANDALL

Two beers.

TESSA

Anything else?

WARNER

Just the two.

Warner stands, walks to the restroom.

INT. DINER BATHROOM - NIGHT

Warner attempts to comb his hair with his fingers. It's wildly unkept. He runs water over his hands and wets his mane to a manageable state.

He looks himself over in the mirror. A speck of blood shows on his upper chest. He licks his finger and rubs over it. It smudges a little. No real change. He wets his hand, wipes it hard.

He stares himself down. An unblinking, unshakeable stare.

He gathers himself. Exits.

INT. ROADSIDE DINER - NIGHT

Retaking his stool, Warner drinks from his beer.

RANDALL

You good?

Warner nods.

Tessa wipes down the counter as two truckers leave an inconsiderate tip.

TESSA
 (To Warner)
 You eat?

WARNER
 What's that?

TESSA
 You eat? Food?

WARNER
 Aw. No. I'm alright.

She nods, finishes drying the counter, starts off to the back.

WARNER (CONT.)
 You have pie?

TESSA
 Excuse me?

WARNER
 You got pie?

TESSA
 Oh. Cherry.

WARNER
 I'll take a piece a that.

TESSA
 Sure thing.

At a booth, a father is scolding one of his sons.

Tessa notices. Nothing new. She cuts a sliver of cherry pie and sets it on the counter before Warner.

TESSA (CONT.)
 Enjoy.

WARNER
 You like birds?

TESSA
 What? Do I like-

WARNER
 -Birds.

TESSA
 Birds? Um. Yes. I guess.

He nods. Takes a bite.

She waits for more. Turns.

WARNER
Big or small?

Another bite.

TESSA
Small?

WARNER
Yeah. Small's nice.

TESSA
Cardinals are pretty.

WARNER
They are. You ever seen a Scarlet
Tanager?

TESSA
A what?

She smiles.

The father is now getting more physical with his sons.

Warner and Tessa pay no mind.

WARNER
Scarlet Tanager. Looks a lot like
a Cardinal. Only its got black
wings.

TESSA
I'm not sure I've seen one before.
Sounds pretty though. I do like
pretty birds.

WARNER
It is. You probably haven't seen
one cause they keep to their own
mostly. They keep to deep forests,
high up in trees. Not out in the
open like a lot of species.

Tessa is leaning on the counter, caught up with Warner.

TESSA
Sounds lonely.

WARNER

Maybe. But there's peace in loneliness. They live for themselves. They keep to themselves.

TESSA

Sounds like a nice bird. And it looks like a Cardinal, you said?

WARNER

Shoot. Better than a Cardinal.

TESSA

Well. I think I like your bird now. What's it called again?

WARNER

Tanager. The Scarlet Tanager.

TESSA

Well. If ever somebody asks me what my favorite bird is, I'm gonna tell them it's a Scarlet Tanager Mr.- Well, what's your name?

WARNER

Warner.

TESSA

Well, Mr. Warner. My favorite bird is now a Scarlet Tanager. You don't mind me taking your bird, do you?

WARNER

Not at all, Misses... Tessa. There a Mr. Tessa?

TESSA

Aw. Not anymore. No siry-bob.

The father pushes one of his sons toward the door so hard he falls to the floor. He pulls the other by the arm.

FATHER

Get your fucking ass up. Get up! Out to the car. Both of you. Soft as they come. Go!

His sons run outside crying.

He leaves money for their meal. Probably no tip. He leaves.

Warner shakes his head. He might not like it, but he can

relate.

WARNER

Well. You have a nice night Ms.
Tessa.

TESSA

Hold on, now. How was the pie?

Warner is counting out an excessive amount of money.

WARNER

Oh. It was... cherry.

He takes one last drink from his beer, and places a thick stack of money under the empty bottle.

Randall tips his cap.

They exit.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - NIGHT

Terry yawns as Clint sleeps uncomfortably beside him. In the back, Allen is stretched out, sleeping deeply.

KATHY (V.O.)

Dispatch to six-oh-one. Dispatch
to six-oh-one. Over.

Terry looks to the CB radio, then to the road.

KATHY (V.O.) (CONT.)

Dispatch to six-oh-one. Dispatch
to six-oh-

Terry switches the CB off. He looks at Clint. Still sleeping.

Terry yawns again.

EXT. ROADSIDE DINER - NIGHT

Inside the semi cab, Warner and Randall load their weapons.

The black couple is now leaving the diner. They walk around the side of the building, around Warner's truck, and toward their car.

As the man opens the driver's door, Warner and Randall hold their guns to them.

WARNER

Sorry folks. But we're gone need a ride.

BLACK WOMAN

Oh! Please. Please, don't-

RANDALL

-Shh.

WARNER

We're not gonna hurt you. Just get in the car, and take us where I tell you. Get in. Get. In.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

The couple enters their vehicle.

Warner and Randall sit in the backseat, still pointing their weapons to the couple.

WARNER

Go on. Drive.

The man is shaky, hyperventilating. Warner sighs.

WARNER (CONT.)

For fucksake. I'm not gonna hurt you. You hear me? Just drive the fuckin car. Start her up. Go ahead. Start her up.

Randall is now blowing in the woman's left ear.

The man turns the key. It starts.

WARNER (CONT.)

Put her in gear. Come on, now. Stay with me. Put it in gear.

The man pulls the gearshift to drive.

WARNER (CONT.)

Alright. Now, let's get outta the parkin lot. And turn right.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

Terry is stirring his coffee. He pours some creamer, snaps on the lid, walks toward the counter. He stops, looks over the candy shelves, grabs a candy bar.

At the counter, the GAS STATION CASHIER is watching a small portable television.

THE TV SCREEN

shows a nearly inaudible newscast. An aerial shot of the steel plant is followed by mugshots of Claremont and Warner and yearbook pictures of Farris and Randall.

Terry clears his throat. The cashier snaps to.

CASHIER

That all for you?

TERRY

Yeah. What's the news?

CASHIER

Something bad at some factory.

TERRY

Aw. Yeah? Anything new?

CASHIER

All the same. Every channel. Same story over and over.

TERRY

Ah, they'll drive it into the ground. Big story.

Cashier nods.

CASHIER

Three twenty-three.

Terry counts out four from his wallet, hands it over, takes his change.

TERRY

Have a good one.

The cashier nods passively. He returns to the television.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

The black couple and the two boys are pulling onto a small gravel driveway. Long and dark, seemingly set away from the rest of the world.

WARNER

Stop here. Stop.

The car slows to a stop.

WARNER (CONT.)

Get out. Both a you.

BLACK MAN
We like white people.

WARNER
What?

BLACK MAN
We like white-

WARNER
-Do I like racist to you?

BLACK MAN
I don't know-

WARNER
-Do I look racist, Randall?

Randall shakes his head, shrugs.

WARNER (CONT.)
I ain't racist. I am not a racist.
What's your name?

BLACK MAN
Howard. How-

WARNER
-Howard, I like blacks. You hear
me?

HOWARD
Yes.

WARNER
Good. I'm not a racist. Now get
out of the vehicle, Howard.

HOWARD
You're not going to hurt us?

WARNER
Is that what I said?

HOWARD
Yes.

WARNER
Then I'm not gone hurt you. Get
out. Stand in the grass. I ain't
gonna hurt you.

The couple exits their vehicle. They stand to the right in
the overgrown grass.

Warner and Randall open their doors. Warner motions for

Randall to stay.

Randall closes his door.

Warner exits, stretches. His gun hangs loosely from his hand. The silencer still attached.

WARNER (CONT.)

This won't hurt a bit.

-tack-

One shot to the man's head.

BLACK WOMAN

Oh! No, please-

Another muffled shot. The woman falls, a bullet hole through her forehead.

Warner stands a moment. He looks around. No one. Nothing. Anywhere.

WARNER

Really shouldn't be able to buy these.

He opens the driver's door, seats himself behind the wheel, and shuts the door.

The car rolls its way up the drive, into the night.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - NIGHT

Terry is sipping from his paper coffee cup. Clint is sleeping in a new position. Allen is still out.

Terry pulls his candy bar to the steering wheel, attempting to rip it open with both hands. Won't work. He manages to tear it open with his teeth. He takes a big bite, another sip of coffee.

-doo doop-

The cruiser hits a deep pothole, spilling some of the coffee on Terry's lap and rousing both Clint and Allen in confusion.

TERRY

Ah, fuck! Shit. Sorry. Sorry. You alright? Shit.

CLINT

What the hell was that?

TERRY
 Pothole I guess. Get me some
 napkins.

He points to the glove box. Clint pulls some out, gives them
 to his dad.

ALLEN
 Big fucking pothole, huh?

Terry pats himself down the best he can.

TERRY
 Big enough.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

The car pulls up near a farmhouse in the distance. Warner
 clicks the highbeams on. Waits.

The porchlight turns on, an OLD WOMAN (60s) exits the front
 door in her nightgown.

She shields her eyes from the light, attempting to see into
 the car.

Warner exits the car, closes the door, moves himself in
 front of the headlights. He stands enveloped in the light. A
 silhouette, a shadow of a man.

Warner motions toward the car. Inside, Randall pulls the
 highbeams down, turns the car off.

Randall begins to exit. Warner motions for him to stay.

Warner walks slowly toward the house.

OLD WOMAN
 You lost?

Warner looks around, looks up, thinks.

WARNER
 Yeah.

OLD WOMAN
 Is that- Warner? Little Warner
 Shaw?

WARNER
 Yeah.

OLD WOMAN

Well. Come in. Come on in. What are you doing out here?

WARNER

I'd just as soon stay outside, ma'am.

OLD WOMAN

Oh. Okay. Gosh, how you've grown. You were so small in highschool. Won't you come in? Come on.

WARNER

Still don't watch TV, do you?

OLD WOMAN

No. You remember my stance on that. Now come on. You come inside.

WARNER

Naw. No, it gets too... messy.

He pulls the gun from his waistband, cocks it.

-tack-

She falls awkwardly to the porch floor.

Warner walks casually forward, up the steps. He sits on the porch next to her.

Petting her hair, he sets the gun on the warped wooden planks as blood puddles from the wound in her torso.

WARNER (CONT.)

Sh. Sh. You deserve this. You deserve it. Shh.

Blood gurgles up her throat.

WARNER (CONT.)

You were such a bitch, Ms. You just naturally that way, or you got a reason for it?

She moves her lips, trying to say something, finding a wet mess where her voice might be.

WARNER (CONT.)

Shoot. I didn't mean to hit you that bad. You always liked to talk. Sure you got a hellstorm to say right about now. Don't you?

(MORE)

WARNER (CONT'D)

Well. I'll just do the talking for now, Ms.

He leans close to her face.

WARNER (CONT.)

There's some people in this world deserve to go out softly. Quick. You know how you told me at the end's going to be Judgement Day? All that "your end will reflect how you lived your life" and so on, so forth? Well, Ms. Lakey, this is yours. Judgement Day. Your end will reflect your life. You might not killed people, or might not think you hurt no one. But you did. You hurt little kids like me, didn't know who they was, what they were doing. You're not a good person. No. No you ain't. So. I really hope this has hurt quite a bit, Ms. I do. But...

Warner turns the gun to point at her head.

WARNER (CONT.)

... I don't have a lotta time to sit here and watch you fade. So. I'd like to say this ain't personal. But it is.

The gun still laying on the porch, Warner squeezes the trigger slowly.

-tack-

He stands, holsters the weapon. He motions to Randall to move the car around back. Randall nods, drives the car slowly around the house.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - NIGHT

Clint and Allen are now well awake. Terry is pulling on his pants, airing them out.

ALLEN

I think this is the last gas station before we get to the house.

TERRY

Alright, then.

Terry turns on the cruiser's sirens and pulls into the

convenience store. He parks behind a CUSTOMER's new car. He gets out.

The customer stops, still slurping from his fountain drink.

TERRY (CONT.)

Sir. I'm gonna need to confiscate your vehicle. I'm sorry.

CUSTOMER

What? I just bought it. I just filled it full-

TERRY

-I'm sorry, sir. You'll be compensated. She's in good hands. I promise.

Terry opens the back door to the cruiser. Allen gets out. Terry uncuffs him.

TERRY (CONT.)

You're driving.

CUSTOMER

Wait. Wait. Is that guy under arrest? Is he a criminal-

TERRY

-Sir! Please! Of course not. Now, step back and hand me your keys. Please.

He does so reluctantly. Terry tosses them to Allen, and motions for Clint to roll down his window.

TERRY (CONT.)

You okay following behind?

CLINT

Yeah.

Clint exits the cruiser. He moves himself to the driver's seat.

Allen sits behind the wheel of the new car as Terry seats himself in the passenger seat.

The new car pulls out of the gas station, the cruiser in tow.

INT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Dark. Nearly black. Fewer streams of light through the windows than a dull flashlight.

Warner and Randall are combing the walls for a lightswitch.

RANDALL

The fuck? Woman a bat or something? She ain't a vampire, is she? Damn. Damn! You got her in the heart, didn't you?

The lights come on. Warner's hand is on the switch.

WARNER

You still scared of that shit?

RANDALL

I'm not scared-

Warner flips the light back off.

WARNER

-Boowahahahaha!

RANDALL

Cut that shit, War!

Warner flips the lights on.

WARNER

Grown man afraid of blood-suckin dead people.

RANDALL

Undead. *Undead* people.

WARNER

You remember what I told you?

Warner is combing the tops of shelves and cabinets.

WARNER (CONT.)

You remember?

RANDALL

Yeah.

WARNER

What's it I said?

RANDALL

Vampires aren't real.

WARNER

No. Well, yeah. But what else did I say? What're they afraid of?

RANDALL

Aw. Yeah. Werewolves.

WARNER

Wolves. Right.

Warner finds a shotgun behind an overgrown plant. He shakes his head. Only Ms. Lakey.

WARNER (CONT.)

If vampires were real. And I ain't for a second sayin they are.

He checks the shotgun. Not loaded. He rummages drawers and shelves for ammo.

WARNER (CONT.)

But if they was, they wouldn't be around here. Too many wolves in these parts, Rand.

RANDALL

Aw. Right. You know, we could be werewolves. Really. What makes a wolf? Wolves stay together. And they take what they want. Right? Only rules they got is between themselves. That's us, War. Couple a wolves.

WARNER

Shoot. I know I got...

He finds a box of shells in a drawer behind a tray of silverware.

He shakes his head again. Crazy old bat.

WARNER (CONT.)

...Now, I know I got some screws loose. And I ain't the straightest arrow by any means. But you're the most crooked arrow a the bunch, Rand. You really are crazy, you fuck.

Warner cocks the shotgun, heads for the door.

RANDALL

Crazy like a wolf.

He howls. A penetrating, controlled cry in the night.

Elsewhere, wolves answer with their own howls. An understanding between beasts.

EXT. FARMHOUSE DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

The new car and cruiser pull onto the gravel drive. They stop.

Terry sticks his head out the window.

TERRY
(To Clint)
Park it off the road! In the
grass.

Clint pulls into the grass, between two trees. Turns the ignition off, the headlights recede.

The cruiser is enveloped in the night.

Clint emerges from the darkness with his own shotgun.

He enters the backseat of the new car.

Terry removes himself from the front, sits in the back as well.

INT. NEW CAR - NIGHT

Terry closes his door. Clint hands him the shotgun.

CLINT
Figure we might need it.

Terry checks the shaft. Clint hands him a box of shells.

Terry loads it.

TERRY
Hope not.

Allen drives slowly up the drive.

Terry and Clint sink behind the front seats, sufficiently hidden.

TERRY (CONT.)
Alright, Allen. When we get up here, do what he wants. Act like we're not here. Once you're in the house, we'll cover the exits. When you're leaving try to walk *behind* them. So they're the first out.

ALLEN

I'll try. But this guy isn't really flexible, if you know what I mean. You sure you can get him? He figures out you're here, I'm dead, Officer.

TERRY

Don't worry. Do your part, we'll do ours. We'll get him. Just drive on up. Act casual.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

The car stops. Allen exits. He walks to the front door. He knocks, waits.

The door opens. Allen enters.

Slowly, Terry and Clint exit the car. Terry cocks the shotgun, waves Clint to take the back.

As Terry softly moves up the porch steps, Clint disappears around the house.

Terry finds a safe spot between the front door and a window. He waits, clutching the shotgun tight.

He waits... waits... waits.

A clearing of clouds allows moonlight to illuminate Ms. Lakey's blood on the porch. Terry's eyes widen.

-BOOM-

A shot from the back. More shots. Then silence.

Terry makes his way around the house, desperation pushing him along.

He turns the corner. A gun pushes firmly to the back of his head.

RANDALL

Hand me the butt of the gun.

TERRY

Wait, now-

RANDALL

-Hand it here!

TERRY

Just hold on now, son.

RANDALL

-Three... two...

Terry hands over the shotgun. Randall pushes and pulls him back toward the front of the house.

RANDALL (CONT.)

Move!

At the front, Warner is dragging Clint's limp body toward the cruiser.

WARNER

Hello there, Ocifer. I swear, I've done nothin' wrong. Swear it on the Bible.

TERRY

Jesus. Clint.

WARNER

Now, Terry. You really think I'd murder your son? Without you here to watch, that is.

TERRY

Please, son. Let him-

WARNER

-I'm not your son! I'm no one's son. You took my father from me. You took my *mother* from me!

TERRY

I'm sorry. I- Your father was-

WARNER

-A bad man! Yes. He was. Only mistake you made was leavin' me behind, Terry. One little boy. What trouble could he be? Well, Officer. Ask yourself now.

TERRY

(To Allen)

What'd you do?

ALLEN

What I was told. I really am sorry, Officer Phelps. I didn't know anyone would be hurt.

Terry looks him over. Allen looks him back. He bursts into laughter.

ALLEN (CONT.)
Damn I'm a good liar! Shit!

INT. TUCKY'S BAR - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Warner and Allen sit at a table.

WARNER
Beer?

Allen nods. Warner waves to the BARTENDER.

WARNER (CONT.)
So you want to make money?

ALLEN
How much are we talking?

WARNER
For you part? Round a quarter-
million.

ALLEN
A quarter mill-

WARNER
-Little more if you do good.

ALLEN
What do I have to do?

WARNER
Just a little con. You ever
scammed anyone?

ALLEN
Yeah. Well. I run some wedding
ring bit at pawnshops sometimes-
What that got to do with it?

WARNER
Wedding ring? Cold-blooded. I just
need you to run a con and drag
some old boys to meet me after.

ALLEN
Who?

The bartender places a fresh glass of beer before Allen.

Allen nods, the bartender retreats. Allen takes a sip.

WARNER
Couple a cops.

ALLEN

Naw. I can't deal with no cops,
brother. I can-

WARNER

-We ain't brothers. And you don't
gotta do nothin but tell em you
know where I'm gonna be. The
rest'll take care of itself.

ALLEN

I don't know. I don't want to get
dragged into something I can't get
out of.

WARNER

You're already in it, Allen. You
ain't got a choice. You can go
ahead and play your part, make a
lot of money. Or you can take your
chances makin it home safe. It's
your life.

Allen thinks, takes a long drink from his glass.

ALLEN

How do I get hooked up with these
cops?

EXT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

ALLEN

No hard feelings, Terry? Money'll
drive a man to do desperate
things.

TERRY

You got no idea.

WARNER

(To Allen)

Water.

Allen throws him a bottled water. Warner pours most of it on
Clint, drinks the rest.

Clint comes to.

CLINT

Dad?

TERRY

I'm here, Clint. Hang on, son.
You'll be alright.

WARNER

Shit. Terry here ain't a bad liar
neither, is he? What do you think,
Allen?

ALLEN

Not half bad.

WARNER

Well. Seein as we got two good
liars here. Reckon we get rid of
one. What do you think, Allen?

ALLEN

Sounds like the right idea to me.

WARNER

Glad you agree.

Warner points his gun to Allen, and knocks him against the
house with a muffled shot to the shoulder.

Allen sways toward the side of the porch.

Warner climbs the steps, holsters his gun, shotgun still in
hand.

WARNER (CONT.)

Oh, quit your fuckin whining! That
the way you wanna go out?

He cocks the shotgun.

ALLEN

Please, Warner! I have a family.
You can keep the money! You can
keep the-

-BOOM-

The force propels Allen over the porch banister, into the
night.

WARNER

I was plannin on it.

He walks down to the first step, sits.

WARNER (CONT.)

In-evita-bility. You understand,
Terry?

TERRY

Should I?

WARNER

E-labor-ation. What we got here is a situation of inevitability. You know what's comin. Question is... How? When? Why? Inside that thick fuckin skull of yours you're thinkin... How- probably this gun right here. When- hell...

He points the gun at Clint.

WARNER (CONT.)

... Now.

He lowers it.

WARNER (CONT.)

No. Soon. Why- now that's the question of your life. Ain't it, Terry? Why is this happening? Why- oh-why didn't I end that boy as a child?

EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

From the porch, YOUNG WARNER (7) watches his parents shot to death as they exit their vehicle.

WARNER (V.O.) (CONT.)

Just a hair.

A bullet misses his father and passes Warner's right shoulder, embedding itself into the dilapidated aluminum siding.

WARNER (V.O.) (CONT.)

Just a hair to the right and you and your boy here'd be cruising about town.

Beyond his victim's still vehicle, YOUNG TERRY PHELPS (now 28) lowers his smoking weapon.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Warner is looking into the far reaches of the night, his past a distant memory.

WARNER (CONT.)

Could be eating pasturized beef and sedating your fat fucking selves with liquid sugar.

He stands.

WARNER (CONT.)

Now that's something to be
desired. Good ole' Americana.

He lumbers toward Clint.

TERRY

I didn't have a choice, Warner.
They drew on me. I'm sorry they
passed. I am. But if it hadn't
happened, they might've hurt
someone. Maybe you. Probably me
and anyone else in their way.

Warner fixates on Terry. A collective negotiation with one
look.

WARNER

Now.

Warner leans down to Clint. Still fixated on Terry, he
shields himself from the spatter with one hand and triggers
Clint's end with the other.

-tack-

His stare so committed, the recoil can't even break it. An
unblinking, unflinching commital to destruction.

For Terry, the world has slowed to a halt. In fluidly slow
motions, Warner hauls Clint's body to the trunk of the
police cruiser, he aids Randall in removing Terry's uniform,
and forcefully guides the butt of the gun to Terry's head.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - NIGHT (LATER)

Now driving, Warner beats on the wire seperator.

Terry stirs to a wake. Randall ignores it, continues trying
to sleep.

Warner and Randall are now wearing Terry and Clint's police
uniforms.

WARNER

Just making sure you ain't dead
yet.

TERRY

Not yet I ain't.

Terry looks through a window. The world refracts through
like a moving painting. Ever-distant, ever-changing.

The road hums a steady tune against the tires. A lullaby for
a sleeping giant riding passenger.

TERRY (CONT.)

You gone some terrible kind a wrong. You know that?

WARNER

I know. I know that's the truth for you. I know I don't see the world like most. But then I ain't like most, am I?

TERRY

No. You're not.

WARNER

Good never wins out, Terry. You should learn that. It never does. Can't.

Terry is fixed on the passing roadside, the shifting trees, the inching of the mountainsides on the horizon. The world he once knew, changed. A new foreign landscape whirls about him.

TERRY

There ain't no call for your kind a evil. You know that?

WARNER

Survival of the fittest, Terry. I'm not a bad man. There is no bad. Or good. There just... is. Life-Life wasn't meant to be what we've made it. In this world, the *least* fit develop laws to *tame* the rest. You can't survive among the strong, develop a system of rules that favor the weak. That's our world. That is this world, Terry. It's controlled by the weak.

TERRY

Some of the greatest American leaders were veterans. Founding Fathers were brave men. Made a system for freedom. "Pursuit of happiness." You ain't got nothin together up there, do you? That head a yours is a dirty flood of false truths, Warner. You ain't got-

WARNER

-Naw. See, that's where we differ, Terry. You don't get it. You live in this world, just like everybody else. This world that's painted around you with a Goddamn crayon to keep you ignorant and entertained. You think I'm "bad," that I'm "corrupt." Look at your government, Officer. The "bad" are the ones sittin in their silk drawers and penny loafers. Up in their fat cat suites, their ivory towers, collecting the spoils of the working class. All the world, all of civilization, works too much and makes too Goddamn little so the top six percent can pad their pockets, getting richer than any man should ever be. That's the real crime, Terry. My crimes are forced. Either I stay a blind slave, or break the Goddamn chains and take what doesn't belong in their hands. Survival of the fittest. It's nature on the simplest level. It's the way the world was intended to be for all living things. The way-of-the world.

TERRY

And all those people? Your coworkers. Fathers and sons.

WARNER

Slaves. Walking blindly through life. Never thinking. Never questioning. Too busy watching their feet walk for reasons they didn't understand. Same as your boy.

TERRY

He never did nothing wrong.

WARNER

Exactly.

TERRY

He didn't deserve it! He was a good kid, you fuck! A bright fuckin future.

Terry spits at Warner through the screen.

Warner pounds the screen behind him.

WARNER

Nobody. Deserves. Nothing! You don't fucking see it, do you? Nobody *deserves* anything. Might think they do, but that's just it. You don't get nothing in this life cause you deserve it. You take it. There is no morality. No spirituality. There's desire, there's need, and the question a whether you got the force to take it.

TERRY

You're a Goddamn murderer.

WARNER

I never murdered nobody. You call it murder cause that's how your world's defined it. You call it murder when a bear mauls a hunter shot its cub? Or kills over food? No. That's instinct. But a *person* kills and it's murder. That's what we humans do, Terry. We deny our instincts. Sex is bad, greed is bad, death is bad. No! It's nature. It's instinct. It's a way-of-life. Of course what I done looks wrong to you. Looks wrong to everybody. It's savage to you. But all I done is open the window out to the real world for a moment. One short moment. And the real world is savage, Terry. It has to be. Life is savage. We are savage.

TERRY

You're insane, Warner.

WARNER

Insane? "Insane." There is no insanity. There just... is. There's you. There's me. There's Randall here. There was your boy. There were a lot of people working at that plant. There is and there ain't. What you call "sane," I call false ideals. We are what we are, Terry. Don't put a Goddamn name to it.

Warner resides his focus to the road. His head swirling, his heart beating.

WARNER (CONT.)

Be smart to get some rest. I got no intentions of going easy on you, you fuck.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

A blue and white flashing on the shoulder of a busy highway.

SHERIFF MANITOW (early 50s) is talking with an OLD WOMAN (late 70s) behind her sloppily parked vehicle.

MANITOW

Ma'am, really you don't need to be so close to the road. You can call into the station if you have a tip. Or follow me back if you'd like.

OLD WOMAN

I saw them right there.

MANITOW

Middle of this busy highway?

OLD WOMAN

Saw four semis like the ones you said you was looking for on the news. Four right back to back. Different looking fronts.

MANITOW

They look like half the truck cab was missing?

OLD WOMAN

Yeah. Just didn't look right. I knew those was the ones when I saw you on the news. Knew I had to show you personally.

MANITOW

We surely do appreciate it, ma'am. But I do have to ask you to return to your vehicle. Can't have an incident out here.

OLD WOMAN

They was heading that way.

MANITOW

Same way as the rest of traffic. Alright. Okay, that sure does help. Now, please ma'am you've aided this investigation more than

(MORE)

MANITOW (CONT'D)
 you know. If you'll return to your
 vehicle it would help us even
 more.

OLD WOMAN
 Is there a reward?

MANITOW
 Oh. Naw-

OLD WOMAN
 -My daughter-in-law said there
 might be one. Figured I'd help my
 chances coming all the way down
 here. Sure am tired now.

MANITOW
 There's just not much of a
 precedence for rewards on this
 sort of case-

OLD WOMAN
 -Feel so tired I could faint.
 Might be hard to drive home,
 really.

Manitow shakes his head, reluctantly pulls his wallet.
 Sighs.

MANITOW
 Now that you mention it, we did
 establish a small reward for tips.

He counts through some wrinkled, sweaty bills.

MANITOW (CONT.)
 How does ten- sixteen dollars
 sound?

She takes the money.

OLD WOMAN
 Thank you.

She walks steadily to her car.

OLD WOMAN (CONT.)
 Good luck finding those crooked
 mother-

She slams her door. Starts the car. Drives wrecklessly into
 traffic.

Manitow returns to his cruiser. He picks up the CB mic.

MANITOW
Six-eleven to Dispatch.

KATHY (V.O.)
Go ahead, six-eleven.

MANITOW
Got a lead. Mrs... Breshear says
she saw the suspects headed south
down the highway.

He releases the button. Thinks. Holds it again.

MANITOW (CONT.)
Hey, isn't there a big shipyard
two counties down?

KATHY (V.O.)
Believe so. Meant for river barges
though.

MANITOW
Yeah. Still. Think I'll check that
out. Any word from Terry and
Clint?

KATHY (V.O.)
No. Still no response. I think we
should be worried, Sheriff.

MANITOW
Worry won't do them no good,
Kathy. Just keep trying, will you?
Terry's a good cop. He'll turn up.

KATHY (V.O.)
'Kay, Sherrif. Keep you up to date
as it comes.

Manitow returns the mic to its holster.

He watches the cars speed past faster than he remembered.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

In the darkness, a body pulls itself into the light.

Allen moans in pain.

He finds hold on the porch, muscles himself up.

He holds his side closely.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - NIGHT

The cruiser pulls into a gas station. Same one Terry bought candy and coffee at before.

WARNER
(To Randall)
Want anything?

RANDALL
Coke. Chips maybe.

WARNER
(To Terry)
What about you?

Terry ignores him.

WARNER (CONT.)
You got a eat something. Don't
want you dyin of somethin natural.
You like hot dogs?

No answer.

WARNER (CONT.)
Shit. Everybody likes hot dogs.

He exits the vehicle. Enters the store.

INT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

Warner passes the counter, eyes the cashier. He's still watching the small television.

Warner grabs two waters and a Coke.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - NIGHT

Terry notices the cashier through the store windows.

TERRY
What's your name, son?

RANDALL
I ain't talkin to you.

TERRY
Why?

RANDALL
Not supposed to.

Terry struggles to catch eyes with the cashier.

TERRY
I won't tell him. What's your
name?

RANDALL
Randall.

TERRY
Randall, I'm Terry.

Terry moves slowly to the other side of the car, into the
light.

RANDALL
I know.

INT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

Warner grabs a large bag of chips.

He pulls a hot dog from a small rotational oven, puts it on
a bun, and snags a packet of mustard and ketchup.

He places it all on the counter. Waits.

The cashier flips through the channels. He stops on a news
station.

Warner, Randall, Claremont, and Farris are the subject of
the report.

Warner reaches his hand behind his back. He grips the handle
of his gun.

The cashier shakes his head.

CASHIER
Fucking news.

He flips back to his previous channel.

CASHIER (CONT.)
That it for you?

Warner nods.

The cashier rings him up, still checking the tv, keeping
with his show.

Outside, Terry's face shows through the cruiser's windows,
illuminated by the street lights. He's looking at the
cashier.

CASHIER (CONT.)
Eight seventy-three.

The cashier eyes Warner. Studies him.

Warner looks him back, still gripping the gun.

CASHIER (CONT.)
Eight dollars, seventy-three
cents.

Warner pulls the roll of bills from his pocket. Finds a ten.

The cashier opens the register, counts the change, hands it to Warner.

CASHIER (CONT.)
Have a good one, man.

WARNER
Got a bag?

CASHIER
What?

WARNER
A bag.

CASHIER
Oh. Yeah. Here.

He hands a plastic bag to Warner. Sits back in front of the tv.

Warner looks the cashier over once more. He bags the goods himself. Leaves.

Now alone, the cashier eyes the cruiser as Warner closes the driver's door.

He sees Terry.

The cruiser backs out. Drives off.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Allen unsteadily moves toward the steps, using the banister as his aide.

He sways, losing balance. He sits on the porch steps, takes a breather.

Determined, he stands and lumbers toward the gravel driveway.

He finds the black couple's car, opens the door, starts the

ignition.

The car makes a full circle and creeps unsteadily down the gravel driveway.

EXT. STOCKYARD - NIGHT

Sheriff Manitow speaks with the stockyard employee that Warner bribed earlier.

The stockyard employee shakes his head, shrugs.

STOCKYARD EMPLOYEE

(Inaudible)

Yeah. Sure. Go ahead.

Manitow obliges. He returns to the cruiser.

EXT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

The black couple's vehicle pulls into the emergency lane.

It drives onto the curb. Shifts to park.

Vehicle still running, Allen exits and stumbles to the entrance.

He stops. Looks around. He pulls his wallet from his pants, and tosses it into a bed of flowers.

He enters through the sliding doors.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - NIGHT

In the back seat, the hot dog, mustard, and ketchup sit next to Terry.

WARNER

Not hungry? You gotta eat. You got the keys to those cuffs?

TERRY

Clint had em.

WARNER

Well Goddamn.

TERRY

Why didn't you just kill me too?

WARNER

Your time's comin.

EXT. STOCKYARD - NIGHT

Manitow's cruiser coasts between walls of metal storage containers.

He scans the yard for something, anything.

He turns a corner, inspecting the double doors of endless rows.

He stops. Exits the cruiser.

At the beginning of a row, there are two empty spaces that could fit four containers.

He walks slowly over the area, thinking.

His eyes squint in the darkness. He fixates on something. Something on the ground.

He kneels. Dabs a finger.

Blood. An uneven, coagulated puddle with one oddly straight edge...

Where a storage container had likely been.

Manitow returns to his cruiser. Picks up the CB.

MANITOW

Six-eleven to Dispatch.

KATHY (V.O.)

Go ahead six-eleven.

MANITOW

We got us another crime scene. Got some blood out here at the stockyard. I need you to get me forensics out here. I want to know who's blood it is and how much of a time lapse we're looking at. I got a hunch we're not looking for four perps no more.

KATHY (V.O.)

Yes sir. I'll relay that right now.

MANITOW

Before you do that. Can you tell me- Are there any gun shot victims in the surrounding counties? Hospitals or morgues.

KATHY (V.O.)
That'll take some time there,
Sheriff.

MANITOW
Of course. Send forensics over
here ASAP. And update me on that
check whenever you can.

KATHY (V.O.)
Will do, Sheriff. Over.

Manitow replaces the CB mic.

He leans back in his seat. Looks around, into the night, and releases a troubled sigh.

EXT. SECLUDED FIELD - SUNRISE

Still dark, the police cruiser pulls onto a hard gravel road.

Then, into a tall, secluded field of wheat.

A mowed section shows ahead, surrounding the remnants of some ancient tree.

They stop. Warner and Randall exit.

They sit on the hood of the cruiser, taking in the view.

MONTAGE

(1) Over the treeline, the sun peaks over the horizon, exploding the field in a symphony of light.

(2) Wheat dances with a morning breeze.

(3) Deer prancing.

(4) Trees swaying.

(5) TIMELAPSE CLOUDS

(6) Leaves fall.

(7) A wolf carries a limp goose, his night's catch.

Warner releases a deep sigh.

He informs Randall of something inaudible. Randall nods.

He opens the back door, pulls Terry out.

TERRY
What are we doing?

Randall walks ahead.

TERRY (CONT.)
What are we doing here?

WARNER
Just walk.

They approach the stump.

WARNER (CONT.)
Kneel.

TERRY
Why?

WARNER
You wish I'd killed you with your
boy. You want to die-

TERRY
-No. No, that's not-

WARNER
Kneel!

Terry kneels, his elbows resting on the wood, his hands to his face in prayer.

Warner hands his gun to Randall. He points it to Terry.

Terry closes his eyes, drops his hands.

Warner turns his back. Behind him...

An echoing *boom*.

The sound reverberates over the land.

Birds call out in flight.

Warner turns.

Terry is still kneeling, still living.

He opens his eyes, taking in the world. Looks down. His hands are free. The chains broken.

A bullet hole reveals between them, burrowed into the wood.

Warner pats Randall on the back. Takes his gun.

TIMELAPSE CLOUDS

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - SUNRISE

Allen is on a stretcher.

Two HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES cart him behind an empty curtain.

HOSPITAL EMPLOYEE 1
We need a doctor. We need a
doctor!

A female DOCTOR (mid-30s) is rushing to them.

HOSPITAL EMPLOYEE 1
Doctor Latham!

DR. LATHAM
What do we have?

HOSPITAL EMPLOYEE 1
Single gun shot wound to the
shoulder. And looks like a shotgun
wounds to the stomach.

DR. LATHAM
Good Lord. Prep the I.V. And-
What's his name?

HOSPITAL EMPLOYEE 2
No I.D.

DR. LATHAM
Nothing?

HOSPITAL EMPLOYEE 2
No wallet. No nothing.

DR. LATHAM
Okay.

(To Allen)
Sir. Sir, what's your name? Can
you hear me? We're going to take
you into surgery, now. Don't
worry. Just- You'll be alright,
sir. Don't worry.

EXT. STOCKYARD - SUNRISE

The sun has now illuminated the stockyard.

Manitow is pointing a FORENSICS TEAM to the blood.

He shakes one of their hands, returns to his cruiser.

On the CB...

KATHY (V.O.)
Dispatch to six-eleven. Dispatch
to six-eleven. Over.

Manitow jogs to his cruiser. Picks up the mic.

MANITOW
Six-eleven here. What you got,
Kathy?

KATHY (V.O.)
You're gonna love me, Sherrif.
You're just gonna love me. There
was probably twenty, thirty-or-so
gun shot victims in the
surrounding counties past couple
days. But, get this. Only one John
Doe.

MANITOW
By God, I sure do love you. Where
at?

KATHY (V.O.)
Central Methodist. Not far from
you.

MANITOW
Remind me to buy you dinner after
this.

KATHY (V.O.)
Heck. You owe me ten dinners
already, Sherrif.

MANITOW
How's pancakes sound?

KATHY (V.O.)
Sounds... sticky.

MANITOW
Nothing wrong with that is there?

KATHY (V.O.)
Not at all. Long as you get sticky
with me.

MANITOW
I'll do whatever the hell you
want. Long as you come see me
after this is over.

KATHY (V.O.)

Well, of course, hun. Don't I always? Now, would you quit it. I'll call ahead, send a local over to the hospital 'til you get there. Go on and catch you a bad guy, would ya.

MANITOW

Six-eleven out. Over.

He replaces the CB to its holster.

He closes the door, starts the ignition.

A short smile overcomes him.

The cruiser peels out.

EXT. MOTEL - MORNING

Rain clouds push in, overtaking the sunlight.

The police cruiser is idling in a motel parking lot.

Randall closes the trunk, opens the back door, tosses a long-sleeve shirt to Terry. He sits back in the passenger seat.

Through the lobby windows, the MOTEL OWNER (60s) shows behind the front desk. A stubby, poorly aged, gray haired man.

WARNER

(To Terry)

Put it on.

TERRY

Why?

WARNER

Put it on.

Terry reluctantly does so, sufficiently covering the broken cuffs on his wrists.

WARNER (CONT.)

You're gonna go in there, get a room-

TERRY

-Alone?

WARNER

Make sure it's on the first floor.
And make damn sure there's two
beds.

TERRY

Why me-

WARNER

-I know you're so on edge right
now you can't see straight. So you
know this- If you try the smallest
thing, any damn thing, that man's
end will be 'cause of you.

Through the motel window, the motel owner takes off his
glasses, files some papers.

WARNER (CONT.)

Don't let him see those damn
cuffs. Don't nod toward us. Don't
fuckin' cry, or let on something's
wrong. Nothin'. You hear me?

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - MORNING

Allen rests, sedated.

A male NURSE checks over his papers, records something.

Dr. Latham enters.

DR. LATHAM

How's he look?

NURSE

Better.

DR. LATHAM

Lucky duck. However it happened,
he's fortunate the shot didn't hit
him in a vital.

NURSE

Shoot. He's fortunate that shot
didn't get him in the face. Can't
imagine his face looking like his
stomach does now.

DR. LATHAM

Wouldn't be here for you to look
at if he'd been shot in the face.
Change out his bandages, and keep
an eye on him. Police will be here
shortly.

She exits the room.

INT. MOTEL LOBBY- MORNING

Terry walks in, disheveled.

The hotel owner is flipping through papers and books, his back turned on Terry.

Terry approaches the front desk. Waits.

He hits the service bell.

-ding-

The man turns. He scratches his forearm.

His nametag reads MARSHALL.

Terry begins to speak...

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

-Quit scratching it!

She emerges from a side room.

Her nametag reads HARRIETT (60s).

HARRIETT

Stop scratching it, Marshall! I told you once. Now stop it.

MARSHALL

(To Terry)

What can we do for you?

Terry opens his mouth again.

HARRIETT

-Have a donut.

TERRY

I'm not hungry.

HARRIETT

Everybody likes a donut. Here. Try the jelly-filled.

Terry takes it.

He eats half of it awkwardly. Displaces the jelly to his chin.

HARRIETT

Here.

She hands him a napkin. Points to his chin.

He wipes it down sloppily.

TERRY

I need a room.

HARRIETT

Okay. One bed or two?

Terry takes a bite. Looks outside. Swallows.

TERRY

One.

HARRIETT

First or second?

TERRY

What?

HARRIETT

First or second floor?

TERRY

Oh. Second.

He finishes the donut.

Marshall sits a key on the desk top.

Terry takes it.

TERRY (CONT.)

Thanks.

HARRIETT

Oh! Quit scratching, Marshall.
It's gonna spread.

MARSHALL

It's *my* arm. I'll do what I want.
You ain't allergic to it.

HARRIETT

That's it. I'm getting the
Calamine.

MARSHALL

I don't want no damn lotion.

Harriett returns to the side room.

MARSHALL
 (To Terry)
 Poison Ivy. You allergic?

TERRY
 No.

MARSHALL
 Good for you. You have a good day.

TERRY
 Yeah.

Terry exits.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - MORNING

Allen stirs in his sleep.

Through a window, a dark, cloud-filled sky watches over him.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - MORNING

Warner pushes the door open. Pulls Terry in like a dog on a leash.

He and Randall set down their bags. Randall rests on the bed.

Warner pulls a rope from his bag.

He pulls it through the heater just beside a wide window overlooking the motel parking lot.

WARNER
 (To Terry)
 Come here.

Terry shakes his head, steps to him.

Warner pulls the end of the rope through one of the handcuff clasps. Ties a strong knot.

TERRY
 What, I get to sleep on the floor?
 What kind of shit-

WARNER
 -"No other rooms available."
 There's *three* cars in that parking lot, Terry. Probably thirty rooms in this building. Try usin' your head. Yeah, you can sleep on the fuckin' floor.

He finishes the knot, pulls the rest of the rope with him to

the bed.

He sits down, ties it around his own wrist.

He picks up the phone, dials a number.

WARNER (CONT.)

(On phone)

It's me. All done? - Sometime later today. Stopped for some sleep - Yeah. I know where that is. You take your cut? Take a little extra. You did good. - It's fine. How's the family? - Good, good. Just get it there by six. -Not a problem.

He hangs up the phone.

WARNER (CONT.)

All set.

Randall nods.

Warner lays back, closes his eyes.

RANDALL

Rope?

WARNER

Came in handy, didn't it?

RANDALL

Guess so.

Randall lays down. He rests, eyes open. Awkward.

He opens his mouth, starts.

WARNER

-Go to sleep.

Randall subsides. He closes his eyes.

WARNER (CONT.)

Terry, you try a damn thing I'm gonna know it. You get some sleep too. You're gone need some energy.

Terry looks to his wrist. Tugs it. Nothing.

He pulls on the heater. No luck.

He sits back. Looks around. Eyes the window.

A powerful thunder threatens the sky.

EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - DAY

Police cruisers and unmarked police vehicles line the driveway of a house we've seen before. Warner's house.

An angry rain assaults the land.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - DAY

A depressing, barren living room is lit only by the smothered sunlight peering through windows.

A large bookshelf dominates the room, filled to capacity with well-used books.

Rain echoes a violent downpour on the metal roofing.

Three OFFICERS are dispersed amongst a couch and kitchen chairs. Their flashlights allowing enough light to read three books.

DETECTIVE CARMICHAEL HARLASHIN (40s) emerges from a hallway. His coat dominates his gaunt frame. The clothes he adorns require a larger salary than he's paid by the state.

HARLASHIN

Got anything for me?

OFFICER ONE

Tough read, Detective.

OFFICER THREE

This one too. There's notes everywhere. He's read these, Harlashin. All of 'em.

Officer Two stands, moves to face the bookshelf.

OFFICER TWO

They're all about society, philosophy, and anti-capitalism, anarchy. Crazy stuff. Drive a man insane, this place.

HARLASHIN

I don't wanna know why he's insane. He is insane. I know. Don't care. I want a know where he is.

OFFICER THREE

That's my point, Detective. These books. This isn't the material of a roughneck. These aren't books a steel worker reads. This guy isn't stupid, Harlashin.

HARLASHIN

Neither are you. Best I got.
You're talkin' about a Goddamn
highschool dropout, for fucksake.
Don't give me this shit.

OFFICER TWO

(Reading)

"Names can name no lasting name.
Nameless: the origin of heaven and
earth. Naming: the mother of ten
thousand things. Empty of desire,
perceive manifestations. These
have the same source, but
different names. Call them both
deep- Deep and again deep: The
gateway to all mystery."

He flips to the book's cover.

OFFICER TWO (CONT.)

Tao Te Ching-

OFFICER THREE

-Asian Philosophy. Took it in grad
school. The Tao Te Ching by Lao-
Tzu.

Three takes the book from Two. Flips through the pages,
searching. Finds it.

OFFICER THREE (CONT.)

(Reading)

"Don't glorify heroes, and people
will not contend. Don't treasure
rare objects, and no one will
steal. Don't display what people
desire, and their hearts will not
be disturbed."

OFFICER ONE

This guy's fucked.

OFFICER THREE

This guy's smart. He's read all of
this. He's read the theories of
the world, he's seen the ways of
the world. And he's adapting to
it. Didn't have enough in life. No
way to get it. He took it. Only
way to do it was through those
steel workers, and he went through
'em. He's not fucked. We're
fucked.

HARLASHIN

You know how much they stole? Two fucking million. Two! Million!

OFFICER THREE

They killed fifty-six people too. Sons and daughters. You think that ought to be our focus here?-

HARLASHIN

-Find him! I don't care how the fuck you do it. You do it. You fucking find 'em!

Harlashin stalks out the front door.

EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Harlashin paces in the front yard, heads toward his car.

He opens the door, grabs the mic from the CB.

HARLASHIN

Come in, Dispatch.

KATHY (V.O.)

Dispatch here.

HARLASHIN

Doin' alright, K?

KATHY (V.O.)

Car, I told you I can't talk on here. You gotta call me on my cell.

HARLASHIN

Ain't no one gonna get on you for talkin' to a detective. I just wanted to hear your voice. I'm havin' trouble on this one... I need this one. Need it for us.

KATHY (V.O.)

For us? How's this gonna fix us, Car? Solving a case gone make me forget what you've done? Make me forget who you are?

HARLASHIN

You know who I am. Always known who I am.

KATHY (V.O.)

Not like this. Never known this.

HARLASHIN

Haven't I taken care of you? Taken care of everything, taken good care with our lives.

KATHY (V.O.)

With your life, Carmichael. With your life. I never asked for all that. Never wanted none of it. I'm a cheap girl. I never had much. Never needed it. Now, when you come offerin' I accepted it, yes. But you're wrong, I never knew how you came about to gettin' it. There's something at odds in my soul in bein' with a man like that. Bein' with a man does things like you. I don't know if I can take it. Don't know if I want it no more.

HARLASHIN

You always wanted it. I hear it in your voice. You still want it. I hear the shake in your voice, K. Might not wanna want it. But you do. And after this score, I'm gone take care of us like always. Better than always. Take you away from this.

KATHY (V.O.)

You can count me out. You got it wrong, Car. I'll look the other way. I'll let you go on doin' what it is that you do. But don't come back after doin' it. Don't you come back to me, knowin' what I know. You go on. Take whatever it is that you're offerin', and go. I got no need for that. Got no need for you. Over... and out.

Harlashin attempts to say something further, but returns the mic to the CB.

He lights a cigarette, takes a lengthy draw.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - AFTERNOON

Randall snores lightly, softly.

Warner stirs, rolls over.

The rain hits hard against the window pane.

The window is now partially open. Terry hangs his body from the ledge. An attempt at freedom. His wrist holds all of his weight.

EXT. MOTEL ROOM - AFTERNOON

Terry is grimacing in pain, his wrist incapable of holding much longer.

The rain has soaked his clothes and hair.

He wipes the water from his face, scans the parking lot for anyone.

Rushing toward the motel is a MEXICAN MAN (mid-40s). He's dressed in uniform, presumably a motel employee. His nametag reads Luther.

Terry waves him down.

TERRY
(Quietly)
Hey. Hey!

Luther sees him.

TERRY (CONT.)
Stop, stop. Help me. I need help.

LUTHER
No. No. Yo no say.

TERRY
What you mean no? I'm a cop. I'm hanging from a *fucking* window. Police officer. Police-o. Policio?

LUTHER
Policio? Policia?

He looks around.

LUTHER (CONT.)
No. No policia. No habla ingles.

TERRY

I need help. Help? Go get help.
Get help!

LUTHER

No habla ingles! No habla ingles,
senor!

TERRY

Shh. Quiet. Quiet. Please, just
help me. I need help. How can you
not see that I need help?

-tack tack-

Two shots to Luther's chest. He drops, his blood mixing with
rain puddles.

Warner shows in the window.

Gun at the ready, he scans over the parking lot for anyone
else. No one.

WARNER

You should learn Spanish. It's a
fast growing language.

Warner hauls Terry back into the room.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - AFTERNOON

Terry lands hard on the floor.

Warner shuts the window.

RANDALL

(To Terry)

What the fuck were you thinking...

Warner grabs a knife from his bag.

TERRY

No. No! Warner, please!

Warner grabs Terry's wrist. He cuts through the rope, pulls
Terry to his feet.

WARNER

Socorro- Help! Ayudeme por favor-
Please help me.

He stuffs the rope back into his bag.

WARNER (CONT.)

Vaya consiga ayuda- Go get help.

He pushes Terry toward the door.

WARNER (CONT.)

No tener remedio... To be-beyond-help! Haven't you figured it yet Terry? You are beyond help, old man. Every mistake you make gets another man killed. Hombre's blood is your hands. How's it feel? Move.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - AFTERNOON

The three officers are still scowering through books.

Officer One is reading through a weathered journal.

OFFICER ONE

Listen to this.

(Reading)

"I walked to the store today. Five miles there and back. Tough stuff. I saw a car pass by. A family. Couldn't help but think, you know. Couldn't help but wonder. I try not to, but I think it's impossible. I miss them. Horribly. I think a family might be the only thing that keeps a man civilized. But where does that put me?" Dated September of oh-three.

One shakes his head, flips to the last few pages.

OFFICER ONE (CONT.)

June of oh-seven. "Walked to town again. Up through the hills. Near ten miles I think. It's getting easier. I saw a hawk flying over a field. Soared real smooth. Then it chased a small bird and caught it. It was beautiful, really. Got me to thinking- Life's a lot different than people let on. We all got hawks in us, I think. Feel like mine's getting tired of staying perched. Ready to hunt. Ready to let him out."

Two chimes in, his eyes on the page of a different journal.

OFFICER TWO

"Me and Randall got those jobs at the steel plant. Good to finally be moving along with the plan. Shouldn't be long now. Not long at all."

Turns some pages.

OFFICER TWO (CONT.)

Here we go. This one's from last week. "Think I found the right guy. Chump with a gambling problem and a family to support. Perfect. Won't name his name here, cause... well, you know why don't you officer? Sorry, just can't give it to you that easy. Probably enough in these journals to give you some clue. But, I got to say- you got your work cut out for you, buddy."

He closes the journal. Thinks, shakes his head.

OFFICER TWO (CONT.)

Damn. Smart.

A long moment hovers between them.

Three is flipping through a collection of newspaper clippings.

OFFICER THREE

Hey, who the hell was it that shot his parents? It was an officer, right?

OFFICER ONE

Yeah. An Officer... Phelps. Terry Phelps. Why?

OFFICER THREE

I think we just got our lead. Found these behind the bookcase.

He lays them out on the floor.

OFFICER THREE (CONT.)

(Reading one clipping)

"Officer Terry Phelps teaches gun safety to local highschool."

(Another)

"Phelps reprehends a thief after two hours of on-foot pursuit."

(MORE)

OFFICER THREE (CONT'D)

(And another)

"Terry Phelps inducts son Clint into the Academy"

OFFICER ONE

Take a look at this one. That's this house. Not so bad back then. "Officer Terry Phelps' efforts are applauded after the successful pursuit of two armed drug dealers. When asked about the shooting, Officer Phelps said, 'I drew my weapon. They drew on me. And I defended myself. It was protocol.' The deceased are survived by one child." Well- Guess we should find Phelps and see what he has to say.

OFFICER THREE

There's been two officers missing since yesterday. Not long after the shootings. A Terry Phelps and Clint Phelps. You didn't hear?

OFFICER ONE

Naw.

OFFICER TWO

No. What do you mean missing? Phelps and his son?

OFFICER THREE

Both. Yeah. Warner's missing and our only lead's missing.

OFFICER ONE

This is fucked. Only way to find Phelps is to find Warner. And we can't do that.

OFFICER THREE

Why can't we? We just got a step closer.

OFFICER TWO

The fuck you mean? All we got is writing, and babblin' philosopher crap, and newspapers, and more writing.

OFFICER THREE

You should pay attention. This writing and these newspapers give us motive. We didn't have it an hour ago, but we got it now. We got motive. Now what do we know about Warner Saw?

OFFICER TWO

He's fuckin' crazy-

OFFICER THREE

-Besides bein' crazy.

OFFICER ONE

Looks obsessed with Phelps.

OFFICER THREE

Right. But why?

(Grabs
newspaper
clipping)

This says Phelps took out two drug dealers here. And they were survived by a child...

Three looks suggestively at One.

OFFICER ONE

Warner.

OFFICER THREE

Right. Phelps took down Warner's parents. Phelps goes missin' same day as Warner's rampage... Warner's got Phelps. This was never about money, fellas. This is about revenge.

OFFICER TWO

So ole' boy's out for blood, not the lute.

OFFICER THREE

Basically. Now, we found motive in this rubble, let's find direction. Where he's been might tell us where he's goin'.

OFFICER TWO

I like it. I like it. Let's do it.

They carouse through shelves and piles of notebooks, each building a stack of reading material.

INT. MOTEL LOBBY - AFTERNOON

Harriett is looking out the front windows.

HARRIETT
I'm tellin' you, he should be
here. Luther's never late. Even in
rain like this.

She peeks around a corner.

A stream of watery blood is flowing toward a storm drain.

HARRIETT
What- is that?

She inches open the front door.

HARRIETT
My God. Marshall. Marshall, come
quick.

A door bangs open. Terry falls through and slides across the
hardwood floor.

MARSHALL
What in the hell?

Harriett turns her attention to Terry.

Warner and Randall enter the lobby, guns raised.

HARRIETT
What is this? Luther. Oh, no.
Marshall...
(She looks
outside)
Luther.

WARNER
You can thank the fool on the
floor for that.

MARSHALL
He don't have no gun.

RANDALL
Neither do you.

WARNER
You'd both be smart to put your
hands up now.

Harriett does. Marshall doesn't.

WARNER (CONT.)

This how you want it? Randall...

Randall moves toward Marshall.

HARRIETT

Marshall.

MARSHALL

I ain't backin' down to these-

HARRIETT

Marshall!

MARSHALL

Fine.

He raises his hands. Steps from around the counter.

WARNER

Thank you. Now, if you'll both kindly proceed outside.

They do so reluctantly.

WARNER (CONT.)

(To Terry)

You still on the ground?

TERRY

I can't take this much longer. I'm not gonna take it.

Warner kneels. Randall stays on the couple.

WARNER

You got a lot more comin'. Stand up.

Terry stands slowly.

WARNER (CONT.)

Outside.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - AFTERNOON

Allen awakens slowly.

He finds himself hooked to IVs and regulators.

He holds his head. Thinks.

A knock at the door.

It opens. A POLICE OFFICER enters.

POLICE OFFICER
Sorry to bother you. Think I could
ask you a few questions?

ALLEN
Um. I don't really feel too well.

POLICE OFFICER
It's important. I'm Officer
Palmer. Now, you came here with
some nasty gun wounds, buddy. And
you don't have a shed of
identification on you. Mind
informing me of what happened?
Your name. Anything.

Allen releases a long, deep sigh.

ALLEN
Of course. My name's Floyd.

OFFICER PALMER
Floyd- what?

ALLEN
Oh. Sorry. Floyd...

Allen looks around for inspiration.

He looks at his blankets.

ALLEN (CONT.)
... Sheets. Floyd Sheets.

OFFICER PALMER
Floyd Sheets it is. Now, what in
the hell happened to you, Mr.
Sheets? Who shot you?

ALLEN
Honestly, Officer, I don't
remember. Last thing that comes to
me, I was at a gas station or
somethin. Then I was on the ground
bleeding.

OFFICER PALMER
Alright. This is progress. That's
good. I'm told you drove yourself
here. That right?

ALLEN
Did I?

OFFICER PALMER

You did.

ALLEN

Alright then. I did.

(Holds his
head)

Listen. Officer. You suppose I
could get some privacy? I need
to... think.

OFFICER PALMER

Sure. Sure.

(Holds his
stomach)

I oughtta take me a "think" right
about now.

ALLEN

'Preciate it.

Palmer exits the room.

Allen holds his hand over his face. Thinks hard. Thinks
long.

Finally, he pulls the wires from his body and arms.

He stands shakily, makes his way to the window. He opens it
with a grunt, and climbs outside.

EXT. HOSPITAL - AFTERNOON

Allen sneaks around trees and bushes to the edge of the
building.

He looks around the corner. Officer Palmer holds an
umbrella. He's recording the plates of the black couple's
vehicle.

ALLEN

Shit.

He looks around, looks down at himself. He's standing nearly
naked in his hospital gown, sopping wet.

He looks toward the hospital's main entrance. He squints,
attempting to see something more clearly.

Allen's...

WALLET

... sits in a puddle, still within the bed of flowers near
the hospital entrance. Money peaks through the folds.

Allen waits. He looks to the parking lot. He takes one step, about to run for it.

Police sirens sound in the distance.

Allen steps back.

The sirens get louder, closer.

Manitow's cruiser enters the parking lot, pulls next to Officer Palmer.

Manitow exits.

MANITOW

(From a
distance)

What are you doing?

OFFICER PALMER

Just recording-

MANITOW

-Where's the suspect?

OFFICER PALMER

Suspect? Here, get under the umbrella.

MANITOW

The John Doe!

OFFICER PALMER

John Doe? Oh! You mean Mr. Sheets?

MANITOW

Oh, God damnit! Where is he?

OFFICER PALMER

Um. This way. Follow me.

Both officers enter the hospital.

Allen waits.

He creeps down the side of the building, toward the entrance.

An ORDERLY exits the building, rushes to the parking lot through the rain.

Allen hides behind the black couple's car. Waits.

He sprints for the flower bed, his gown flapping open behind him, his white ass propelling him through rain puddles.

He kneels, grabs his wallet, runs through the parking lot, keeping low, favoring his side.

He darts out of sight.

At the entrance, Manitow and Palmer exit in a hurry.

They look around for anything.

MANITOW

Shit! You call yourself a cop?

OFFICER PALMER

Well I couldn't just-
(Pops open his
umbrella)

-I couldn't just sit there and
watch him use the bathroom.

MANITOW

Why the hell not?

OFFICER PALMER

I don't know. Just prefer not to,
I guess.

MANITOW

Well I'd prefer you do your fuckin
job!

OFFICER PALMER

Well, I'm sorry! He seemed pretty
nice to me!

Manitow stalks to his cruiser, gets in, slams the door.

He turns the sirens on, peels out.

EXT. BUSHES - AFTERNOON

Allen is kneeled behind a row of bushes near the hospital.

He shivers as the rain hits him with a gust of wind.

Manitow's cruiser screams past him.

Allen checks through his wallet. Everything is in place.

He looks across the street. A "Big & Tall" store rests
between a small grocery and a children's store.

EXT. BIG & TALL STORE - AFTERNOON (LATER)

Allen exits in clothes far too big for him. He pops open a large umbrella.

He looks down at himself. An oversized belt barely holds his XL dress pants on his waist. Even his sunglasses are too big for his face.

He shakes his head, holds his side, and walks down the sidewalk.

INT. MARSHALL'S SUV - AFTERNOON

Randall drives. Terry rides passenger. Warner sits between the couple in the back seat.

WARNER

This is a nice vehicle, Marshall.
Really.

HARRIETT

Thank you-

MARSHALL

-Don't talk to him, Harriet.

WARNER

Probably not easy on gas though.

HARRIETT

Oh. Not at all. Been tellin
Marshall to trade it in-

MARSHALL

-Harriett, don't talk to him!

HARRIETT

Fine.

(To Warner)

I can't talk no more.

WARNER

Understandable.

(Sighs)

Look. Marshall, is it?

(No response)

I had no intention of hurting...
what was his name?

MARSHALL

Luther Cuh-saunas.

HARRIETT

Casañas. Luther Casañas. Would you get it right for once.

MARSHALL

Man's dead. Don't matter now.

HARRIETT

It's called respect for the dead, Mar-

MARSHALL

-Respect? 'Stead a barkin' at me, how 'bout you quit playin' nice and bark at the man that made him dead?

WARNER

Hold on, now, folks. Like I said, I didn't mean him no harm.

MARSHALL

No harm? Man's still bleedin' out in a closet.

WARNER

My intention was to get some shut eye and hit the road. That man up there (Terry) did somethin' he shouldn't have. Called attention to himself. Got your Luther killed. You want who made him dead? Look in front a you.

HARRIETT

Son, maybe I'm wrong, but I don't think he pulled the trigger. Might be a better use of your time to stop pointin' the finger and start takin' responsibility.

Warner kicks Terry's seat.

WARNER

Wake up.

Terry stirs to a wake.

WARNER (CONT.)

I said wake up. Told you to get some sleep didn't I.

TERRY

I made my choice.

WARNER

Then stick to it. Keep your eyes open.

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

One, Two, and Three are hard at it. Their stacks of notebooks have dwindled down to small piles.

One and Three have written extensive notes in their respective notepads.

Three removes his glasses, stretches.

THREE

Okay. What do we got so far? Anything?

ONE

I have a lotta nothin'. That help?

TWO

Same here. Buncha shit about hikin' and campin'. Nothin' that gives me any idea of where or what the fuck he's doin out there...

Detective Harlashin swings open the front door. He enters, savors the last draw from his cigarette, and flicks it into the rain.

ONE

Harlashin.

HARLASHIN

Tell me you got something.

Three sighs, nods.

THREE

We got something.

HARLASHIN

Let me have it.

THREE

Terry Phelps. Heard of him?

HARLASHIN

Where does this come into play? I'm askin' about-

THREE

-Officer Terry Phelps. Been missing since yesterday. Officer Clint Phelps. Went missing yesterday.

HARLASHIN

The fuck? You forget we're talkin' about Warner Saw here? You forget which missing person we're after?

Three picks up a newspaper clipping.

THREE

Officer Terry Phelps.

Hands it to Harlashin.

THREE (CONT.)

Busted a couple drug dealers here. At this house.

Harlashin reads it over with interest.

TWO

Warner's got those cops. They killed his folks.

THREE

Terry killed 'em. But yeah he's got 'em.

HARLASHIN

This is speculation.

THREE

He's obsessed the man, Harlashin. Obsessed with revenge. He doesn't care for money. What need does he have for it.

HARLASHIN

Everyone needs money. What world are you in?

THREE

Right now, Warner's. Now, you want answers, I'm giving 'em. He's got Phelps, and I don't think he's tryin' to get away with him.

(To Two)

What were you sayin' before?

TWO

He's crazy?

THREE

Naw, about what you read? The journals.

TWO

Aw. 'Bout hiking and bullshit.

THREE

A lotta mine had nature in 'em too. In fact (picks up his notepad), he wrote that he and his family used to go hiking. Any of that in yours?

TWO

Nothin' about his folks, no. Just that missed 'em and boo-fuckin-hoo.

ONE

Hey, somewhere he said that they hiked up to this one spot near some hiking trail. Um- Um, uh- Wilt- Wilt, uh- (finds his notes) Wilted Passing.

THREE

Wilted Passing. There you go. There-we-go. Think about it. If you wanted revenge on someone that killed your family, would you run off into the sunset with a load of money, or take the guy that killed 'em somewhere... fitting?

TWO

You askin' if I was fuckin' two shades to Nutty town?

THREE

It ain't that crazy. He's gonna kill Terry. If he hasn't already, he's gonna kill 'em. And the best we got right now is that he's gonna take him somewhere that's... secluded. And that's... meaningful. Wilted...

ONE

... Passing.

THREE

Wilted Passing. You wanna find Warner, we try it.

TWO

A fuckin' hikin' trail? A fucking hiking trail.

HARLASHIN

Naw. That's good. It's somethin'. It's somewhere. (To Three) You're the best I got. You believe this?

THREE

The best bet. It's the only bet. That's all I got.

HARLASHIN

That's all you got?

THREE

That's it. Wilted Passing.

HARLASHIN

Wilted Passing.

He nods. Contemplates this.

He confidently draws his weapon toward Three.

HARLASHIN (CONT.)

Good work.

He pulls the trigger. Drops Three. Shoots One twice in the head. Dead.

He turns to Two, arches his head in question.

TWO

You know I'm with you.

HARLASHIN

Always are. Good boy.

He finishes off Three.

EXT. SIDEWALK - LATE AFTERNOON

Allen walks conspicuously past a row of window shops, his large umbrella still protecting him.

He thinks to himself, mumbling. Tries to sort through his situation.

ALLEN
 (To himself)
 No way she'll take me back. No
 way. No money. Nothin'. Can't go
 back with nothin'.

He stops.

A small electronics store shows a few TVs in its windows.

ON TV

A newscast shows the same aerial shot of the steel plant.

A newsbar scrolls across the bottom.

It reads: "Shooters reported to have taken 2 million in
 steel."

ALLEN (CONT.)
 (Loudly)
 Two mill-
 (Looks around)
 Two million?

Allen paces, stalking past the storefront.

He stops, contemplates something.

ALLEN (CONT.)
 (To himself)
 I'll never find 'em. How would I
 find 'em? What the fuck did you do
 that for? Where were you gonna go?
 God damnit, Allen.

He looks around, down the block. Seems to have a thought.

ALLEN (CONT.)
 (To himself)
 Gotta do it. Yeah, you gotta do
 it. Stupid fuck.

Allen walks off with a purpose.

EXT. BREAKFAST DINER - LATE AFTERNOON

The SUV sits idle in the parking lot.

HARRIETT
 (To Warner)
 I can't go in the men's. I know
 I'm not that attractive, but you
 do know I'm a woman?

WARNER

Ain't half bad if you ask me.

RANDALL

Me neither.

WARNER

For an older woman, that is. Just go in there, knock on the door. Shouldn't be no one around. Not a lot of people eatin breakfast right now. Third stall, against the wall. Take off the lid. In the tank, there'll be a duffle bag. Unzip it. Inside, there'll be some plastic bags. Put the plastic bags in this.

He hands Harriett a small backpack from his duffle bag.

She thinks it over, nods hesitantly.

MARSHALL

You get in there, you just don't come back. You hear me?

WARNER

That is an option, ma'am. It is. But I trust you understand the consequences?

MARSHALL

I'm tellin' you, Harriett. You don't come back. We had a good run. No shame in lettin me go. Don't come back.

WARNER

You love him, Harriett? You love Marshall?

HARRIETT

I do.

WARNER

Then do what I ask. He'll be here waitin on you. And I'll be here watchin you. Don't try nothin. You know I'm capable. You seen enough of me to know by now what I'll do.

She nods again, purses her lips.

HARRIETT
I'll be back.

MARSHALL
Harriett-

HARRIETT
-I'm sorry.

She exits the vehicle quickly. Shuts the door.

EXT. STORE - LATE AFTERNOON

Allen stands outside in the rain, his umbrella overhead.

He musters some courage and enters. The umbrella catches in the doorway.

He struggles to pull the umbrella inside, but gives up. He tosses it outside, closes the door.

The only other CUSTOMER walks past Allen and leaves the store.

Allen looks around. No one but the STORE CLERK (early 20s).

The clerk eyes Allen. He steps from behind the counter and pulls a soda from an advertisement cooler.

Allen takes his cue. He lunges at the clerk, takes him to the ground.

The clerk submits with little struggle.

Allen pulls his boot off and presses the tip against the back of the clerk's head- a sorry replacement for a weapon.

ALLEN
Get up. Get up!

STORE CLERK
Man, I didn't do nothing to you.

ALLEN
I know. Just get up. Get up now.

The clerk stands slowly. He turns toward Allen.

ALLEN (CONT.)
Turn around. Turn around! Don't look at me.

STORE CLERK

I've already seen you. The cameras have seen you, man. You should've wore a mask.

ALLEN

I said look straight! Walk toward the door.

Allen escorts him to the door, the boot still against the clerk's head.

A desperation penetrates Allen's voice.

ALLEN (CONT.)

Lock it.

The clerk starts to turn over the open/closed sign.

ALLEN (CONT.)

Hey! Hey! Lock the door.

STORE CLERK

I gotta turn over the sign, asshole. Won't matter if the door's locked if the sign says we're open.

ALLEN

Fine. Turn over the sign.

The clerk does so. Then locks the door.

ALLEN (CONT.)

Okay. Come on. Where's the phone?

STORE CLERK

Over there. Behind the counter.

ALLEN

Okay. Go. Go.

Allen escorts the clerk behind the counter top.

The clerk picks up the phone.

STORE CLERK

What number?

ALLEN

911.

STORE CLERK

What?

ALLEN

Dial it.

The clerk shakes his head, sighs.

He dials the number. Waits.

ALLEN

Tell 'em you were just robbed by a man in a hospital gown.

STORE CLERK

Look. I told you I saw you. You're not in a hospital gown.

ALLEN

I know that! Just say it. Nothin' else. That's it.

A dispatcher answers on the other end.

STORE CLERK

Yeah, um... I'm at three ninety-four Morrow Street. The corner store- Thing is... I was just robbed by a guy in a... hospital gown- Right- Yeah. About five-nine, maybe a hundred fifty pounds- Okay- No, I'm fine. Just took the money- Yeah, okay. Thanks.

He hangs up.

STORE CLERK (CONT.)

Welcome.

ALLEN

Thanks. Now face the wall. Face the wall.

The clerk turns reluctantly.

STORE CLERK

Man, I've seen you already.

Allen notices a small handgun beneath the register. He pockets it in his coat.

Allen starts to back out of the store, still pointing his boot at the clerk.

ALLEN

Just face the wall.

STORE CLERK
What about the money?

ALLEN
What?

STORE CLERK
You gotta take the money, man. I
just told 'em you took the money.
I don't wanna get in trouble for a
false report or some shit.

ALLEN
Oh- Right.

Allen returns to the counter, he hits the register with his
boot, expecting it to open. Nothing.

The clerk shakes his head.

STORE CLERK
Red button.

Allen looks at the clerk, back at the register.

He finds the button, opens the register.

STORE CLERK (CONT.)
There you go.

Allen pockets the cash and clears his throat.

ALLEN
Okay. Face the wall!

STORE CLERK
I am.

ALLEN
Okay. Good. Just... face it!

Allen backs out, still pointing his boot at the clerk. Each
step highlights his uneven stride.

EXT. BREAKFAST DINER - LATE AFTERNOON

Harriett exits the diner wearing the backpack. The SUV door
opens for her, she climbs in with Warner's help.

HARRIETT
Thank you.

She removes the backpack, hands it to Warner.

He unzips it, pulls out a plastic bag. Wads of hundreds rest
silently.

RANDALL
All there?

WARNER
Yeah.

MARSHALL
Just once. Couldn't you listen to me, just one time?

HARRIETT
I can't do that, Marshall. I will not do that. I've put up with you for forty-some-odd years now. I'm just gonna turn on you. I won't be the reason for your end. And- I just can't walk off knowin' you won't be in my life nomore. You understand me, Marshall? Don't ask me somethin' like that again.

MARSHALL
I understand. I'm sorry.

Warner mulls this over. A moment passes.

WARNER
(To Harriett)
Have any trouble?

HARRIETT
Toilet lid was on kinda tight. But other than that, no.

WARNER
Alright then. Get us out a here, Randall.

Randall shifts to drive and the SUV exits the parking lot.

EXT. STORE - LATE AFTERNOON

Numerous police vehicles line the street. Through the store windows, the store clerk gives a statement to TWO POLICE OFFICERS.

Sherrif Manitow's cruiser pulls up. He exits his vehicle as the two officers exit the store.

Manitow meets them.

MANITOW
Hey there, boys. Eddie Manitow.

POLICE OFFICER 1
Deputy Sharp.

POLICE OFFICER 2
Berret.

MANITOW
Pleasure. Now, what's the word?

SHARP
Clerk says a guy 'bout 5'9, 150
came at him with a weapon.

BERRET
But he wasn't there to rob the
place.

SHARP
Yeah, but he did take the money.

BERRET
He did take the money.

MANITOW
Was he in a hospital gown?

BERRET
No.

MANITOW
But the, uh, report was for a man
in a-

SHARP
-The perp actually had the clerk
at gunpoint as he called 911. He
told the clerk to say that he,
himself, was wearing a hospital
gown.

BERRET
We figure the guy was on PCP.

MANITOW
PC-

SHARP
-some kinda hallucinagen. PCP,
crack-cocaine. Doesn't matter.
Must've been wacked out.

MANITOW

So he wasn't in a hospital gown.
He made the clerk say that he was-
He was there when he dialed- He
let him call 911?

SHARP

Made him.

BERRET

Forced him. A cry for help
probably. Who knows. These fucks
make me sick.

MANITOW

He made him call 911. And say that
he was in a hospital gown?

SHARP

Oh. And the clerk said he almost
forgot to take the dough.

BERRET

How do you forget the reason
you're holdin' a man at gunpoint?
Fuckin' crackheads. (Looks at his
watch) Already late for dinner.
Makes me fuckin' sick.

MANITOW

Is it possible he wasn't there for
the money? Think he might've
wanted to- Ah, nevermind.
Crackheads. Make me sick too. You
all have a good night, boys.

SHARP

You too.

BERRET

Yeah.

Manitow looks the store over, checks his surroundings, and
retreats to his cruiser.

INT. MANITOW'S CRUISER - LATE AFTERNOON

Manitow closes his door. He shifts to drive and pulls into
traffic.

As he drives, he tries to piece together the information.

He picks up the CB mic...

ALLEN (O.S.)

Put it back.

The barrel of a handgun presses firmly against Manitow's neck.

MANITOW

Oh! Fuck! Fuck. Shit.

Manitow breathes heavily, avoiding a panic. He replaces the mic.

Allen pulls the hammer with a click.

ALLEN

Keep driving. Believe you're looking for me?

MANITOW

What?

ALLEN

Man in a hospital gown.

MANITOW

You. From the hospital?

ALLEN

Yeah. Floyd. Just keep driving. I won't hurt you. What's your name?

MANITOW

Doesn't matter. What are you doin', buddy?

ALLEN

You're on Warner Saw's trail. Am I right?

MANITOW

Tryin' to be. Best lead I had was a John Doe with a gunshot wound.

ALLEN

Me? I'm your lead?

MANITOW

Don't look like it. Not much of a lead if you're controlling the shots. What's your deal here?

ALLEN

I need to find Warner again. I want my cut.

MANITOW

You were with him. He shot you?

ALLEN

I need to find him! What else you got?

MANITOW

I don't got nothing-

KATHY (V.O.)

-Dispatch to six-eleven.

Manitow starts for the mic, holds back, looks to Allen, back to the road.

Allen thinks.

ALLEN

Answer it. But don't fucking make me shoot you. I will. This's been the shittiest day of my life. And really I don't mind if shootin' you puts me-

KATHY (V.O.)

-Dispatch to six-eleven. Dispatch to six-eleven. Over.

Manitow starts for it again.

ALLEN

I don't care to shoot you and put myself in a car crash that takes my own life! Not sure if I got much of a life left worth saving anyway. So don't try me. Now answer it.

Manitow grabs the mic.

MANITOW

Six-eleven here. Sorry about that.

KATHY (V.O.)

Fine, Sheriff. Tip just came in from a gas station clerk. Said a man fitting a suspect's description came in dressed as an officer. And, get this, an officer that came in earlier last night was in the back of his cruiser. In the back.

MANITOW

Sounds promising. Thanks for the tip, Kathy.

ALLEN

Get more out of her!

KATHY (V.O.)

Well, don't you wanna know what my keen detective skills have deduced?

MANITOW

Oh. Yeah. What is it?

KATHY (V.O.)

Well, Terry and Clint have been missin' since yesterday, right? Well, the clerk gave a description of the officer he says he saw last night. The one that was in the cruiser too. Fits Terry's description. To a T. And the officer that had Terry in his cruiser, he fits the description of- Guess who. Warner. Saw.

MANITOW

Good work, dispatch.

Allen presses the gun harder against Manitow's neck.

MANITOW (CONT.)

Where's this gas station at?

KATHY (V.O.)

Good question. Gets more interesting. It's just on the outskirts of town. And- Guess what. Clerk says the cruiser was headed toward town. Not away. Now, you tell me, Eddie, that make sense to you?

MANITOW

Don't need to. Good work, dispatch. I'm headed back right now. I'll be on the look out. Over and out.

He puts the mic back on its holster.

MANITOW (CONT.)

That about do it for you?

ALLEN
Not quite. But it's a start.

Allen lets off the hammer. Pulls back the gun.

EXT. HIKING TRAIL - LATE AFTERNOON

The SUV pulls into a deserted gravel parking lot in a secluded wooded area.

The incessant downpour has muddled the gravel to a thin rocky pond.

The SUV parks, the doors open, the group exits into the rain.

WARNER
(To Terry)
Come on.

Terry is hesitant to follow.

WARNER (CONT.)
I said come on.

TERRY
You don't gotta do this.

WARNER
Yeah I do.

Warner grabs Terry from the SUV and sends him to the wet rockbed below.

HARRIETT
Oh. Are you okay?

She goes to help him up.

WARNER
Get back.

For the first time, Harriett seems physically threatened. She steps back beside Marshall.

WARNER (CONT.)
(To Terry)
You sorry fuck. Have some respect
for yourself. Pick yourself up!

Terry hauls himself to his feet.

His clothes covered in a muddy mix, his hair matted to his head, he seems a broken shell of the man he was two days ago.

TERRY

Well, let's get on with it then.

Terry leads the charge toward the trail head.

Warner shoves in front of him, sending Terry to his knees once again.

WARNER

'Nother noise from your throat and I'll cut it. You got me?

Terry nods, stands slowly.

INT. UNMARKED POLICE VEHICLE - LATE AFTERNOON

Harlashin rides passenger beside Officer Two.

TWO

You know you didn't have to kill 'em, right?

Two looks to Harlashin.

Harlashin doesn't acknowledge him.

TWO (CONT.)

They wouldn't have been a problem is what I'm sayin'. All I'm gonna say.

Harlashin peers at him for a moment, refocuses his gaze to the road.

Rain rattles against the windshield. An expectation shows in Harlashin's eyes.

INT. MANITOW'S CRUISER - LATE AFTERNOON

Manitow stares blankly at the road as the asphalt hums against the tires.

Allen is still in the back, his gun still at the ready beside him. He's layed back comfortably, his eyes fixed on the ceiling.

ALLEN

You know, I didn't set out to get involved with Warner. Just at the wrong place. Come to think, I never been in the right place in my life, that I can remember.

MANITOW

That right?

ALLEN

It's just- Money makes the world-
Money makes- Money's got a way
of... bringin' you to do things
you thought you couldn't- or
wouldn't do.

MANITOW

Not for everyone, son.

ALLEN

Maybe not. But, you know, ya lose
your family, and your job, and
your home, you entertain other
options. Didn't think it'd get me
here, though.

MANITOW

How exactly did you come by
Warner?

ALLEN

Odd coincidence, I guess you'd
say.

MANITOW

You don't gotta tell me much, but
it'd be a help if you let me know
where you're takin' us.

ALLEN

I ain't a bad guy. Not much of a
secret keeper. It's just a hunch,
but when me and Warner met up to
go over his plans for this whole
mess, he gave me some indication
of where he might be goin'...

INT. TUCKY'S BAR - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Still in conversation, Warner sips from his beer.

Allen waits, his beer still nearly full.

WARNER

Shouldn't be a problem for you.
Feel like you're capable of more
than you think.

ALLEN
Might be capable of more than *you*
think.

Warner smiles shortly.

WARNER
Could be.

He finishes off his glass, looks out the nearest window. A tree-filled mountain range shows in the distance.

ALLEN
If you don't mind me askin', why
do you want to do this?

WARNER
Beautiful.

ALLEN
What?

WARNER
Beautiful, isn't it?

ALLEN
Yeah.

WARNER
Got some real nice hikin' trails
up there. Used to go up there with
my family. All the time. Right up
to the clearing, out on the ledge.
Even more beautiful from up there.

Allen looks out the window, back at Warner.

WARNER (CONT.)
I don't know why I'm doin' this.
Gotta set somethin' right, I
guess. You?

ALLEN
Money. Only reason I do anything
lately.

WARNER
Good reason. Like I said, you do
your part, you'll get your money.
Ain't much for lyin'.

ALLEN
Me neither.

INT. MANITOW'S CRUISER - LATE AFTERNOON

Allen continues his spiel from the back of the cruiser.

ALLEN

... Didn't mean much to me then.
But your woman on the radio said
he was headed back to town.
Couldn't piece it up right away,
but then I was thinkin' about that
night. It was like he was drawn to
that mountain. Somethin' real odd
in his eyes. Like a longing for
it. I figure we get to the foot of
that mountain and maybe we'll find
somethin'.

Manitow nods.

MANITOW

She's not my woman.

ALLEN

What?

MANITOW

On the CB, she wasn't my woman.

ALLEN

Aw. Alright. Guess I read it
wrong. Heard a softness in her
voice. Don't hear that from a
woman that don't feel... close to
you.

MANITOW

Guess you heard her wrong. She's a
kind woman. Always a bit soft.

ALLEN

Sorry. It's just... I know a
little about that- A woman's
voice. My wife- She used to have
that softness for me, in her
voice. Took it for granted, and...
it faded. I knew when she quit
loving me. Heard it in her voice.
That woman on the radio- Maybe
she's not your woman, but she
loves you. I can hear it.

Manitow looks at Allen in the rearview, then back to the
road.

MANITOW

How do you suppose we'll come upon Warner with no more of a lead than "The Mountain." You don't just happen upon leads in this game.

ALLEN

Happened upon me, didn't you?

MANITOW

You got the gun. Wasn't me that found you.

ALLEN

He told me he always made it up to the clearing, wherever that is.

MANITOW

Yeah? Only one trail that leads there.

ALLEN

Then that's where we need to go. What's it called?

MANITOW

Ah. Wilted somethin'. My memory fails me.

EXT. WILTED PASSING TRAIL - SUNSET

Warner pushes Terry up the path. Terry is sweating furiously.

Behind them, Randall flanks the old couple as they walk at their own pace. Marshall remains in handcuffs, Harriett free.

They come upon a clearing ahead.

Warner pushes his way in front of Terry.

WARNER

Over there. Go on.

He points his gun toward the edge of a cliff.

Marshall and Harriett make their way steadily behind Terry.

Randall stops by Warner.

Terry, Marshall, and Harriett sit down and rest.

MARSHALL

What the hell are we doin' here?

WARNER

Don't think I gotta tell you for
you to know, do I?

MARSHALL

We never done nothin' to you.

WARNER

You figure that matters to me?

Marshall clenches his jaw, holds himself back. Harriett braces him.

An inevitability seems to sweep over Terry.

TERRY

I told you I was sorry. Always
have been sorry.

WARNER

Sorry don't hack it. You took the
only two people ever mattered to
me.

TERRY

I didn't have no choice.
(Looks to
Harriett)
I didn't have a choice.

Harriett shakes her head in understanding. She pulls herself closer to Marshall.

Warner takes a long moment. He looks out over the landscape. A large expanse of trees cover the land to the horizon. Uniform save for another cliff adjacent to their own.

A strong wind blazes across Warner's face, a hard scowl etched over his skin.

Warner snaps to, steps to Terry, grabs him by the collar, and drags him like a dog toward the cliff's edge. He points the shotgun at Terry.

WARNER

You see that?

Terry looks up.

WARNER (CONT.)

Do you see it!

TERRY

Do I see what? What?

WARNER

My father took me here. Sat right here! Looked at this for hours on end. Didn't even talk. Just sat next to him... cause I liked bein with him. He was my father...

TERRY

I'm sorry.

WARNER

You say sorry again, I'll make you sorry. I wanna know why.

TERRY

Why?

WARNER

Why...

TERRY

They drew weapons on me. It was- It was self-

WARNER

-Defense. Yeah. I've heard all that. But I've gone over that day in my head a thousand times to no end. Never added up once. Why were you there? Why them? A thousand other criminals out there. Why them?

TERRY

I witnessed a drug transfer, Warner. They were drug runners. I made every attempt to keep it civilized. If I could go back and save em, I would.

WARNER

But you can't, can ya.

TERRY

No, I can't.

Warner points the shotgun barrel toward Terry.

TERRY (CONT.)

Please, Warner.

WARNER
 (To Randall)
 Keep them back.

Randall cocks his gun, points to Harriett and Marshall.

Warner cocks the shotgun, aims at Terry.

WARNER (CONT.)
 Tell me what you remember bout my
 family. Bout my mom. Bout my dad.

TERRY
 What?

WARNER
 Tell me what you remember. Last
 thing in your mind before you die
 is gonna be them. Tell me.

TERRY
 I- I- They jumped out a their car.
 And, uh. They...

Terry stops. He contemplates something and summons courage
 with a gulp.

TERRY (CONT.)
 ... I shot em by accident.

WARNER
 The fuck you say? Speak up.

TERRY
 I shot them by accident. It was an
 accident. I'm... sorry.

WARNER
 What'd I say!

TERRY
 I know. I just- I am. I am.

WARNER
 What do you mean an accident?

TERRY
 I mean they weren't drug runners,
 Warner. They weren't criminals. I
 lied... I lied.

WARNER
 Why'd you do it?

TERRY

Why'd you do what you done?

WARNER

That's not what I asked.

Warner leaps to Terry, jams the shotgun barrell to his face.

WARNER (CONT.)

Why'd you do it! Why? Why'd you do it? Why'd you do it! Why! Why? Why!

TERRY

They saw me. They saw me!

Warner lets the barrell of Terry's face.

TERRY (CONT.)

They saw what I did... I killed a man. He- He was a drug runner. He actually was. I let him pay me off. For far too long. He switched the tables. Said he was gonna sing on me. I killed him. Drug him up to a cliff, like you done with me. And I killed him. Right over there.

He nods to the adjacent cliff.

TERRY (CONT.)

You're right. Your daddy did like comin up here. He was right here when I did it. He saw me. I saw him. I followed him home. Tried to talk it out with him. But he wouldn't have it. Said he was gonna get his shotgun. So I- I shot him. And then I shot his wife. Your momma. Never been proud of it, but that's what I done. And I can't change that. Wish I could, but I can't.

WARNER

And the drugs?

TERRY

Planted em. Had em on me from the man I killed. And I planted em. Made it look lawful.

WARNER

You're a dirty son of a bitch. You
dirty-

TERRY

-I can fix it. I'll fix-

WARNER

-There ain't no fixin this!

TERRY

I'll confess.

WARNER

You'll...

TERRY

I'll confess to it.

WARNER

And go to jail. Naw. I got worse
things in mind for you.

TERRY

I can clear your daddy's name.
Your momma and daddy.

Warner looks him over.

WARNER

Go on.

TERRY

I'll confess. Hold a press
conference and confess, Warner.
Say your family was good folk.
That I planted the drugs. That I-
I murdered them, and the man I
told you about. I'll confess it
all.

WARNER

I don't care about him.

TERRY

I do. Need to get this off my
shoulders. It's too much. Weight's
too much.

WARNER

How do I know you'll confess, I
let you go?

TERRY

These good folk heard me. Didn't you?

MARSHALL

We did.

TERRY

I don't confess to it, they can call me on it. I don't have a choice. Please. I can clear their names. I'll clear their names.

Warner chews on this. Studies Allen. Studies Harriett, then Marshall.

WARNER

Naw. I got somethin else in mind... Somebody's gone a die tonight. You don't want it to be you, you're gonna shoot Harriett and Marshall here.

Warner pulls Terry's gun from his waistband. He opens the chamber, empties four bullets to the ground.

Terry thinks, looks the couple over.

TERRY

I ain't stupid. I shoot them, they pull my bullets out of their bodies and I'm worse off than if I confessed about your family.

WARNER

You have a point there. But I ain't interested in your grief no more, Terry. I want my parents' names cleared. I want everyone to know they didn't do what you say they did.

Warner tosses the gun to Terry.

WARNER (CONT.)

There's two bullets left in that gun. You use em to end these good folk, and I'll let you on your way. You clear my momma and daddy's names and I won't never come back for you. You'll be free. Free from your conscience. Free from me.

Terry thinks for a long moment.

TERRY
I can't do that.

WARNER
Yeah ya can.

TERRY
Naw. No, I can't.

WARNER
You value your life?

Terry hesitates. Warner fires a shotgun round into the air.

WARNER
Do you value your life!

TERRY
Yes!

WARNER
Then pull the trigger! Pull-the-
trigger. Pull the trigger. Kill or
be killed! Pull! The! Trigger!

Terry shakily raises the gun toward Harriett.

MARSHALL
Don't you do that. Point it at me.
Point it at me, you Goddamn
coward!

WARNER
Do it! Shoot em! Pull the trigger.
You done it before. Pull the
Goddamn trigger! Do it!

-click-

Nothing. Terry tries again... again, again. Nothing. An empty chamber.

WARNER (CONT.)
See folks, I ain't the only bad
man in these parts.

-chang-

Warner shoots Terry with the shotgun. The force pummels him toward the cliff's edge. His gun slides into the brush just over the cliff.

Warner steps overtop of Terry, gazes into his eyes as he fades.

WARNER (CONT.)

Devil's been waitin on you, you
son-of-a-bitch.

MARSHALL

You'll meet him there soon, I'm
sure.

Warner kneels beside the corpse. He traces over Terry's
face, then his own. A comparison in some strange way.

MARSHALL (CONT.)

You're gone a kill us, make it
quick. We don't want a wait on
you.

HARRIETT

Marshall!

WARNER

I was never gonna kill you all.
This world was made for good
people... For *good* people.
Beginnin to realize that.

Warner walks back toward the trail.

WARNER (CONT.)

Let's get on, Rand.

Randall follows. Warner stops, looks back.

WARNER (CONT.)

I trust you can find your way
back?

Marshall nods.

WARNER (CONT.)

Just don't leave too soon, you
know what I mean.

He continues back down the trail with Randall. They walk out
of sight.

Harriett quickly crawls to Terry's aide. She puts her ear to
his chest.

MARSHALL

Don't you help him.

HARRIETT

We have to do somethin.

MARSHALL

You're right. But don't you help him. Not a man like that.

HARRIETT

He doesn't have a pulse.

Marshall picks up the discarded bullets off the ground.

MARSHALL

He's dead. It happens.

He walks to the cliff's edge.

HARRIETT

What are you doing?

MARSHALL

What I got to.

He kneels down, grabs hold of a loose root, and extends an arm over the edge. He finds the gun entangled in the brush.

He pulls himself back up. Stands. Loads the gun.

MARSHALL

You stay right here.

HARRIETT

Don't you leave me.

MARSHALL

I ain't gonna say it again. Stay put.

HARRIETT

Marshall, I can't stay here by myself-

MARSHALL

-Listen, Harriett. I care the world for you. I do. Don't you think otherwise. But this is somethin has to be done. Somethin I'm gone a do, and somethin you can't be present for. I'll be back for you.

Marshall stalks down the path quietly.

EXT. WILTED PASSING TRAIL - LAST LIGHT

Warner and Randall are walking side by side.

Moonlight illuminates the trailhead awaiting them.

RANDALL

Seems like a good thing.

WARNER

Of course. I had this image of 'em though. Not sure what to think now.

RANDALL

I'd think it'd be a lot easier for you to think. Should have a clearer picture of who they were.

WARNER

You're right. It is a good thing. You're the only thing that's kept me sane- or kept what sanity I got left.

RANDALL

You always been there for me too, War. You're a brother to me. You're my brother.

WARNER

Always gonna be.

RANDALL

Think they'll stay put?

WARNER

Hm?

RANDALL

That couple. You think they'll-

WARNER

-Wouldn't worry 'bout 'em. They understood me. We still got other things to take care of.

MARSHALL (O.S.)

Don't turn around!

Warner starts to cock his shotgun.

Marshall fires a shot.

MARSHALL (CONT.)

Don't you move!

Randall raises his arms. Warner raises his left, cocks the shotgun as he raises his right.

WARNER

What do you think you're doin,
Marshall?

MARSHALL

Don't think I gotta tell you for
you to know, do I?

WARNER

I let you go.

MARSHALL

Shouldn't have. Can't stand by
knowin' what you done. No place
for a man like you.

WARNER

This won't end well for you,
Marshall.

MARSHALL

Don't look to be endin' well for
you neither. Just drop the weapon.
Slowly.

Warner lowers the shotgun by his side. He quickly swings around to face Marshall, and dives sideways as he unloads a shot.

Marshall shoots wildly as the shrapnel shreds his chest and face. He falls silently, his body slides and rolls down the trail.

Warner picks himself up, checks over Marshall as he chokes up blood. Warner sighs.

WARNER

Tried to tell you. Goddamn fool.
Randall, you alright?

Warner searches for Randall. He's lying on his back off the trail.

WARNER (CONT.)

Randall?

He rushes to his aide.

WARNER (CONT.)

Aw, no. Rand.

A bullet wound gushes from Randall's throat.

WARNER (CONT.)

Naw. No. Come on, kid. I need you.
I need you with me, buddy. Come
on, brother. Aw! No. God damnit.
No.

Randall desperately fights for breath.

WARNER (CONT.)

Fight it. Aw, Rand. Fight it
Goddamnit.

Randall gasps a last, short breath. He fades.

WARNER (CONT.)

Fight it...

Warner savors a moment of sorrow. He stands, eyes Marshall
fiercely. Marshall coughs blood.

Warner stalks toward him.

WARNER (CONT.)

Why didn't you stay at the
clearing? Why couldn't you stay
put! All you had to do was stay!
Why didn't you stay!

He brutally kicks Marshall's face. Marshall screams as his
wounds flare.

Warner bellows a primal roar. He kneels on Marshall and
unleashes an animal rage with his fists.

He stands, out of breath, his knuckles embedded with a mix of
Marshall's blood and his own.

He finds the shotgun, grabs his duffle bag. He picks up
Marshall's handgun, holsters it in his waistband, and
carries on.

EXT. CLEARING - NIGHT

Harriett leans against a tree, an understanding painted on
her face, tears welling in her eyes.

EXT. TRAILHEAD - NIGHT

Warner stalks angrily through the muddy gravel parking lot.

An unmarked police cruiser pulls around a tree. It stops, it's headlights trained on Warner.

The hammer of a handgun sounds.

HARLASHIN
You move, I shoot.

Warner forces a disgusted smile, nods.

The headlights dim, the driver and passenger doors open.

Harlashin and Officer Two exit.

HARLASHIN (CONT.)
Drop the gun and the bag. Now.

WARNER
Both know all you want is the
money.

Warner drops the bag with exaggerated movement.

Attention now on the duffle bag, Warner trains the shotgun on Harlashin.

Both Two and Harlashin emphasize their weapons on Warner.

TWO
Hey! Hey. Drop it. I'll shoot.
I'll shoot you.
(To Harlashin)
Just give me the word. Just give
me the word!

HARLASHIN
Naw. Don't shoot.

WARNER
I ain't aversed to killin' you
both. So don't give me an
opportunity.

Warner slowly reveals the gun from his waistband. He aims it at Two, cocks the hammer.

HARLASHIN
You're right. We came for the
money. Leave it. You can walk.

WARNER

You're a rotten excuse for authority. I know you, Carmichael Harlashin. Dirtiest cop I ever saw... Least 'til tonight.

MANITOW (O.S.)

Drop the weapons! Drop your weapons!

Manitow and Allen step into the moonlight. Manitow aims at Harlashin, Allen at Warner.

Harlashin stays on Warner, Two turns to Manitow.

Warner's shotgun remains on Harlashin as he refocuses his handgun on the new couple.

TWO

Drop it. Both of you. Drop it!

HARLASHIN

Stay where you are. Identify yourselves.

MANITOW

I'm a police officer! We are police officers.

ALLEN

We're cops.

TWO

So are we! What are you doing here?

HARLASHIN

I'm Detective Harlashin. Of the-

MANITOW

-Harlashin?

HARLASHIN

Ed? Ed Manitow. I'll be damned.

MANITOW

Yeah. Well. Your wife relayed a lead... to me... over the radio.

Allen eyes Manitow, then Harlashin. Adds it up.

HARLASHIN

Hm. Glad to have some backup. Got us an uncooperative suspect, here.

MANITOW

I see that.

WARNER

Allen? That- That you? That's really you, ain't it?

ALLEN

Uh- Uh. Yeah. Officer Allen-

WARNER

-This ain't no officer. He's a criminal- Like you and me.

TWO

I knew it. I knew somethin' was up.

HARLASHIN

That right? What you doin' with him, Manitow? What're you really doin' here? Are no leads to bring you out here.

ALLEN

(To Warner)

I just want my cut. I need the money, Warner. I need that money.

HARLASHIN

That why you're here? Lookin' for some green. For some honey. Well I think our interests are aligned-

ALLEN

-Already been in your honey.

HARLASHIN

What's that?

ALLEN

He's already been in your honey. In your... honey.

MANITOW

He don't know what he's sayin.

ALLEN

I know damn well what I'm sayin. You got marriage problems? Problems with your marriage? With your wife?

Allen nods toward Manitow.

MANITOW

He don't-

WARNER

-You're fuckin' his wife? Aw. This is rich.

(To Harlashin)

Your wife's fuckin' the cop.

(To Manitow)

You fuckin' her or you love her?

ALLEN

He loves her.

MANITOW

...I do.

HARLASHIN

You mother- That bitch- You- You... motherfucker!

WARNER

(To Manitow)

And you wanna arrest me? Shit. You should be after the money, guy. Take it as a weddin gift, or honeymoon, whatever you like. Don't need me cloudin' up your bright future. Shit. Kill him and take the money. Two birds with a bullet.

HARLASHIN

(To Manitow)

I'll slit your goddamn throat when this is over. Don't doubt me, Ed. I will kill you.

WARNER

Well don't point your weapons at me. I ain't fuckin' this woman.

HARLASHIN/MANITOW

Kathy!/Katherine.

WARNER

I ain't fuckin Kathy. I ain't the enemy.

Harlashin and Manitow mull over the situation, chew on the information at hand.

They retrain their weapons on one another. Warner lowers the shotgun.

WARNER (CONT.)

(To Allen)

And you. Shit, you want the money, you can have it. Just gonna have to fight these animals for it. But you got the survival instinct in you. Only reason you're here, Allen. Two million. You can have it. You can have it all. I ain't in your way. I ain't the one standin in your way.

Warner lowers his handgun. Allen thinks, aims his gun at Two.

WARNER (CONT.)

There you go. Good.

HARLASHIN

Open the bag. Unzip it.

WARNER

Give me your keys.

(Waits)

Look. The officer over here has a car, don't you? Don't need two around here, and I ain't givin' up this money without wheels to get on with.

Harlashin thinks it over. He pulls his keys from his pocket and tosses them to Warner.

TWO

Now unzip the damn bag!

Warner obliges. The money shines in the moonlight.

WARNER

Alright then. I'll leave you boys to it.

Warner backs away. The four remain at each other.

He opens the driver door of Harlashin's unmarked cruiser. He enters, starts the ignition. The headlights reveal the group ahead. They're yelling, nearly at each others throats.

Warner smirks, backs the cruiser around, and drives away.

INT. UNMARKED POLICE VEHICLE - NIGHT

Warner drives slowly down the gravel path. He finds a pack of cigarettes, pulls one out, places it to his lips.

He loads the car lighter, waits. He rolls down the window. A faint sound of yelling resounds in the distance.

The car lighter jumps to the ready. Warner lights his cigarette, draws a hit.

Numerous gunshots echo across the mountain. Then silence.

Warner exhales a plume of smoke as the gravel grinds beneath the cruiser wheels.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The unmarked cruiser rolls through the night at a comfortable pace.

Warner tosses a cigarette out the window, leaves it down, puts his head into the wind. His hair dances wildly in the night air.

EXT. HIGHWAY - MORNING

Warner drives casually down the road. He pulls over near a large storm drain, grabs his shotgun and handgun. He hides them well within the shadows.

He returns to the vehicle, and pulls slowly onto the road.

EXT. PET SHOP - MORNING

Warner parks the unmarked cruiser. He looks around, enters the shop.

EXT. WILTED PASSING TRAILHEAD - MORNING

Harriett has made her way down the mountain. She cautiously searches for Marshall, fearing the worst.

She finds him. Goes to him slowly.

She kneels beside him, fights off her tears unsuccessfully. She kisses him softly.

She sees Randall. She crawls down to him, and pulls her SUV keys from his pocket. She continues on the path.

She comes upon the gravel parking lot and notices the scene before her. Three men shot to death. Further down the parking lot, a fourth corpse with a duffle bag.

Harriett cautiously approaches the fourth man, Harlashin.

She touches his back softly, then harder. No movement. She grabs the gun from his hand, then the bag from his other.

Harlashin jerks quickly, seemingly waking from unconsciousness.

HARRIETT

Oh! My God.

HARLASHIN

Give me that bag. Give me that bag!

He crawls toward her, unable to gain the strength to pull himself to his feet.

HARRIETT

Please stop. Just stop. Don't- Don't come closer.

HARLASHIN

That's- mine. It's mine. I'll- kill you.

He reaches for his ankle. A small gun shows strapped under his pantleg.

HARRIETT

Don't. Stop it. Stop!

She raises the handgun awkwardly.

HARLASHIN

You fuckin bitch. You're dead, you know. You're a dead fuckin bitch.

Harriett discharges a bullet through Harlashin's forehead. She drops the gun in a panic and heads for her SUV.

She stops, turns around, goes back for the gun. She grabs it, throws the duffle bag in the back, climbs into the driver seat, peels out.

EXT. ROADSIDE DINER - DAY

Warner exits the unmarked cruiser. Inside, the same father is dragging his sons toward the entrance. He pushes and pulls them through the door.

Outside, Warner waits on him.

FATHER

I said no salt! No salt on your eggs! You get that straight! Take your asses to the truck. Go on!
And-

Warner drops him to the pavement with a hard right to the jaw.

He stands over the man, now dazed on the pavement.

WARNER

Have some respect for your children, you fuck.

(To kids)

Go on. Get in your truck. He'll be alright. It's okay. Go on.

He walks back to the cruiser, opens the back door. He pulls out a small birdcage. Between the bars, a young bird holds tightly to its perch.

INT. ROADSIDE DINER - DAY

Warner walks through the door.

Inside- no truckers, no black couple. Just one elderly couple enjoying their breakfast at a corner booth.

Tessa looks up from behind the counter. She's brewing more coffee.

She smiles. Warner approaches the counter.

TESSA

If it ain't Mr. Warner. Back for more cherry pie?

WARNER

Brought you somethin.

TESSA

Did you now?

Warner places the birdcage on the counter.

TESSA (CONT.)

Oh. It's beautiful.

WARNER

Scarlet-

TESSA

-Scarlet Tanager! I remember.

WARNER

I been wonderin. I asked, would you leave here with me? Right now?

TESSA

What do you mean?

WARNER

I mean just up and leavin. You. Me. The bird. Gone.

TESSA

Well, I don't know. You askin?

Tessa studies Warner curiously. Warner smiles. Tessa smiles back.

They share a moment as three gunshots echo throughout the diner. Warner hits the countertop hard, knocking the birdcage to its side. He falls slowly to the floor.

In the doorway, the father stands holding a smoking pistol. He breathes heavily, furiously. A scowl etched across his bruised face.

He lowers the pistol and backs out the door toward his truck.

Tessa rushes to Warner's aide. She kneals beside him, holds his head.

TESSA

Oh my God. Warner. Jesus.

(To elderly couple)

Call nine-one-one. Go on, hurry.

(To Warner)

Hold on, Honey. You're okay. Just hang on for me. Oh, Warner. No.

No. Warner. Warner...

He holds an understanding smile as blood creeps up his throat, up to his lips.

Tessa looks him over. Warner gazes at her, his eyes glossy wet.

She kisses him defiantly. She holds onto his lips, releases, opens her eyes. He's gone. Her lips retain a thin film of his blood.

Behind her, on the...

COUNTERTOP

The Scarlet Tanager nudges the cage door open. It flies

about the diner, lands on Warner's expired body for a moment. It studies him, then her.

It takes to flight again, lands on a chair by a window. It looks outside toward nature, toward its world, toward freedom.

FADE out.