CHOICES

By
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EXT. DEER HEAD TAVERN - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

A thin, geeky, slightly beer buzzed man exits the tavern and scans the lot. LOUIS (19) takes a swig from a bottle and descends the three step porch.

Another scan. The lot is unpaved and poorly lit. All cars are haphazardly parked.

Woods surround the lot.

Louis searches for his step brother. He weaves around cars. Finally, he calls out.

    LOUIS
    Rick!  Oh, Rick... Mr. Rick.
    Ricky Boy?

Louis lobs his empty beer bottle into the woods.

A loud YELP.

Louis runs to the sound and discovers WAYNE MORGAN (21) big, brutal, tattoo adorned.

Wayne fiercely undulates on top of VIVIAN DAVEY (17). Rag in her mouth, jeans and panties down to her thighs, torn blouse. Completely distressed.

Wayne looks up, rises and turns to Louis.

    LOUIS (CONT’D)
    Wa, Wa... Wayne?

    WAYNE
    You’re done wimp shit!

Vivian, breathless, out of control, angry, rises and collects herself.

She quickly re-adjusts what clothing she can and turns to Wayne.

    VIVIAN
    You rotten bastard!!

Wayne grabs Louis, with both hands, at his throat:

A DEATH CHOKE.

From behind, a baseball bat hits Wayne’s head.
Wayne goes down HARD.

RICK (19) six foot, athletic, stands over Wayne, baseball bat at READY. Rick looks to Louis.

Vivian speechless; awe struck

RICK
(to Louis)
You okay?

Louis stares at Wayne while trying to catch his breath.

Wayne’s eyes are open but he isn’t breathing.

LOUIS
God, Rick, I think he’s dead.

Rick bends down. Feels for a pulse.

RICK
I think you’re right.

Vivian recovers from her speechless trance.

VIVIAN
...I’m so outta here!

She sprints off into the woods. Rick stands.

LOUIS
Oh God! Oh God! What do we do?

RICK
Well, I think we’ve got choices here Louis. First choice, we leave the scum bucket bully here, go back inside and get bent.

LOUIS
No! No! No! We call the cops, tell ‘em what really happened. We saved the girl--

RICK
And I killed the police chief’s son. Don’t like that choice, Louis.

LOUIS
But, it’s, it’s... like self defense.
RICK
Here’s a third choice. We put Wayne in the truck and take him camping with us. We bury him six feet under at the GROG.

Rick lights a cigarette.

LOUIS
No! I can’t be a part of that. Besides, I told Billy Gentry we were camping out at the GROG tonight.

RICK
You sly dog! Perfect! An alibi! We’ll drive to JACKSON’S BLUFF, instead, bury Wayne and camp there. No one goes to the BLUFF. Done deal!.. AND we’ll bury him deep.

LOUIS
No way! No way! I can’t do it!

Rick places his arm around Louis’s shoulder and leads Louis in a slow walk around Wayne’s body.

RICK
Lou... Louissss.
Didn’t you tell me that Wayne was the kid who tortured you in grade school?.. Glued your books together, shave creamed your locker, constantly pelted you with spit balls.

LOUIS
Well, um... kind of.

Rick expectorates and kicks a stone mid pace.

RICK
Stole your lunch and made you pay him to get it back.

LOUIS
Yeah, but...

RICK
Made you eat dirt. Held your head down in the boy’s rest room toilet.

They pause, turn and simultaneously stare at Wayne.
LOUIS
Uh... Well, sometimes.

RICK
Hell, even in high school, you said, he always tried to embarrass you, especially in front of the cheerleaders.

Louis breaks from Rick and stands with his head down, moping.

LOUIS
Okay, okay...

RICK
Didn’t he steal your clothes, tie you butt naked to the flag pole... outside of the girl’s locker room? If I’d been around then--

LOUIS
(shouting)
Enough! Enough!

Wayne suddenly sits up; drooling, eyes blinking wildly.

WAYNE
Buh,buh,buh,buh,buh.

Louis picks up the baseball bat and hits Wayne in the head as hard as possible... WHACK! A short period of SILENCE.

RICK
... Camping???

LOUIS
(hesitantly)
I’ll take is legs.

Rick extinguishes his cigarette in the palm of his hand and flicks the butt into the woods.

EXT. DEER HEAD TAVERN - PARKING LOT - NIGHT (LATER)

Rick and Louis sit on the tailgate of their pick-up truck.

A police cruiser pulls up. PATROLMAN JESSUP (40) dutiful, drives. There is a passenger in the rear seat.

RICK
(softly)
I’ll do the talking Louis.
Window lowers.

PATROLMAN JESSUP
Good Evening gentlemen.

RICK
Officer Jessup..? Yeah, back at ya.

PATROLMAN JESSUP
Chief Morgan’s son Wayne has been reported missing. You boys know Wayne, yes, no? Have you seen him?

RICK

The cruiser’s rear window facing the boys lowers. Vivian Davey slides over and thoroughly eye balls the boys.

VIVIAN
Noop, not them. The two I saw were much older. One was short and bald and the other; tall. Real tall. Like giraffe tall. I think he was wearing a toupee.

Both windows close simultaneously. The cruiser drives off and exits the parking lot.

Rick and Louis stand and face each other at the rear of the pick-up truck. The tailgate is open. A hand is exposed from underneath a tarp secured in the bed.

RICK
Ya know, six years of Little League baseball, three years of Babe Ruth, four varsity baseball letters and I never swung a bat like that. It was dark but I do believe you transferred Mantle’s signature to his forehead.

LOUIS
Yeah, thanks, I guess.

Rick tosses a Mickey Mantle signature Louisville Slugger into the bed of the truck as they enter the cab.

RICK (O.S.)

FADE OUT