

ORTEGA HIGHWAY

An original screenplay by

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EXT. CASINO PARKING STRUCTURE -- NIGHT

Four bikers arrive O.S. Riding an eclectic mix of motorcycles, which range from Harley to crotch-rocket to dirt bike.

The Bikers park their machines pointing so as to allow for a quick escape. They exit their bikes in unison. They have the looks of people up to no good: nervous, a bit jumpy, and tightly-strung.

A moment later, A fifth biker, who drives a dirt bike, who we shall call SUZUKI, 25-ish, petite Native American, pulls up to speak with the Biker Boss, who we shall call DUCATI. He rides a purple Ducati motorcycle, is clad in expensive Euro riding leathers with purple highlights and he sports a green Mohawk atop his helmet.

Suzuki whispers something into Ducati's ear. Ducati contemplates whatever it was that Suzuki told him for a moment; Ducati is deep in thought.

Ducati points away into the parking structure and commands Suzuki to move his bike to a position and --

DUCATI

Keep an eye out for trouble.

-- Suzuki slowly drives to the position.

With Ducati in the lead, the four bikers move as a team on foot, towards what is most likely the Casino Entrance. However --

EXT. CASINO SIGN - MOMENTS LATER

-- they arrive at a sign: One way points towards "CASINO" the other points to "CASINO OPERATIONS." The bikers take the path to the "Casino Operations."

INT. CASINO OPERATIONS - MOMENTS LATER

The four Bikers move cautiously through the area. They move continuously until they find the "Chief's" offices.

INT. CHIEF'S OFFICE DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Ducati motions for one of the Bikers to come forward to him; This Biker is carrying the burglary tools.

The Biker hands Ducati a flat steel crowbar. He inches it into position, and CRACK goes the door as it opens.

The Bikers wait for a moment, as if waiting to see if the alarm goes off. Nothing.

DUCATI
(Whispering)
Good. T.J. got the alarm.

Ducati motions for two of the bikers to split-up and keep a look-out at two points, as Ducati and his right-hand-man, who we shall call NINJA, enter the Chief's office.

DUCATI (CONT'D)
(Whispering)
Cover the door.

NINJA
Yeah, Boss.

Ninja moves to the door, and closes it most of the way, but keeps it cracked open, so that he can peer out, scanning for any trouble coming their way.

Ducati, with the crowbar in his hand, pries open several drawers on Chief's desk, stuffing valuables and papers into his jacket.

Ducati eyes a beautiful bronze statue of a cowboy on horseback shooting a bear. Ducati picks it up and examines it closely for a few moments, and then he stuffs it into his jacket.

Ducati finishes ransacking Chief's desk, and moves to a large display cabinet that contains several important tribal artifacts and relicts. One of which he is after.

Ducati spots what he wants, and his face is lit-up in troubled glee.

DUCATI
(Mesmerized by what he is
seeing)
Aaaaaa!

INT. CHIEF'S DISPLAY CABINET - MOMENTS LATER

We now see the full resplendent collection of beautiful Native American tribal artifacts, handsomely on display within the glass display cabinet.

Inside the glass case is a lit-up ancient Native American Coup stick. It has nicks and dings; it is a spectacular artifact of religious importance; it is ancient and it appears to have been used quite a few times.

DUCATI, is now working on defeating the alarm; he has a post-it note with numbers on it. He punches the numbers, but the alarm is not defeated.

He is having some difficulties.

NINJA
(Scared, breathless)
Come on... time's up!

DUCATI
Code ain't working.

NINJA
Smash it open! Let's get outta here, man!

DUCATI
(Grunting)
T.J. told me the code works.

NINJA
T.J. Dyslexic! You know that.

Ducati tries entering a few more codes, mixing some numbers, in an attempt to get the cabinet to open. He drops the Post-it note. He picks it up and turns it upside down. Still no good.

DUCATI
Fuck. Son of a bitch. T.J.'s gunna pay....

Ducati takes the crowbar and strikes the glass case. Nothing happens. Ducati strikes it again. Nothing. Ducati uses all his strength for this last hit, and the glass case shatters into millions of little diamond-like pieces.

DUCATI (CONT'D)
(Mesmerized)
He, He, He, Yeah!

Ducati reaches for the Coup Stick, and seizes it. The moment he grabs it, alarms and sirens and lights explode from everywhere.

With all the excitement, Ducati is unfazed. He is mesmerized by the Coup Stick and is captivated by its beauty. He is in a different world, until --

NINJA
Gotta BLOW! NOW, Boss!

-- Ninja shakes him out of his trance, pulling on his jacket.

All shit is breaking loose.

Ducati stuffs the Coup Stick in his jacket and he zips it closed, and they start to exit the office.

As they try to run out of the Chief's office, Ninja spots a Rent-a-cop running towards them, so he stops Ducati from exiting, and he holds the door closed, until the rent-a-cop pushes through the door, where Ninja punches the back of his head, lights out.

Ninja sticks his head out the door, looks around and then pulls Ducati out the door with him as they make their getaway.

The two are running through very nice corridor as they try to stay ahead of the guards. Their two compatriots are running behind them.

EXT. CASINO PARKING STRUCTURE - MOMENTS LATER

The two run out of the Casino Operations area and back into the parking garage. The Bikers hop atop their motorcycles when --

RENT-A-COP
Stop! ...

-- A Rent-A-Cop comes out of the building behind them, gun in his hands; He lines them up for a shooting.

At this moment --

RENT-A-COP (CONT'D)
...Or I'll shoot!

-- Suzuki arrives, and skids into the Rent-a-cop and bowls him over, his gun skids away across the concrete, out of reach.

Suzuki picks up his bike, cranks it up, and drives away, his engine screaming, tires squealing.

Tribal Police, guards and rent-a-cops are now all converging upon the Bikers. Cop cars with lights and sirens pierce the dark night. Seems like every cop in a hundred miles is converging upon the Bikers.

Ducati, Ninja and the others hurriedly crank 'em up. Wild racing motorcycle whining engines drown-out the sirens.

Ducati quickly puts on his helmet, which sports a wild green Mohawk. He slams it into gear and his motorbike screams away.

EXT. CASINO ROADS, STREETS, PARKING LOTS - MOMENTS LATER

He is joined by Ninja. Both motorcycles screaming as they make their getaway. Suzuki joins them which makes three crazy motor bikes running from the cops. Another two Biker motorcycles follow close behind.

As they make their escape, now show-up the guards and the Tribe Police. All shit breaks loose.

Bikers hop atop planters, barriers, cars, etc. As they make their way to escape.

The cops are no match for the Bikers as they speed and swerve through the crowded casino roads, streets, parking lots, as they make their Getaway.

EXT. PALA (TEMECULA) ROAD - MOMENTS LATER

The Bikers escape the Casino, and are on the road, with Ducati in the lead. Lots of cars are also on the road. The bikers dangerously swerve in and out of traffic, taking huge risks to escape. Soon, the traffic reduces and then completely dies away.

The five bikers more or less join up.

Ducati pulls the Coup Stick from his jacket and raises it into the air for his gang to see.

DUCATI
(Tribal, guttural)
[Triumphant Scream!]

The Bikers behind him break into celebratory victorious guttural Native American chants, screams and song.

The Bikers move away as their voices fade.

BEGIN TITLES

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BEDROOM - CONDO COMPLEX - DAY

Mallik, 40's, handsome, dark and tall, is alone in bed under the covers, when the phone rings. Mallik looks like he got to bed at 4am; he is dog tired and only able to open one eye.

Mallik's hand fumbles as it passes across a bedside table; he is feeling for something.

MALLIK (V.O.)

The phone screamed and rattled before the sun had a chance to rise. At least that was my initial perception. I have found that one's initial perception is often dead wrong.

Mallik clumsily seizes the ringing and rattling older portable telephone - then he slowly moves it to his tired, whisker-stubbed face; partially smothered in a fluffy pillow. He answers.

MALLIK

(Tired and half awake)
Hello?

INTERCUT AS NECESSARY - INT. OFFICE SUITE - SAME TIME

JEFFERY, 30's, is very neat and clean and well dressed; he displays some urbane mannerisms; His voice is a bit high-pitched.

Jeffery is on the telephone. He telephones Mallik from the W.L. Norton Detective Agency, where Mallik is employed. (Jeffery is Mallik's friend and also the Boss's Man Friday.)

JEFFERY

(Loud, cheerful, a bit shrilly)
You still sleeping, Tiger?

MALLIK

(Lying, yawning)
Nah, you caught me in a yawn. I'm drinking coffee and reading the paper.

Mallik yawns a bit and blinks a lot before his eyes adjust.

JEFFERY

Newspaper? The last one liquidated two months ago.

MALLIK
(Trying to refocus
Jeffery)
What's up, Jeffery?

Groggy, Mallik rises with his phone stuck to his head and moves to the bathroom in pajama bottoms and a rank old T-shirt.

MALLIK (V.O.)
I needed to 'liquidate' in a bad way.

JEFFERY
(Unclear banter)
Blah blah blah.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mallik stands and urinates. One hand on his phone, the other O.S. The sound is heard by Jeffery.

JEFFERY
Seems like each time I call you,
you're on the can.

We hear the drip-drip of Mallik's last few drops.

MALLIK
(Relieved)
You've got a sixth sense.

MALLIK (V.O.)
Jeffery had a bad habit of calling
while I was using the commode.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mallik grabs a dress shirt and puts it over his tee.

JEFFERY
The Boss says your report was
timely and well written. He
forwarded it to the client's
attorney, who forwarded it to the
old man, who forwarded it to his
old lady's attorney, who forwarded
it to the old lady.

MALLIK
You got a point to your roundabout
story?

Mallik examines and selects pants from several in the closet.

JEFFERY

I was getting to it.

MALLIK

Can you then? I got a headache.

Mallik puts on the pants, buttons his shirt and opens his sock drawer. It's empty. He grabs several from the floor and sniffs them until he finds a tolerable pair.

JEFFERY

Sure. The old lady capitulated and settled. Took about an hour this morning. Superb work, Rick.

Mallik sits on the edge of his bed and puts on stiff socks.

MALLIK

Thanks. When do I get paid?

JEFFERY

Check's signed and waiting.

MALLIK

I'll be down in an hour.

Mallik puts his shoes on.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I lied; I'd be down in twenty minutes.

JEFFERY

Good. Boss has another case for you. Very hush-hush. Requires a man of your disposition.

MALLIK

Not sure I like how you said that.

JEFFERY

This one offers per-diem, mileage, expenses, full day rate...

MALLIK

Sounds tempting.

JEFFERY

...And no tie required.

MALLIK

Thanks, Toots! See you soon.

Mallik disconnects.

MALLIK (V.O.)

Jeffery hates it when I call him
Toots, that's why I call him Toots;
Stick a blonde wig on him, some
rubber-balloon-boobs 'n high-heels,
and he becomes one hot looking
dame. I got the photographic-proof
security-bolted to my office wall.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. W.L. NORTON DETECTIVE AGENCY - LATER

Mallik enters the professional building.

INT. OFFICE SUITE - MOMENTS LATER

Mallik enters and sees a SECRETARY talking on a Plantronics-
like headset phone as she answers incoming calls and takes
notes.

Some other few STAFF are hard at work: sorting, filing,
talking on the phone, etc.

Also in the office are some GUARDS wearing rent-a-cop outfits
with modern cop hats and matching badges. These Guards are
sitting at a utility steel desk, filling-out some forms,
getting ready to start work.

Mallik sneaks up to Jeffery as he files paperwork, and
pinches his ass.

MALLIK

(Playfully grinning)

Hiya, Toots!

Startled, Jeffery jumps up and away as if a spider just bit
him. A few of the Staff see Mallik's move, and smile, giggle
to themselves. The Guards notice none of this.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I snuck up behind Jeffery and
playfully pinched a buttock cheek.

JEFFERY

Not in the office, Rick!

MALLIK

(Playful tone)

Where then?

JEFFERY
Shaddup, you freak.

Jeffery recovers quickly, happy for any attention. Mallik laughs and winks.

MALLIK
You saying I'm unnatural?

MALLIK (V.O.)
Anybody else did what I just did to Jeffery, he'd date 'em. When I pinch his cheeks, he giggles and acts coy. Story of my life.

MALLIK
You got my check, Jeffery?

Mallik follows him over to a desk, where Jeffery sifts through several pay envelopes.

JEFFERY
Yeah, but I ought to be charging you, the way you man-handle me!

MALLIK
You going to sell yourself for the five dollars I got in the envelope? I figured you'd cost not less than twenty.

Jeffery finds Mallik's pay envelope and hands it to him.

JEFFERY
(Resigned)
Whenever you're around, I gotta give it away for free it seems.

Mallik opens his envelope; as if realizing he's been cheated.

MALLIK (V.O.)
I ripped open the envelope, expecting to be screwed. I was.

INT. BOSS'S OFFICE - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Mallik is in the private office of W.L. NORTON, (owner and namesake for this detective business) who is handsome and in his late 60s; he wears a tailored double-breasted suit of high-quality. He wears frame-less eye glasses. His hair sports a nature-rounded peak set amid a slightly receding hairline of dark undyed hair; His demeanor is business-like; no-nonsense.

W.L. Norton's office is furnished as one would expect a successful business man's office to be furnished: Walnut and leather. On his office wall are some important photographs and an 1880's-era gilted-eagle Bull's-Eye mirror.

W.L. Norton addresses Mallik, who is fully in charge. They are sitting. W.L. Norton is slowly puffing -- and enjoying -- an expensive stogie.

W.L. NORTON

...Client's opposition capitulated. We don't need you for the whole week. I'm not gonna pay you for not working. What kinda crap are you spewing this morning, Rick?

MALLIK

You told me I was needed the whole week.

W.L. NORTON

But you got it done in two days.

MALLIK

But I still deserve the week's pay.

W.L. NORTON

You are one funny man, Rick. Sit down. I got another job for you.

MALLIK

You got paid for the week, even if I only worked two days, right?

W.L. NORTON

It doesn't work that way, Rick, we got expenses.

MALLIK

I got expenses.

W.L. NORTON

Your twenty-five year-old Chrysler is a gold mine at fifty-five cents a mile.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I shut my mouth and cut my losses.

MALLIK

What's this new job?

Jeffery enters with doughnuts and coffee for two.

MALLIK (V.O.)

The Boss laid out the basics of the new gig. Jeffery brought in doughnuts.

(beat)

When the Boss wasn't looking, I tried to pinch Jeffery's butt cheeks again; He acted like I tried to stuff my whole hand up his skirt. Fun times.

Mallik tries to pinch Jeffery who leaps up and away.

W.L. NORTON

I wish you two would lay off that shit in my office.

MALLIK (V.O.)

Jeffery flushed crimson. I stopped flushing years ago.

Mallik waits a beat - then pretends to sniff his fingers.

MALLIK

Jeffery, you're gunna need to learn to wipe better.

MALLIK (V.O.)

Jeffery snickered. The Boss looked like he was about to blow coffee and doughnut chunks across the room.

Jeffery leaves, smiling, and quietly closes the door.

W.L. NORTON

What the hell's wrong with you two?

MALLIK

We man-bonded over the Geneva case a few years ago.

W.L. NORTON

Well, I wish you'd cut out the public affection shit. The staff is starting to talk.

MALLIK

Only about half the gossip is true.

W.L. NORTON

Half is half too much!

Norton grabs a manila folder off his desk and hands it to Mallik, who opens it. The notes and papers are sparse and few. Mallik is concerned.

MALLIK

There's nothing in here.

W.L. NORTON

It is a very delicate case. Word-of-mouth mostly, nothing written down on our end. Client requires discretion and agreed to pay per diem, mileage, and hourly, plus expenses for our very best.

MALLIK

And Cost-plus to you?

W.L. NORTON

We get our cut, too. You know...

MALLIK (V.O.)

I cut him short.

MALLIK

I know... You've got expenses.

W.L. NORTON

Exactly right.

MALLIK

How long is this job?

W.L. NORTON

The Client wants to meet you first, and then if you pass the interview, he'll employ you until it is done.

MALLIK

How many hours?

W.L. NORTON

Until the job is done.

MALLIK

What bill rate?

W.L. NORTON

Top dollar, hourly plus per diem and expenses.

MALLIK (V.O.)

He handed me some more papers with directions, a partial map and an address, plus a letter of introduction. All old world stuff.

Norton stands and walks Mallik to the door, placing a fatherly hand on Mallik's shoulder.

W.L. NORTON

I told him you'd meet him after lunchtime at his Temecula estate.

MALLIK

Temecula?

INT. OUTSIDE BOSS'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Norton shows Mallik that the conversation is over.

MALLIK (V.O.)

The boss walked me to his door, and gently glad-handed me out of it.

W.L. NORTON

Yes, Temecula.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I winked at Jeffery and shoved a couple of sticks of Wrigley's into my masticator... then raced hell to the bank.

Mallik exits the W.L. Norton building.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. INSIDE CAR - TRAVELING - ORTEGA HIGHWAY - LATER

Mallik drives his 20+ year-old, blue Chrysler on Highway 74 by San Juan Capistrano between I-5 and I-15... past restaurants, houses, condos, etc. and then into undeveloped wild lands. His land-barge smokes. Ominous storm clouds brood above.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I could see the black clouds that have been chasing me for the last hour. They matched my malicious mood...

Mallik glances into his rearview and sees -

MALLIK (V.O.)

One fellow on a motorbike found amusement teasing the commuters... his riding style closely matched the pattern and precision of a motorcycle cop on a ticket-writing binge. He'd pass one car, speed up to the next commuter, then fall in behind and match the speed for a mile or so. Exactly the way a cop would do the trick.

MOTORCYCLE JACKASS performs stunts.

MALLIK (V.O.)

It is easy to spot when the commuter is caught by this false cop: a startled under-steer into one of the curves followed by an aggressive over-steer to correct the mistake...

A clown car (Smartcar, Fiat) swerves as the Motorcycle Jackass moves up the chain, inching closer and closer to Mallik.

MALLIK (V.O.)

... a real cop would light-up the driver for suspected drunken driving. I watched his routine in my rear-view as he moved up the feeding chain.

Another commuter car swerves as the false cop inches closer to Mallik. The Motorcycle Jackass experiences great joy as he harasses the commuters.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I decided it was high time to teach this dirty biker a valuable lesson. The Biker rocketed past his latest victim and began his game with me. Quick as a whip, his blinding headlights flooded my rear-view which started the raccoon-tan I had always wanted...

The Motorcycle Jackass pats the hood of a car he passes, just to show the commuter who really owns the road, and as he catches up to the rear of Mallik's Chrysler --

MALLIK (V.O.)

At the next long curve, I unloaded a bottle of window-washing fluid onto him - flushed him head-to-toe. Bird guano, bug pieces and other miscellaneous detritus from my windshield peppered him like unwelcome miniature bird-shot.

-- Mallik sprays Jackass with washing fluids. And then one further humiliation: --

MALLIK (V.O.)

I punched the gas pedal to the floor which flooded the engine and produced an oily tailpipe emission. When a smoky tailpipe is called for, my Chrysler is king.

-- Mallik floods the carburetor which causes thick oily smoke to pour from the Chrysler's tailpipe, inundating the Jackass.

MALLIK (V.O.)

A real cop would have lit me up and written whatever kind of ticket he could get away with, but this guy dropped back to wipe the bird shit from his visor, and to spit Chrysler smoke from his lungs.

Jackass pulls himself together and accelerates towards the Chrysler.

MALLIK (V.O.)

At the next curve, the biker began his counterattack. As he got closer, I could see that he rode a newer European Ducati and appeared to be sporting a green Mohawk. I didn't believe my eyes... Another quick glance showed he had affixed a push broom brush atop his helmet for visual effect.

Jackass drives angry and aggressive. The Push-broom Mohawk fibers are bent back, showing awesome speed and maneuvering.

MALLIK (V.O.)

His swerving and speeding in 'n out of traffic led me to the conclusion that he must've been sitting atop the push stick portion.

Motorcycle Jackass comes up fast on the Chrysler. Angry. He may attack.

Mallik extracts the huge wad of gum he's been chewing with two fingers, and makes a very long, deep, low hawking sound, as if pulling phlegm up from the lowest and deepest parts of his lungs.

MALLIK (V.O.)

The biker made his move. He sped up and hugged the center stripes. I pinched the wad of gum I was masticating, instantly hawked-up a mouthful of lung spittle, and waited.

Jackass displays a raw burst of speed as he catches up - then raises his elbow as he passes the Chrysler.

MALLIK (V.O.)

In a raw burst of power, he caught up to the driver-side rear, about to knock off my side-view mirror. I hit the button that instantly dropped my window and spat the entire mouthful of snot-cheese up and into the air.

Mallik turns and glances back, eyeing long streamers of mucousy phlegm embedded into and trailing the biker's Mohawk; his visor deeply smeared with snot which severely obscures his vision.

In trouble, Jackass slams his brakes which squeal and smoke. His motorcycle swerves right, left, then right again, all the way into the bushes, stopping just short of a steep cliff.

MALLIK (V.O.)

His brakes screamed in muffled agony as the bike slowed rapidly, swerving all the way to the shoulder and into the brush.

Jackass claws at the mucus which smears his face mask. He has long streamers of phlegm embedded into his helmet Mohawk.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I slowed and glanced again into the rear-view. Saw his fingers smear the still warm mucus. His feeble attempt to clear the obstruction only achieved further obscuration. In my mind's eye, I can still see him clawing at his visor.

(MORE)

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

Lesson delivered. I was hopeful that my tutelage would inspire him to remember the safe-driving, two-second rule.

A smug Mallik returns the pinched gum to his happy mouth, wipes his lips and chin with the back of his hand, and raises the window to retain any lingering warmth.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I dropped my foot hard on the accelerator to make-up for time spent tutoring.

EXT. INSIDE MALLIK'S CAR - TRAVELING - LATER

Mallik passes the Riverside County border.

MALLIK (V.O.)

The Ortega Highway narrowed and then began a quick transition to poorly maintained.

A series of unexpected bumps and rattles announced through the Chrysler's vibrations.

MALLIK (V.O.)

Most of the drive into Riverside County is pretty smooth - almost graceful - so long as you are in Orange County. Once you leave it though, it's like you are back in the Wild West: Pot-holes, Biker joints, dirt roads... plus the assorted oddball collections of weed-growers and meth-heads. Everything wild that O.C. had pushed out years ago thrived in certain parts of Riverside County.

EXT. HELL'S KITCHEN RESTAURANT - LAKE ELSINORE - LATER

Mallik eyes the roadside diner as he passes it. Many motorcycles are gathered and parked in a seemingly random manner. Some bikers are milling about.

The look on Mallik's face tells that he doesn't like bikers.

As Mallik passes Hell's Kitchen, we see some unruly bikers acting aggressively towards commuters: stepping into traffic, blocking passing cars to let bikers exit, etc. (In Mallik's mind, bikers are lawless thugs.)

EXT. RIVERSIDE COUNTY ~3 MILES WEST OF HELL'S KITCHEN - LATER

MALLIK (V.O.)

The highway's last few miles of hairpin turns were a little rough, and you were never sure if the guy in the opposing lane was going to over-steer into your lane, and cause a head-on crash.

EXT. RIVERSIDE COUNTY ~1 MILE EAST OF HELL'S KITCHEN - LATER

Mallik has close calls with cars drifting into his lane.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I finally broke through the menacing clouds which had been chasing me from the Beach Cities. The sky in front of me opened up bright with wispy, misty clouds.

Mallik exits the overcast and enters bright blue sky and light.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I gained altitude quickly as I climbed the last few miles before the downhill plunge into Elsinore.

EXT. ORTEGA HIGHWAY - APEX ABOVE LAKE ELSINORE - LATER

Mallik is presented with a beautiful view of Lake Elsinore.

MALLIK (V.O.)

My windshield was filled by a bright blue lake, surrounded by bone-dry desert. The remaining drive down to the lake was via a generously wide highway lane, with ample turnouts and a gentle slope.

Mallik continues downhill towards Temecula via Lake Elsinore, Lakeland Village, Wildomar and Murrieta.

EXT. GRAND AVENUE - NEAR I-74 INTERSECTION - LATER

MALLIK (V.O.)

To my left, over my shoulder, every once in a while, a skittish view of the lake, burst through the trees between the bungalows and shacks.

EXT. GRAND AVENUE - LAKELAND VILLAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Panoramic lake views as Mallik passes houses and trees.

The Chrysler blows smoke through Lakeland Village.

MALLIK (V.O.)

For just a fleeting moment, I
floated back to my younger years
when I swam and fished in the lake,
before the rich folk up the canyon
dammed the stream and killed the
lake. I pushed the pedal a bit
harder to whiz past the memories...
and the stink.

EXT. GRAND AVENUE - WILDOMAR - LATER

MALLIK (V.O.)

I slammed a couple of fresh sticks
of Wrigley's into my mouth hoping
its minty oil might overpower my
naturally distinctive halitosis.

EXT. GENERAL KEARNEY ROAD - TEMECULA - LATER

Mallik looks out as if to notice the "General Kearny Road"
sign. (This takes significance later.)

EXT. PRE-ENTRANCE - CHIEF'S COMPOUND - TEMECULA - LATER

Mallik passes a pinkish desert gate-wall of gorgeous
flagstone.

MALLIK (V.O.)

The flagstone was chiseled and
fitted with the utmost care that
only a true artisan can impart.
Each stone was masterfully
selected, chiseled, and manually
fitted into place. There must be
some mortar or concrete holding it
together, but I could not see any.

The turn into the compound is recessed to allow a few cars to
queue and await their turn at a guard's shack.

EXT. CHIEF'S COMPOUND ENTRANCE - MOMENTS LATER

An OLD LADY in mid-sized Ford SUV makes a multi-point turn to exit the guard stop area.

MALLIK (V.O.)

One car was in front of me. The Driver was a frail old lady who was animatedly explaining she was looking for the Community Center. The Guard either did not know where it was or chose to be unhelpful to the old lady.

She could pull forward and exit but makes an ill-fated U-turn.

MALLIK (V.O.)

The old lady made a twelve-point U-turn in front of me; She stopped steering for a moment, to catch her breath and to give a knurled arthritic bird to the stone-faced Guard. She gave me the finger, too.

She gives THE GUARD the finger once more, then pulls away.

MALLIK (V.O.)

As I put my Chrysler into drive, a silent Japanese electric sedan shot around me and stole my rightful place at the front of the line.

Mallik puts his Chrysler into gear but a small Prius darts around him.

MALLIK (V.O.)

Before my righteous anger could build too high, the driver drove right past the rent-a-guard without stopping or slowing. I followed the lady's lead into the compound.

The Prius passes the guard. Mallik's look is parked somewhere between concern and WTF - then whips past the guard himself.

The Guard turns his back to Mallik as he watches the Prius speed past him and park.

Mallik clandestinely spits a large wad of chewed gum out his window and onto the pavement in front of the Guard shack.

EXT. CHIEF'S COMPOUND - PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Chief's compound is a working / work-related residence. It is miles from the Casino. It is elegant and expensive looking. The parking lot is concrete with imbedded flat local rocks, which gave a sublime look to the whole area.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I parked next to the lady's electro-sedan. I wondered for a moment how unhappy the owner will be when he sees my Chrysler's dripped oil that I neglected to change for the last fifty thousand or so miles.

ANGLE ON ELVIS MARTINEZ

as she exist the Prius. The Chief's elder daughter, early 30s, an American Indian Princess who looks and acts the part. Well spoken, educated, Elvis is a bit of a tom boy. She walks with authority.

Mallik exits his Chrysler.

MALLIK

Nice driving, lady, you get lots of tickets?

MALLIK (V.O.)

One of my better pick-up lines.
(beat)

On second thought, I had a brief notion that my line might have come out a bit sideways.

ELVIS

You tourists are supposed to check-in with the guard!

MALLIK

I work here, Toots.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I retorted smartly -- mostly a feign to buy some time -- while I examined her in greater detail.

ELVIS

You're kind of skinny for a cook. And frumpy. Didn't they tell you about the dress code? Or can you not hear too well?

MALLIK (V.O.)

A broad with a mouth, who knows how
to use it.

MALLIK

I'm Rick Mallik.

ELVIS

Let me guess, your friends call you
"Dick?"

MALLIK

No, they call me Rick.

ELVIS

Well, in that case, I'll call you
Dick, with a small 'd.'

MALLIK

(Coy)

So long as you call me.

Mallik smiles. Elvis looks him up and down; and likes what
she sees.

ELVIS

(Slight smile, lying)

Unlikely.

They stare at each other for a long pregnant beat.

MALLIK (V.O.)

We spent an awkward moment
reloading our rejoinder cannons. I
liked this dame, but felt I had to
destroy the deadly silence.

MALLIK

I'm here to see the Chief.

ELVIS

(Victor's smile)

You expect me to announce you?

MALLIK (V.O.)

She had a knowing and growing
smile; one which I found was hard
to read the edges of. The central
part I got, but the edges gave me
some trouble. Story of my life.

MALLIK

Yes, please, Ma'am.

MALLIK (V.O.)

She walked off into the compound,
leaving me to fry in the desert.

Mallik glances back over his shoulder at the Guard Shack. The Guard found his gum, which makes Mallik smile.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I could see the inevitable look of a guy who had just realized that he had stepped in something vile - he tries to stop the downward momentum of his foot as it slams into the semi-fluid pile.

(beat)

The pile always wins. He danced around as if in slow-motion, trying to keep his foot out of the gum.

(beat)

His dance elicited a short but lively ditty...

The Guard, we'll now call "T.J." steps into the nasty gum. Very pissed-off, he lets fly some ad-libbed irate words - then dances around, trying not to take the whole pile of gum up into his shoe.

T.J.

Shit! Shit! Fuck! Son of a...

Mallik grins and enjoys the spectacle.

MALLIK (V.O.)

... his lyrics captivated me.

(beat)

The day was getting better moment by moment. I grinned at him. He grinned back at me. Nice fella. Quite a good dancer.

The sun glinted off of T.J.'s Tijuana grill work as he danced and gyrated.

T.J. gives Mallik the evil-eye mad-dog stare down, but Mallik just grins back, taunting him further.

The Chief's heavy-set manservant, NORRIS, arrives. Norris is in his mid-40's. He has the classic features of a stout and well-built modern Native American Indian. His appearance says "Warrior."

MALLIK (V.O.)

I was still grinning when a heavy-set, suited man with a ponytail arrived to take me to the chief. I had my business card ready and handed it to him with the letter of introduction. He read my card and glanced over the letter.

Norris motions for Mallik to follow. Mallik glances over at T.J. once more; he is scraping gum from his cheap shoes.

INT. CHIEF'S COMPOUND - MOMENTS LATER

The floors are exquisite burgundy-colored Mexican tile, anchored by a stunning, dark reddish hue grout.

MALLIK (V.O.)

The heavy-set man walked across the floor soundlessly, as if he were floating. I could discern not even the slightest scratch or flop noise as he walked. I tried to match his stride and noiseless gait. The walls were darkish and designed to keep the building quiet and cool. They did their job well.

INT. CHIEF'S COMPOUND - WAITING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Norris deposits Mallik into a dark and cool room.

MALLIK (V.O.)

The room was quiet, but a peaceful kind, not an abrupt or strained quiet. It reminded me of...

(beat)

... my travel back to my youth was cut violently short. The heavy-set man clomped his catcher's-mitt-sized palm upon my shoulder blade with a sudden heft of force. I was immediately knocked from my slumber.

NORRIS

The Chief will see you now.

MALLIK

Okay, thanks. What do I call you?

NORRIS

Why you want to call me?

MALLIK

Your name. What is your name?

NORRIS

Chief call's me 'Norris.'

MALLIK

Pleasure to meet you, Norris.

NORRIS

The Chief will see you now.

MALLIK

Thanks. Who was the girl?

NORRIS

Chief's daughter is Elvis, like singer.

MALLIK

Girl named Elvis, she's a pretty one!

Norris thinks (about Mallik's comment) for a moment in silence, then he decides it needs no response.

NORRIS

(A short grunt-like sound)
Grunt.

INT. CHIEF'S COMPOUND - MOMENTS LATER

Norris motions for Mallik to take a chair.

MALLIK (V.O.)

Norris led me through a corridor, and down a hallway and out into a shaded outdoor patio garden, where a glass table, comfortable chairs, and a large pitcher of lemonade and two tall clear tumblers awaited.

Norris moves a telephone into the center of the table and then retreats. Mallik waits. The pitcher has beautiful spirals of sliced lemon rind floating on top, and the rind twirls all the way to the bottom.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I was mesmerized as I tried to figure out the secret of the floating lemon rind. The patio was decorated with numerous potted plants. Some glazed, some not. Some were hanging, some parked flat atop their concrete plates and the stone. All were earthen-toned and gave an aura of a well managed estate. This garden was dedicated to local plants mostly, and also to various Aloe plants.

Well-maintained potted plants are abundant. A fan keeps the temperature pleasant.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I am no expert, but I could identify the common aloe plants: Vera, Lace and Krantz. And a few less common ones, such as Wildii, which reminds me of grass gone to seed. This Aloe garden demonstrated that my prospective employer had class, sophistication, and money.

(beat)

Too bad none of that impressed me.

Mallik reaches for a glass. The CHIEF enters. Mallik drops his hand.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I was about to pick up the pitcher and a glass and pour a deep cool draft to relieve my parched throat, when the client entered the patio.

Chief is an older gentleman of about mid-70's, who sports a grey ponytail and salt-and-pepper hair with platinum sideburns. His stylish horn-rimmed glasses with green-shaded lenses are reminiscent of the 70s, upgraded to first-class 21st century.

MALLIK (V.O.)

Chief Martinez greeted me with a dry five-pound handshake. I gave him my thirty-five-pound bone-crusher. He did not wince, nor whine, nor retreat.

CHIEF

You have got a great grip, for sure, Mr. Mallik. Thanks for meeting with me on short notice.

MALLIK

My pleasure, Chief Martinez.

CHIEF

Just call me "chief." Small c. All my friends do. At my age, one of the little indulgences I take literally.

MALLIK

Okay, Chief.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I called him Chief, with a big 'C.'

CHIEF

Would you like some lemonade?

MALLIK

No thanks, not thirsty.

MALLIK (V.O.)

My parched throat lied.

The phone rings loud and the Chief answers. He presses the speaker button, presumably so Mallik can listen in.

CHIEF

(Into phone)

Chief here.

DAN (O.S.)

Hello, Chief... this is Dan from Sacramento.

CHIEF

(Into phone)

Hello, again, Dan. What have you got for me?

DAN (O.S.)

Mallik has a P.I. License for fifteen years, no serious violations. Though he has incurred a few fines for late payments, etc. He drives a twenty-year-old Chrysler that is said to leak like my dog on new carpet.

(MORE)

DAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

His bank accounts show that he has about fifty-five grand in retirement savings and another hundred bucks or so in his checking. Another couple of grand in a dormant savings account he probably forgot about...

MALLIK (V.O.)

Gotta remember to bitch-slap that lying bank clerk who told me "no hold on my deposit."

DAN (O.S.)

... He has another hundred grand equity in his Condo. His credit cards are a bit sparse for a man his age... he seems to use the cards to track expenses; he doesn't carry a balance past thirty days. His neighbors don't seem to know that he resides in the same building....

Chief looks directly at Mallik, sizing him up, as if he has an important decision to make. Mallik fidgets a little bit in his chair.

DAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

... Coworkers say he is mostly a straight arrow; however one guy in his office says that he is not so straight... I pressed this guy hard to figure out what he meant, but he just giggled and sucked his thumb. Some kind of screwball is my guess; every office has one or two.

MALLIK (V.O.)

Gotta remember to bitch-slap Jeffery, too.

DAN (O.S.)

Important clients vouch for him off the record. My gut says he's your man. My inquiries prove it.

CHIEF

(Into phone)

Thanks, Dan.

Chief hangs up. A few moments pass as Chief is engaged by deep thought.

MALLIK (V.O.)

Chief ended the call and waited a long moment.

CHIEF

Mr. Mallik, do you know why I asked you to come out here, to see me?

MALLIK

I'll tell you the little I know.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I laid out what I knew. It didn't take long.

CHIEF

Let me tell you a little story about my people. About one-hundred-seventy years ago, my tribe was spread out across this valley in small villages. We were dominated by the Californio peoples who controlled lands of what is now the western United States. These Californio peoples were politically aligned with Spain, and later, Mexico. The Californio had agreements with other tribes that allowed these tribes to behave very badly towards us. These other tribes still exist to this day.

MALLIK

(Half in jest)

Are these tribes your mortal enemies?

CHIEF

(Laughing)

Not exactly. During the time while Spanish rule was collapsing, Spain granted our lands to certain Californio families. There was a power vacuum, and the Californio peoples took ruthless advantage.

MALLIK

I suppose anybody in the same position might do the same.

CHIEF

True, but I hope my tribe would never succumb to such an evil.

MALLIK

I see. Please continue.

CHIEF

These Californio took our lands, stole our livestock and wrecked our crops. Occasionally, they might enslave whole villages. They could murder my people at will without cause or question asked.

MALLIK

The way we learn... they were righteous and loving.

CHIEF

Lies often get in the way of facts. The Californio would drive herds of cattle over our crops, just for spite.

MALLIK

They wanted to starve your tribe?

CHIEF

Not really. We existed at their pleasure.

MALLIK

History of California I did not know.

CHIEF

Late 1847, my tribe decided that we had to make a stand, and so we attacked an enemy tribe to the south. We expected a quick victory for very little risk. However, a tribe we thought of as an ally sold us out and informed the Californio, who set an ambush.

MALLIK

Where did the ambush take place?

CHIEF

Temecula. The events are generally called, "The Temecula Massacre."

MALLIK

I heard about this as a kid.

(Flashback to Mexican-American war or carnage?)

CHIEF

We had made critical military mistakes, and we paid a big price. However, the Californio were not happy with a big battle won, they decided to put my entire tribe to the sword.

MALLIK

They decided to kill off your whole tribe because of a minor skirmish?

CHIEF

Things were complicated at the time... We had ambushed a tribe friendly to the Californio, and this was overwhelming payback for a minor disturbance.

MALLIK

Once war starts, things can get out of hand quickly.

CHIEF

Yes... let me finish my damn story.

MALLIK

Sorry....

CHIEF

Right in the middle of this massacre - right in the middle of the Mexican-American War - the U.S. Army General Kearney's Mormon Brigade came to Temecula... The Californio were in the process of destroying my entire tribe. However, the Mormon's showed up and scared off the Californio and protected us from certain death... We had already lost many warriors dead and dying on the battlefield. The Mormon Brigade helped us bury our dead and attended our wounded.

MALLIK

I saw a street sign...

CHIEF

Yes, the same man. Intervention by General Kearney's Mormon Brigade literally is why I exist.

(beat)

It is why my people exist.

MALLIK

How can I help you?

CHIEF

A few days after this intervention which saved my people, Captain Davis of the Mormon Brigade presented our Chief with an ornate captured Coup Stick. The dying warrior had told him that the Coup Stick held the power to either save or destroy my tribe.

MALLIK

I got you... so someone stole the Coup Stick, and you want me to get it back.

CHIEF

Exactly. Someone stole it and now they want money for it.

MALLIK

Do you know who?

CHIEF

Probably one of the tribes formerly aligned with the Californio. The Coup Stick had belonged to their leader. Captain Davis told my tribe that Providence had won our lives that day, and therefore Providence must be present in the Coup Stick, and that we had better protect it.

MALLIK

Does this other tribe want to keep the relic? Might it have religious value to their tribe, too?

CHIEF

It is possible, but I do not think so. If they held such sentiment, would they not have tried to recapture it a long time ago?

MALLIK

I get your point.

CHIEF

I am old, and if I cannot produce the Coup Stick soon, there will be no easy transfer of power.

MALLIK

You'd think that in this modern age-
-

CHIEF

Tradition carries great weight with
my peoples...
(beat)
Our customs define who we are. Our
ancestors continue to help and
protect the living.

MALLIK

I'll get your Coup Stick back.

CHIEF

I put my confidence in you. I must
have it soon.

MALLIK

Do you want me to arrest the
guilty?

CHIEF

I prefer you to deliver a lesson
which will cause these parties to
change their evil ways.

MALLIK

I'm good at delivering lessons.

Norris unlocks the door and rolls in a cart full of history
books, maps and papers. The books have Post-It notes affixed
to pages.

CHIEF

(Knowing smile)
I have knowledge that you are
very...

Chief searches his mind for the right words.

CHIEF (CONT'D)

...talented... in this way.

Chief exits. Norris unloads the cart onto the table.

MALLIK (V.O.)

The Chief left me in the garden
with a pitcher of lemonade, a stack
of books and notes and a history
lesson. I stayed and read and
analyzed.

(MORE)

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

I took notes, tossed a few more Wrigley's into my chompers to kill my bad breath and help me think. An hour passed. Then another. Then another.

HOURS LATER

Mallik has completed his study. Norris silently sneaks up.

MALLIK (V.O.)

Norris silently snuck up on me again and clomped his huge mitt upon my aching shoulder-blade once more. It gave me a sudden and stark shock. Somehow he ambushed me again without even the slightest sound. This guy was starting to give me the creeps.

NORRIS

(Smiling, pleased)
Closing time, Mr. Mallik.

MALLIK

Tell Chief I need the Blackmail demand letter and the payoff.

NORRIS

Chief told me so.

MALLIK (V.O.)

He gave me a look as if he were speaking to a child.

Norris hands Mallik a black Coach leather bag full of cash. Mallik extracts and counts the bundles. Norris hands him a receipt, which Mallik signs and hands back.

NORRIS

Thank you. Here is a copy of the Demand letter.

Norris takes the signed receipt and hands Mallik the short and simple letter. Mallik reads it, surprised by the brevity.

MALLIK

This is it?

NORRIS

Elvis desires to meet with you before you leave.

MALLIK
(engrossed in reading)
What?

NORRIS
Chief's daughter wants to talk with
you, before you leave.

MALLIK
Tell her I'm busy. I'll catch her
next time.

MALLIK (V.O.)
That ought to show her who's boss.

Mallik follows Norris out of the office.

EXT. PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Mallik and Norris walk out of the building. Mallik has the
Coach bag in one hand and Demand letter in the other.

MALLIK (V.O.)
The sun was slowly setting now. A
pleasant cooling wind was beginning
to blow up the Santa Margarita
River valley from Oceanside. The
flowers atop a series of manicured
trees were beginning to give off
their pleasant pre-evening scents
into this serene zephyr.

Mallik unlocks his trunk, tosses the bag of cash into it and
slams it shut; pulling on the top to ensure it is secure.

T.J. comes into view; he is just finishing typing out a text
message into his phone.

MALLIK (V.O.)
I got into my Chrysler, cranked her
up, and headed out of the Chief's
lot. The exit was blocked by the
gate-troll rent-a-cop. And this cop-
wannabe was gunna do his job by the
book. Shit!

A pissy and angry T.J. blocks Mallik from driving away. The
compound gate is closed.

MALLIK (V.O.)
Before he opened the gate for me,
he was gunna give me the business.

T.J. opens his note pad and writes down Mallik's front license plate number, and then he walked to the back to confirm that both plates matched.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I took the occasion to spat out another plus-sized wad of Wrigley's where I thought he'd likely be stepping momentarily.

T.J. gives Mallik's Chrysler the work over like a DMV inspection; and jots down notes on his clipboard as he circles the Chrysler. So Mallik spits another wad of gum for T.J. to step in.

MALLIK (V.O.)

All this time, the gate in front of me was shut. No way out of this one!

T.J. stops at Mallik's window and looks directly at him; intimidating. Mallik smiles back; demurring.

MALLIK

Say, Buddy, you got any gum? I gave up smoking. I could sure use some.

Once again stepping into Mallik's gum pile, T.J. hops on one foot. Long streamers of white goo lead back to the point where he made contact, next to the Chrysler's driver side.

MALLIK (V.O.)

A perverse look came across the rent-a-cop's face. His lips twisted and parted to reveal once-crooked but now framed in a silver grill and dirty teeth and a puckered mean-looking mouth. His facial expression made me reckon he might have found gum on his shoe again. Which he did.

MALLIK

(Snickering)

I say, you got any gum, mister?

MALLIK (V.O.)

Once more he began to sing his catchy little ditty...

T.J. (GUARD)

Shit! Shit! Fuck!

T.J. hops on one foot back to his shack, punches the button to the gate and it slowly opens.

EXT. INSIDE MALLIK'S CAR - TRAVELING - MOMENTS LATER

Mallik pulls his Chrysler out of the compound onto the street.

MALLIK (V.O.)

The gum-shoe prank always makes me smile. Twice in one day is a new record. My outlook brightened a tad. I exited the compound, turned left and accelerated. Behind me, less than a quarter mile behind...

Through the rear-view, Mallik sees a Motorcycle headlight illuminate. Is someone following Mallik???

THIRTY MINUTES LATER

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. GAS STATION - EVENING

Mallik pulls in, gets out, and starts pumping gas.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I wanted to try to spot the biker following me, so I stopped for some gas and looked back up the road... but couldn't see where the bike was hiding. I stuffed a quad of Wrigley's into my kisser to kill the rank flavor leaking into my mouth, and topped off the tank.

Mallik tops off the tank, chews more gum and wastes time.

MALLIK (V.O.)

Chief told me the blackmailers wanted to be paid tonight, at a restaurant past the apex of the hills after you rose above Elsinore. I passed this joint earlier today.

When he cannot spot the bike, Mallik replaces the pump, pays for more Wrigley's, and pulls out.

EXT. INSIDE MALLIK'S CAR - TRAVELING - MOMENTS LATER

Mallik spots the Biker headlight again in his rear-view, with a knowing smirk. He drives a small distance; then quickly hangs a U-turn into a parking lot and pulls up.

EXT. LOT - SAME

The front of Mallik's car points towards the road. He lowers himself into his seat so he is not so easily spotted.

The bike is an expensive purple Ducati; its rider wears a matching purple-highlighted leathers and helmet.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I flipped a quick bitch, and parked pointing my front-end out towards the highway and waited. A half a minute later, there he went. He didn't see me, but I saw him; and what a sight. A medium-sized man atop a purple Euro crotch rocket with matching helmet and leathers.

(beat)

I waited another minute, then followed him up the hill.

The Chrysler pulls out and continues up the Ortega Highway to the top of a hill and -

EXT. HELL'S KITCHEN RESTAURANT - LATER

Mallik pulls into the crowded lot full of BIKERS and cycles.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I pulled into the tiny parking lot and was immediately surrounded by motorbikes. I wondered if there was some sort of convention going on. I parked in one of the few spots large enough to accommodate my Chrysler land-barge. My spot was next to a purple Ducati that had a matching helmet chained to its seat. This had to be the one that followed me from Temecula.

INSIDE THE CHRYSLER

Mallik opens his large glove box. Several pistols are visible with a bunch of stuff mixed in.

Mallik reaches in for a small digital camera, and snaps some pictures of several bike license plates parked near his car. Mallik gets out and -

RETURN TO THE LOT

looks around. Mallik snaps some pictures, slips the camera back in his pocket and walks to the purple Ducati. We see what he describes...

MALLIK (V.O.)

I thought for a moment, and then pressed my warm but spent wad of Wrigley's deep into the Ducati's ignition switch. I hoped that Mr. Ducati likes gum. I know I sure do.

EXT. HELL'S KITCHEN ENTRANCE - MOMENTS LATER

Mallik pulls on the door handle and enters.

INT. HELL'S KITCHEN LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

It is dark and hard to see.

MALLIK (V.O.)

It took a moment for my eyes to adjust to the lights - or rather lack of lights. Sometimes certain obvious facts that are in plain sight can be invisible to the viewer. This was one of those times.

A pair of GREASY BIKERS enter behind Mallik and rudely push past him as if in a hurry to use the toilet.

MALLIK (V.O.)

As my vision slowly adjusted to the lack of light, a number of alarming developments were illuminated... First, a full-sized coffin blocked my way. I didn't think that Riverside County was so backwards as to allow human death and food to mix... Second, I was being quickly surrounded by leather-clad unwashed smelly and dirty bikers. A lot of them.

A large and open coffin greets Mallik. The coffin holds condiments including hot sauces, peppers, etc.

The two bikers now point at him and speak to a purple-leather clad compatriot who looks somewhat familiar to Mallik.

BIKER-1 AND BIKER-2

Yeah, that's the guy, Boss.

Ducati stares at Mallik.

DUCATI

I know you?

MALLIK

You, uh.... are you the proprietor of this crumby place?

MALLIK (V.O.)

I politely lied, vying for time because my vision still had not fully recovered.

Ducati holds a large wad of gum a biker handed to him.

DUCATI

My brothers tell me they saw you plugging gum into my key hole. Why you do that?

Ducati holds out a graphite-laden and oily hunk of still-warm Wrigley's for inspection.

MALLIK (V.O.)

Before I could swing at the guy, two bikers grabbed me from behind.

Two Bikers grab Mallik by the shoulders and slammed him roughly to the floor. Then they forcibly roll him onto his back. Ducati leans near to Mallik's head.

MALLIK

That your purple Ducati?

DUCATI

Yeah.

MALLIK

(Cheshire-cat smile)
Nice bike. What's that stuff in your Mohawk? Looks like dried snot.

Ducati becomes visibly irate; then recalls earlier that day.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I was shocked at how quickly his
anger built up steam.

DUCATI

You stopped in for food, mister?

MALLIK

Yeah.

MALLIK (V.O.)

Wrong answer.

DUCATI

You like gum, do ya?

Ducati slowly presses the wad of warm and gooey gum into
Mallik's mouth, past his clenched lips and teeth.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I try to never answer rhetorical
questions.

(beat)

I could taste machine oil and minty
graphite, as well as sweaty
leather.

DUCATI

(ominous, slow, grinning)

Chew it up before you swallow it.
Don't want no more choking deaths
in here.

The Bikers holding Mallik laugh.

MALLIK (V.O.)

His compatriots thought that was a
funny line. I didn't. I spat out
the gum. Wrong move again.

Mallik spits out the foul-tasting gum. Ducati backhands him
hard and then follows with an open palm bitch-slap which
stings deep.

Ducati repeats the assault a few times and then he expertly
picks up the mass of gum with his boot heel.

MALLIK (V.O.)

Ducati picked-up the gum with his
filthy boot-heel. I was pretty sure
that this was not going to enhance
the flavor.

DUCATI

Open up for another serving,
Mister.

Ducati pinches the gum off his boot with a finger and thumb -
serving the gum again to Mallik - who opens his mouth.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I opened up nicely this time, and
he jammed the gum deep into my
mouth. It tasted the same as last
time, but with a slight bouquet of
dirt, tar and dogshit from Ducati's
boot. The peanut shells from the
floor added a fibrous ambience.

MALLIK SINKS HIS TEETH

into Ducati's hand.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I didn't expect my teeth to cut all
the way through Ducati's glove, but
chompers can surprise ya.

Ducati screams bloody hell as he jerks his hand from Mallik's
mouth. It's torn-up and bloody. Ducati spins, dances and
wails in pain.

In the confusion, the Bikers holding Mallik loosen their
grips and Mallik leaps up and away.

MALLIK (V.O.)

The boys holding me accidentally
loosened their grips. I shot up
like a pocket rocket.

(beat)

I nearly lost some teeth, but
gained a piece of Italian-leather
glove, and two-thirds of a
thumbnail. I spat it all out into
my hand, and shoved the contents
into my pocket. The boys at the
shop never believe my stories
without proof.

MALLIK

(Smart-alecky)

Gunna be kinda hard to use your
brakes for a week, me thinks!

MALLIK (V.O.)

Why I think that my wise-ass cracks are gunna smooth-over violent situations continues to thwart and amaze me.

Ducati has a murderous, pain-crazed look on his face; he is holding his injured hand up: he is missing skin and nail. Bone is visible.

MALLIK (V.O.)

Ducati had a pain-crazed mean look on his kisser... it looked like a tiger had dined on his thumb.

Ducati's Biker friends moved away and the result is a sort of crowd circle with Mallik and Ducati in the center. Mallik and Ducati circle each other.

MALLIK

(Wiping his mouth out)
You better have that hand looked at.

Ducati pulls out a large pocket knife and tries to open it.

MALLIK (V.O.)

Ducati decided to bring a knife to our disagreement, but was having some difficulties on account of his missing thumb-pieces.

Mallik runs at Ducati, head butts his stomach.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I started at him like a high school football tackle rushing the quarterback. He tried to move up and out of the way, exposing his belly. My head punched deep and hard. Warm beer vomit sprayed my back and drenching my nape.

Mallik is sprayed with beer vomit; he beats on Ducati for a few moments until the Bikers pull him off. Ducati is a little dazed and confused.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I got a couple of good punches in before Ducati's friends pulled me off.

DUCATI
(Like a wild animal)
Hold him up!

A few of the Biker gang members grab Mallik for Ducati to beat the shit out of him.

Ducati begins a systematic on-armed beat-down lead by ferocious back-hands and powerful punches. Mallik's strength is slowly sapped.

MALLIK (V.O.)
Ducati delivered beat-down I'd surely remember for a long time.
(beat)
He was unable deliver the beating I truly deserved, on account of one of his hands being put out of action early.

Ducati slaps Mallik's face, alternating backhand and then open palm several times.

Ducati's strength begins to wane, so he finished-up Mallik with a flurry of devastating backhands to his face.

MALLIK
(Lying)
You slap like a bitch!

DUCATI
Your chin like iron billet.

Ducati delivers a devastating low-blow to Mallik's testicles with his kneecap. Lights-out for Mallik.

MALLIK (V.O.)
At this moment, Ducati introduced his kneecap to my testicles. I passed out cold and hard.

TIME HAS PASSED

Bikers are mostly gone. Mallik has apparently been unconscious for some time. Bartender throws a pitcher of ice water into Mallik's face and shouts.

BARTENDER
Closin' time!

Two Biker thugs drag Mallik out the door and into the parking lot. The Bikers walk to their motorcycles and drive away.

EXT. HELL'S KITCHEN PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Mallik has come-to but is groggy and disoriented. Has a hard time focusing.

ELVIS
Why you gotta piss-off the bikers?

MALLIK
(Surprised by Elvis)
What you doing here?

ELVIS
Thought I'd come and see you in
action... first hand.

MALLIK
Chief know you here?

ELVIS
I don't tell him everything.

MALLIK
Help me to my car.

Elvis helps Mallik to his car. He is unsteady in his walk, and leans on Elvis.

ELVIS
Why you gotta play games with the
Bikers?

MALLIK
Can't just pay 'em... gotta (pant)
size 'em up first. See if they
gunna play ball.

ELVIS
Chief gave you one job...

MALLIK
Ransom ain't ever over after one
payment, they always want more.

EXT. MALLIK'S CHRYSLER - MOMENTS LATER

Elvis helps Mallik into his car.

ELVIS
(Concerned, softened
towards Mallik)
You able to drive? I can...

MALLIK
(In a lot of pain,
breathless)
Oh, I'm tough, baby.

Mallik closes his door. Elvis holds the Chrysler's window.

ELVIS
Yeah, I can see that.

Elvis stares at Mallik for a moment, her earlier hardness towards him slowly melting way.

MALLIK
Gotta rest... a moment.... I'll be
O.K.

EXT. INSIDE MALLIK'S CAR - HELL'S KITCHEN LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Mallik sits in his Chrysler, catching his breath. He watches as Elvis walks back to her car.

MALLIK (V.O.)
I sat for a while, recuperating.

TIME CUT TO:

EXT. INSIDE MALLIK'S CAR - HELL'S KITCHEN LOT - NIGHT

Some minutes later, Mallik pulls out onto the highway.

MALLIK (V.O.)
I started the Chrysler and drove
straight onto the highway; most of
the motorcycles had cleared out of
the parking lot. This was a lucky
break, because I couldn't turn my
head without excruciating pain.

Mallik drives onto the Ortega Highway; he glances into his rear-view mirror and spots a small car following him.

MALLIK (V.O.)
The long drive back home was a slow
agonizing ride. I felt each and
every bump.
(beat)
My balls felt like crushed glass
pearl onions sitting atop a very
hot Japanese hibachi, without any
cooling Teriyaki sauce.

MINUTES PASS

Mallik sees the car in the rearview; still following.

MALLIK (V.O.)
She followed me all the way home.
Maybe she thought she'd tuck me in.

EXT. MALLIK'S CONDO COMPLEX - NIGHT

Mallik gets out and stumbles inside.

MALLIK (V.O.)
I somehow crawled into the building
and up to my place without anyone
noticing my discomfort.

INT. BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Mallik staggers in and face plants.

MALLIK (V.O.)
My last thoughts as I passed-out
were a puzzlement: I wondered if
there existed a field within the
medical sciences where one could
specialize in the surgical
reconstruction of testes. I think
funny things when I'm in pain. I'd
need to answer that question in the
morning.

Mallik is asleep two minutes when the phone rings. He answers
groggy.

MALLIK
(Into phone)
Hello?

JEFFERY (O.S.)
Hay ya, Rick. Got anything to
report?

MALLIK
(Weak, beaten, into phone)
Tell Norton I took one for the
team.

JEFFERY (O.S.)
What?

MALLIK

(Into phone)

Tell him I had a rough go with the crooks -- Can barely walk.

JEFFERY (O.S.)

Stay awake, I'll be over with the first-aid in ten minutes.

MALLIK

(Into phone)

I'm not sure I can last that long.

A click is heard over Mallik's phone. Jeffery hangs up. A moment later, we hear a slight tap at the front door.

Mallik hobbles over and places his hand onto a Police Special .38 atop a table by the door.

MALLIK (CONT'D)

(Frightened)

Who's there?

ELVIS (O.S.)

It's me, Elvis. Let me in.

Mallik thinks a beat - then puts the gun into a drawer.

ELVIS (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Come on, Mallik, let me in.

Mallik opens the door and lets in Elvis.

MALLIK

You followed me home?

ELVIS

I wanted to make sure you got back okay. You could barely walk.

MALLIK

You with that biker gang?

ELVIS

What? Don't be stupid. Chief told me about the drop, and I came to watch you in action.

MALLIK

How'd I rate?

ELVIS

I'd say you should learn to walk softer, or carry a bigger stick.

MALLIK

Cute. Thanks.

Mallik is in pain. Elvis holds his face in her hands, and rolls his head right, and then left. Then again up and down, examining various bruises, cuts, and scrapes.

ELVIS

Let me see...

(beat)

Ouch, they worked over your face pretty good. If you got a first-aid kit, I can fix you up.

MALLIK

Jeffery's on his way over... he does that for a living.

ELVIS

Jeffery?

MALLIK

Party-boy-slash-paramedic from work. A man of many skills.

A tap-tap-tap is heard. Mallik opens the door.

JEFFERY

Oh. Hello. I thought you needed me.

Elvis sizes Jeffery up; a bit jealous.

ELVIS

(Gruffly, curtly)

You got the med kit?

Elvis reaches for the kit. Jeffery leans away, protecting it as if it were his, and only to be touched by him.

JEFFERY

Yes, but... I was gonna do that.

Elvis quickly snatches the kit from Jeffery; who feels out of place - then fights Elvis over Mallik's care. Mallik is too beaten to care much.

MALLIK

(To Jeffery)

Get me sixteen aspirin?

JEFFERY

I'll get some.

Jeffery heads into the kitchen.

ELVIS

You scared me back there. I thought they might have killed you.

MALLIK

Me? Oh, I'm tough as nails, baby.

Mallik hugs Elvis, pulling her to him. But he is in too much pain to pull too hard. Elvis helps a bit. They smooch briefly. Elvis wipes her mouth between kisses.

ELVIS

(Disgusted; foul taste)
You taste like salty dog-shit!

Jeffery returns with aspirin and sees the kisses. Saddened.

JEFFERY

I guess it's too late for these?

Jeffery tosses the bottle on the bed and sets a glass of water on a tabletop, then quietly exits - dispirited. Mallik and Elvis resume smooching.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Mallik awakes from a restful sleep. All alone.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Mallik enters. Elvis fixes coffee and toast, etc.

MALLIK

Oh, my aching... everything!

ELVIS

I knew you were gonna live, when you started chasing me around.

MALLIK

Yeah, but you didn't need to let me catch you.

ELVIS

I felt sorry for you, given your... condition.

MALLIK

My Condition? Bullshit... You wanted me.

ELVIS

I suppose... but I don't always get what I want. Do you?

MALLIK

I wanted you since the moment I saw you.

ELVIS

(Playful but accusatory in tone)

What about Jeffery?

Elvis sets a cup of coffee down for Mallik. Smiling.

MALLIK

He's just a boy. I saved his ass once... Now he thinks I own it.

ELVIS

His ass?

Mallik playfully grabs Elvis and painfully rotates her back into -

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

MALLIK

No, you dumb broad... HIS LIFE!

Mallik teasingly pushes Elvis's face into the bed pillows. They giggle and laugh.

ELVIS

(Sincere now)

I'm just teasing.

MALLIK

(Serious)

Chief gunna scalp me because of you?

ELVIS

I'm a big girl. He knows I could do a lot worse... and have already. A few times.

Mallik pouts; jealous. Some wind noise exits his mouth.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. INSIDE MALLIK'S CAR - DMV OFFICE - HOURS LATER

Mallik parks in a handicap spot - eyes his phone - reads the screen - then jots down license plate numbers from the pictures of gang motorcycles he snapped at Hell's Kitchen yesterday.

Mallik returns the camera to the glove box, locks it, and then exits his car.

EXT. DMV OFFICES - ORANGE COUNTY - CONTINUOUS

Mallik limps toward the nondescript building, in agony from the kneecap Ducati delivered. Still in rough shape.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I was having a tough walk, on account of my nards still being like two swollen grapefruit in my pants.

Mallik labors inside.

A COP on a motorcycle sees his car in the handicapped spot and grabs his ticket book. But he focuses on Mallik's limp and his beaten-up demeanor, and then he puts away his book.

INT. DMV OFFICES - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Mallik researches the cycles' license plate numbers.

MALLIK (V.O.)

The next day found me at the local DMV. I needed to pull address and registration records on the license plates I photographed... To get the records, I had a bunch of paperwork to fill out first. Then had to give the State its pound of flesh.

The government DMV offices look like they haven't been updated in twenty-five years or deep-cleaned in fifteen. Greenish and beige are the only colors employed in this designer disaster.

Mallik moves to the DMV help desk.

The DMV HOSTESS's phone rings constantly. She answers every time after one ring; robotic. She is an older lady with a crinkled smoker's face; her eyes are dark and sunken deep into her skull; her teeth are Smoker's beige colored.

MALLIK (V.O.)

The clerk assigned to the front desk had a crinkled smoker's face, which looked like she hadn't had a good smoke in a couple of months... Her teeth reminded me of ancient elephant ivory I had seen partially buried at the La Brea tar pits when I was a kid... I hoped her breath would match.

Mallik approaches the DMV Hostess at her desk. She raises a finger to Mallik, while she finishes up with the call.

MALLIK (V.O.)

In a short moment, she would dispatch the caller to the appropriate party with a snarl or a grunt. This was gunna be a hard lady to deal with. Muscle wasn't gunna work here. Finesse might - only I ain't had none since I was six years old.

MALLIK

(Sweet, buttery)
Hello, Ma'am, good morning.

DMV HOSTESS

What you want, Hun?

MALLIK

I need...

The phone rings and she immediately answers, sticking one finger up in the air.

MALLIK (V.O.)

The phone rang again and she "shushed" me like I'm in the third grade.

DMV Hostess has a quick conversation (O.S.) with the unseen person calling in. Yakitty-yak-yak...

DMV HOSTESS

(Into phone)
Please hold...

The Hostess transfers the caller to some unknown and unseen government cubicles.

MALLIK

I need...

Up goes the Hostess's finger again, which tells Mallik to shut the fuck up. Finger goes down after she dispatches Caller 2. Yakitty-yak-yak...

DMV HOSTESS
(Into phone)
Please hold...
(Turning to Mallik)
What you want, Hun?

Mallik speaks fast before the next call circumvents.

MALLIK
I need DMV Name and Address records
for these license plates...

Mallik tears a page of paper from his Detective's Notebook and hands it over along with his Private Investigator I.D.

The Hostess eyes the ID and then Mallik. She compares the two before accepting it as real - returns it - retains the plate numbers - and up goes her finger as her phone rings once again.

DMV HOSTESS
(Into phone)
May I help you, please?

The phone rings constantly. The lady answers every time on one ring, puts down Mallik's list and repeatedly shushes him.

MALLIK (V.O.)
I wanted to snap off the lady's
nicotine-stained finger. I could
see that this was gunna be a long
day.

The receptionist spent a few minutes going over how to find the DMV building. The whole time, her finger is in the air.

MALLIK (V.O.)
Its funny how backwards government
can be. In business, if someone
calls in who can't make himself
clearly understood, whoosh, the
caller is dispatched. Government
people should do the same thing.
Caller can't say what they want in
five words? Hang the fuck up on
them. If they call back again,
block the number!

The Hostess finally transfers the caller to another party.

DMV HOSTESS
(Into the phone; then down
goes her finger)
Please hold.

It is Mallik's turn again...

DMV HOSTESS (CONT'D)
What was that you wanted again?
Copies of Name and Address cross
referenced to these license plates?

MALLIK
Yes, Ma'am.

The phone rings - she reaches for it - up with the finger.

MALLIK (V.O.)
I wanted to put up two of my own
fingers, but I didn't. I could see
how this was going to play out. It
would take me two hours to spit out
my questions to her...

(beat)

For a moment, I thought that I was
like that idiot caller who should
be hung up on, because he can't get
to the point quickly. I let that
thought go and quick...

(beat)

I noticed the lady's telephone jack
was right in front of me, so I
nonchalantly pulled out the cord.
Pretty soon, I'd have her full
attention. I snickered quietly to
myself. I can be a genius at times.

DMV HOSTESS
Yes. You were saying?

MALLIK
I need Name and Address records for
the license plates.

Mallik points to his list.

DMV HOSTESS
Not everyone on your list will have
up-to-date records, most likely.

The Hostess rapidly types on her PC - then politely sucks on
the pen she was writing with.

Mallik decides to try being pleasant.

MALLIK

You sure are busy this morning.
Your phone always ring like that?

DMV HOSTESS

We require payment up front before
we pull the records... I found 23
valid reports. I'll need payment in
cash or credit... This place is a
mad house. Lost three guys to
layoffs about 18 months back. Job
has been tough since then.

MALLIK

I see. Sorry to hear that.

MALLIK (V.O.)

She gave me the look that told me
that she knew I didn't give a fuck
about her little job. I wanted to
offer her a light for the pen she
was sucking.

A printer churns out a bunch of forms. The DMV Hostess stamps
the forms and hands them to Mallik.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I paid the lady. She stamped the
forms "PAID" and handed them to me.

DMV HOSTESS

You can fill these forms out on the
web, and then batch-submit them.
Saves you a lot of time. You're
never too old to learn to use a
computer, Hun.

The Hostess reaches behind her desk and feels for her
telephone plug - then replaces it into the correct socket -
staring at Mallik the whole time.

Embarrassed to be caught, Mallik extracts and parks himself
at a counter top to complete the forms.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I meekly went to one side, leaned
onto a greenish counter, and
started to fill them out.

TIME PASSES AS

Mallik fills out forms.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I finished the task a little bit past noon; went back to the DMV Hostess's desk and handed over the forms... I was happy to see that the old lady with the crinkled face had gone to lunch. In her stead was a large-boned woman, very tall, with an Adam's apple the size of a hand-grenade.

DMV TRANNY is tall, blonde, and very good-looking, but retains somewhat masculine features including a huge Adam's apple. Mallik initial perception is: somewhat confused.

Mallik hands her the filled-in forms; he is oblivious and non-judgmental.

MALLIK (V.O.)

Her voice was man-like but she was trying to sound like a woman. Poor thing. She clearly had severe goiter on her thyroid. But she was efficient and fairly friendly, and liked to wink at me, so I winked back a few times. This seemed to impress the lady, and make her work more diligently.

DMV Tranny is very busy typing in data from the forms Mallik handed over.

MALLIK

(In hushed tone)

You got Hashimoto's disease?

DMV Tranny is very busy typing, not fully hearing Mallik.

DMV TRANNY

What?

MALLIK

I got Hashimoto's disease.

(beat)

It looks to me like you got it too, toots.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I asked in a non-judgmental tone, which is hard for me.

DMV Tranny completes processing the forms. And, then a printer starts in the background.

DMV TRANNY

What are you talking about?

MALLIK

I see you got a goiter. Get your hormone levels regulated, then the goiter will go down.

DMV TRANNY

You like my goiter?

MALLIK

(Unsteady)

Ah...

MALLIK (V.O.)

I wasn't sure if we were speaking about the same thing, but I played along.

MALLIK

Sure... you got a nice goiter.

DMV Tranny retrieves printout from printer and hands it to Mallik. She is smiling at him.

DMV TRANNY

Want to walk on the wild side, Cowboy? I'm off in an hour.

MALLIK

(Caught off-guard, reading forms)

Wild side?

DMV TRANNY

Wild side!

(beat)

Wild.

(Wink)

Side.

The DMV Tranny winks at an unnerved Mallik.

MALLIK (V.O.)

She had a knowing and growing smile; one which I found was hard to read the edges of. She may have some winking disorder. It scared me completely awake.

(Mallik often has difficulties reading women.)

MALLIK

Sure, let me get my papers, and
I'll be waiting for you out front.

The Tranny hands the reports to Mallik.

DMV TRANNY

Here you go. See you soon.

EXT. INSIDE MALLIK'S CAR - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Mallik speaks into his phone from the driver seat.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I telephoned to report my findings.

MALLIK

(Speaking on phone to
Norris)

... My hunch was right. The map
showed me what I expected... The
Bikers live within the borders of
the tribal lands... and they are
former tribe members. This caper
must be an inside job.

Mallik drives away slowly. Apparently forgetting the Tranny.
He is still on the phone with Norris.

NORRIS

Chief wants you here at 3pm...
yakity yak yak....

Pull back to see... DMV Tranny, with her legs apart and arms
forlornly wrapped around her belly, watches Mallik. Sad but
not surprised.

MALLIK

... thanks, Norris, see you at
three.

Mallik guns it.

EXT. INSIDE MALLIK'S CAR - TRAVELING - DAY

The Chrysler is back on the road to Temecula, driving over
the Ortega Highway. Mallik passes the Hell's Kitchen again.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PARKING LOT GATE SHACK - DAY

Mallik pulls in and waits politely in line. T.J. calls someone on his phone and has a quick conversation (O.S.).

Suspicious, Mallik mentally notes that T.J. always seems to make a call when he arrives.

MALLIK (V.O.)
You gunna let me in?

T.J.
(Rude and in-charge)
Wha's your business?

MALLIK (V.O.)
Last couple of times I visited,
T.J.'s been a bitch to me. No
apparent reason came to my mind.

Wary, Norris approaches T.J.'s guard shack and yells from a short distance away.

NORRIS
(Pissy, demanding)
There a problem?!

T.J.
(Becoming defensive in his
tone)
No, sir. Mr. Mallik doesn't want to
state his business.

NORRIS
Chief is waiting!

T.J.
(Obedient pretense)
Yes, sir.

The gate opens slowly. Mallik smiles and tells T.J. --

MALLIK
(Ominous)
Next time, I rip out your grill
work, Gum-shoe.

-- Mallik winks, points his finger like a gun, and makes a click-click sound. Enraged, T.J. bares his grill work and growls back at Mallik.

EXT. COMPOUND - MOMENTS LATER

Mallik parks his leaking Chrysler close to the building. An ATTENDANT scrubs oil stains off the lot with soapy water and bristle brush.

ATTENDANT (O.S.)
(Responding to Mallik's
quizzical stare)
Some asshole parked a leaker!

INT. PATIO - CHIEF'S OFFICE - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Norris leads Mallik inside.

NORRIS
Chief will join you in a minute.

MALLIK
Thank you, Norris.

Momentarily, Chief enters. Mallik stands to greet him and uses his five-pound handshake this time. Chief notices.

MALLIK (CONT'D)
Chief, you know about the failed
money drop... but I have more bad
news. The Coup Stick job appears to
be an inside one. Indian-on-Indian.

CHIEF
I see... please continue.

MALLIK
Before I met with the bikers, I
snapped some pictures of their
plates, and ran them this morning.
All bikes are registered to people
who reside on your tribal lands and
many are past tribal members.

CHIEF
This is odd.

Mallik places a Coach bag full of money on the Chief's desk.

MALLIK
It is best for me to step away, and
let your tribal police handle the
case. Since it will fall under
their jurisdiction.

CHIEF

You want to quit the case?

MALLIK

Not really. But I have some reasonable reasons to withdraw.

CHIEF

Which are?

MALLIK

Your local Police force might be best equipped to handle this case.

CHIEF

Malarkey. Any other reasons?

MALLIK

I've fallen for your daughter.

CHIEF

(Worried)

Which one?

MALLIK

Elvis.

CHIEF

(Relieved)

Oh, her.

(beat)

Any more reasons?

MALLIK

And, I consider the cash drop a complete failure.

CHIEF

Let me think...

(beat)

Yes, the cash drop was a failure, but they were not ready to play ball yet... and Elvis told me that you delivered a lesson or two.

MALLIK

Elvis told you?

CHIEF

She phoned this morning. She said you beat on the Biker boss, and his troops roughed you up in return.

MALLIK

I'm still having trouble walking.

CHIEF

Elvis told me that Biker Boss will have trouble riding, on account of someone biting his hand off.

MALLIK

Well, just a thumb... and the dumb ass put it into my mouth.

CHIEF

(Laughing)

Sounds like he's surely going to remember your name.

Mallik empties his pocket and shows the Chief a large piece of a thumbnail and some fine Italian riding glove leather.

CHIEF (CONT'D)

Jeez, Mallik, that looks like skin.

MALLIK

No, just nice Italian glove leather. Tastes pretty good, too.

Chief eyes Mallik - unsure if he is joking - then makes a whooshing sound.

MALLIK (CONT'D)

There's more bad news, Chief... I've been followed. Your communications are compromised.

CHIEF

Are you certain?

MALLIK

Might be electronic eavesdropping, but I doubt it.

CHIEF

Why?

MALLIK

Electronic eavesdropping must be monitored. Biker Gang is a small operation. They probably have a live asset inside.

CHIEF

Many Tribal members are involved in Casino Operations.

(MORE)

CHIEF (CONT'D)

They profit-share... this is a very strong motivation for loyalty.

MALLIK

Then it must be some other person who has good access. An outsider.

CHIEF

When you find this traitor, I will want to talk with him. Or her.

Mallik pushes the Coach bag of cash a little towards Chief.

CHIEF (CONT'D)

So you are quitting?

MALLIK

I want to help, but I'm compromised. I think it best for you to fire me.

CHIEF

This is exactly why I know you are the right man for this job.

Chief pushes the Coach bag back to Mallik.

MALLIK

Did you forget about Elvis? Surely that is grounds for firing me.

CHIEF

Elvis is a big girl; old enough to make her own mistakes. I see no conflict.

(Shrugging)

Try not to let her hurt you too bad.

MALLIK (V.O.)

We discussed the various aspects of the case for the next half-hour. Chief sold me hard on the job. He offered a bonus, perks, and full-time job. I took away the idea that more was at stake than some archaic Coup Stick trinket.

CHIEF

Good. I'm happy that you agree to continue. There is another matter I need your help with.

MALLIK

(Laughing, in disbelief)
Killer biker gang ain't enough on
my plate? What else you got?

CHIEF

A cash payment has been hijacked,
and the owner believes that I
arranged it.

MALLIK

You guys still use cash? In this
day and age?

CHIEF

Back when we started the Casino,
banks would not take deposits from
operations, because no formal
Compact was executed with the
State, so we had tons of cash. All
of the Casinos were in the same
boat: Tons of cash and nowhere to
store it.

MALLIK

Sounds almost too good to be true.

CHIEF

Ha-ha. Yes it was good and bad. We
were always expecting to be robbed.
It is very tough to live that way.
We tried to keep it quiet... but
people talk.

MALLIK

I can only imagine.

CHIEF

When the tribe needed a new car, we
brought cash. When we needed to
expand a building, we brought a van
stuffed with it. We had no
recourse. My tribe borrowed funds
to expand our casino. Many of the I-
10 Casinos were also flush with
cash, and very happy to lend it out
and make it someone else's problem.

MALLIK

Musta been hard for everyone on pay
day!

CHIEF

The banks took deposits from non-gaming operations, so we just fudged the numbers a bit and always made payroll.

MALLIK

It seems to me to be simple now... just write a check and mail it to I-10 tribe.

CHIEF

The agreement is exactly thus... Cash in and cash out, plus interest.

MALLIK

Can't you just change it a little? Seems to me both sides are taking risks they don't need to take.

CHIEF

Any arbitrary change would make the funds immediately due, and might cause repercussions to me personally.

MALLIK

I got it. So you must pay as agreed, else everything becomes due at once.

CHIEF

Exactly.

Chief hands a note and another bag of cash to Mallik.

MALLIK (V.O.)

Chief handed me a very worrying note. It said that the creditor tribe had come to the conclusion that Chief had ripped them off and that I-10 Tribe will disclose certain information, etc., etc.

MALLIK

This other tribe... they just up and lent you money, and now they think you are ripping them off?

CHIEF

Not exactly. They were inspired to lend me a lot of cash.

MALLIK

Inspired? I don't understand.

CHIEF

I will tell you another story in strictest confidence.

MALLIK

Please continue.

CHIEF

Quite a few years ago, I went to work for the rich I-10 Tribe. They had opened a new casino, and were desperately in need of highly educated workers. I had a college degree in Business so I applied. They hired me on the spot, and for the next few years, I worked increasingly complicated jobs, until soon I landed a dream position under the Casino Boss.

(beat)

He was a joy to work for. Sometimes the job was four hours a day, sometimes sixteen. My boss told me the Tribe would pay for my advanced schooling. I jumped at the offer. Within a few years, I had a USC MBA, no school debt, and the biggest Cadillac I ever did see.

MALLIK

Why are they threatening you now?

CHIEF

A few months after my MBA, my boss was killed by a tribal rival.

MALLIK

I see.

CHIEF

We all thought we knew who did the deed, but we waited for the tribal police to do their jobs.

MALLIK

Did they catch him?

CHIEF

Do the rich and powerful ever pay for the crimes they commit?

MALLIK

Well...

CHIEF

A month or so after the murder, the Tribal Police announced that the murder was likely committed by an as-yet-unknown Narco-trafficker gang. Some FBI Profiler concurred. And the case was closed.

MALLIK

So the guilty got off scot-free?

CHIEF

Not exactly.

MALLIK

What are you saying, Chief?

CHIEF

I learned who had done the deed, and I confronted him the day he took over my former boss's office. He told me not to worry, that I could work for him now... New boss, same job.

MALLIK

So you killed him?

CHIEF

A deep rage overcame me. I had never been so humiliated. This man expected me to just write off my dear friend and mentor.

MALLIK

What happened?

CHIEF

In my blind rage, I picked up a very nice and expensive Remington, and sunk it deep into his skull.

MALLIK

Another reason you shouldn't leave guns lying around the office.

CHIEF

Gun? No. It was a seventy-five-hundred-dollar, heavy bronze work of art. A man on horseback shooting a bear.

MALLIK

Kinda had your fingerprints all over it, I suppose.

CHIEF

(Shudders a bit in horror)
Not only that... I had parts of his frontal lobe all over my jacket. His blood was in my hair. My jacket was ruined. I can still remember the taste of his blood in my mouth. One eye popped out of his socket... and it was staring at me. I'll never forget that look.

MALLIK

What happened next?

CHIEF

The I-10 Elders would not believe that I could have done such a vile and evil deed. They sent me to wash up in a hotel suite. The tribal police showed up and they rounded up the usual suspects: meth heads, dope dealers, pot smokers. In the end, they reported that the same unknown bandits who had earlier murdered my previous boss had come back to finish the job.

MALLIK

Wow. Can't trust anybody these days.

CHIEF

I trust Norris. I trust Elvis. I trust you.

MALLIK

Sorry. I didn't mean it like--

CHIEF

(Interrupting)
I-10 Tribe decided it would be best to not have me continue working in the executive offices. They also wanted my silence. We agreed that a good course of action would be for me to quietly borrow funds to help my tribe build its own casino.

MALLIK

They were probably scared to make you mad, given your propensity to turn into a raging psycho killer.

CHIEF

Ha! I suppose that might have been a part of their consideration, too.

Mallik eyes the Chief a long beat.

CHIEF (CONT'D)

Someone is interfering with this agreement, and I am afraid that if the loan is not paid as agreed, they will throw me under the bus and make me pay for the killing.

MALLIK

They'd turn you in to the cops to tie up loose ends?

CHIEF

I was told to keep my nose clean, or else.

MALLIK

Doesn't make sense to me. You pay back funds year after year, and then outta the blue you're gunna cheat 'em?

CHIEF

Young Turks involved in the I-10 business now. Older generation is dying off. Almost all are gone. The man I killed's grandson is high executive now.

MALLIK

If you want to retain me, there is nothing that forces me to quit.

CHIEF

Thank you, Mr. Mallik. I am in a desperate position, and I need your help. I am like a candle burning at both ends.

MALLIK (V.O.)

When we were done, I agreed with Chief and took the bag back.

CHIEF

I will assign Norris to assist you
as you require.

MALLIK

I'm not sure, I--

CHIEF

(Interrupting)

He is my most trusted employee.
Like the son I never had. He is
loyal unto death.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I came away with the idea that the
Chief was scared to death. Maybe
the missing relic had him on edge.
Maybe a murder rap hanging over his
head was making him lose sleep.

CHIEF

Take care of the I-10 payment
first, and help me mend the fence.
And then find and return the Coup
Stick.

Chief reaches below his desk and extracts a blue Coach bag.
Mallik opens it and peers in. It is stuffed with more cash.

CHIEF (CONT'D)

Please apologize for the
lawlessness of others, and express
my deepest gratitude to I-10 Tribe
for all they have done for me and
my Tribe. And please deliver this
letter. Also, I want you to deliver
all subsequent payments to them.

MALLIK

It is my pleasure, Chief.

Chief hands a sealed envelope to Mallik.

CHIEF

I am pleased that we understand
each other. My era is near
completion.

There is a very polite knock at door. Norris enters. Chief
rises to shake Mallik's hand and walks him to the door.

CHIEF (CONT'D)

Norris, I want you to assist Mr. Mallik. Make sure no evil crosses his path.

NORRIS

Yes, sir.

CHIEF

Good bye, Mr. Mallik.

Chief shakes hands with Mallik before Norris walks him out.

EXT. COMPOUND PARKING LOT - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Mallik opens his trunk and tosses in the two matching Coach bags.

The teenage Attendant scrubbing oil off the pavement looks up and sees Mallik staring at him; he blocks the blinding sun with one hand.

MALLIK

When you're done there, you gotta get this spot next.

Mallik points to where his Chrysler is parked.

ATTENDANT

Yes, mister.

Mallik backs out, exposing nasty fresh-leaked oil; a repugnant puddle atop the beautiful stonework.

ATTENDANT (CONT'D)

Son of a-- Shiiiiittt!

Mallik grins and punches the gas, spraying the Attendant with sooty black Chrysler smoke.

THROUGH THE GATE

we see FOUR BIKER GANG WARRIORS who wait outside. Ominous.

ON T.J.

who covertly texts the bikers and Ducati that Mallik is leaving.

DUCATI RECEIVES THE MESSAGE

with a severely bandaged hand.

EXT. COMPOUND GUARD GATE - SAME TIME

T.J. snickers as Mallik leaves and the poor Attendant scrubs more oil stains from where Mallik parked. His Chrysler slowly approaches the locked/closed exit gate.

T.J.

Get your car fixed, bitch! You think that kid likes to scrub up every time you leave?

MALLIK

(A Cheshire cat smile)
At least the kid has a job, some people don't have jobs.

T.J.

Yeah, maybe.

MALLIK

Look, sorry about the gum.

T.J.

No big deal.

Mallik beckons T.J. to come closer...

MALLIK

I got a question for you.

T.J. cautiously inches closer to Mallik's driver side window.

T.J.

Yeah, whatchu want?

Mallik grabs T.J.'s collar and pulls down hard, SLAMMING T.J.'s head into the Chrysler roof, knocking him out.

Mallik exits his car and quickly grabs T.J. as he slumps to the ground. He sets T.J. down softly. Mallik then steps into the guard booth and hits a gate OPEN button.

Mallik unlocks the Chrysler trunk, picks up T.J. and tosses him inside. Radiator fluid and oil containers are everywhere, alongside the two Coach bags. Mallik slams the trunk closed.

Biker Gang Members, including Ducati and Ninja, see Mallik move T.J. into the trunk - they dart forward to save T.J.

As Mallik jumps into the Chrysler and takes off - nearly bulldozing two of the Bikers.

Mallik smashes into two big bikes, knocking them over and out of action, leaving only two more standing: Ducati and Ninja - who hunt down Mallik.

EXT. WHITEWOOD RD. - MURRIETA - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Mallik is chased several miles with evil dirty Biker gang members close behind. The Chrysler make two quick turns - then onto a dirt road not fit for bikes. Dust, pebbles and shit flies everywhere.

Mallik floods the gas, pumping smoky soot out of Chrysler's tail pipe - then makes three quick turns as the Bikers lose sight of him in the dust.

EXT. I-60 EAST OF I-215 - THE BADLANDS NEAR BEAUMONT - DAY

Mallik works his way towards I-10 Casino via I-60 on picturesque side roads. After some time, he pulls into -

EXT. DESERTED AREA JUST OFF I-10 - DAY

Mallik parks, rudely extracts T.J. from his trunk, and shoves him down onto the ground - face-up. Then pours radiator fluid onto T.J.'s face.

T.J. wakes gagging and coughing and pulls a knife, trying to stick Mallik, who knocks it away.

Mallik attacks. A brutal fist fight ensues. Mallik wears T.J. down and wins the fist-fight.

Mallik rips-off T.J.'s rent-a-cop shirt, etc. and tosses the garments into the trunk - then he grabs duct tape from the trunk and ties T.J. up.

Mallik grabs T.J.'s phone; scrolls texts and sees the last one, comparing his call list from the DMV with known biker gang members. Soon he smiles and turns to T.J.

MALLIK

Why you text Biker leader?

T.J.

(frightened)

Fuck you, dirty asshole, mother--

MALLIK

I don't got time for attitude. I
need answers now!

Mallik ransacks his trunk before pulling out old nasty, dirty
pliers. Then starts to rip out T.J.'s top teeth grillwork
with them.

We hear T.J.'s blood-curdling screams and cries before -

T.J.

Don't hurt my diamond!

Mallik crushes the diamond with the pliers.

MALLIK

News to you buddy, your diamond was
cheap glass.

T.J.

Mother-fucker!

Mallik yanks out T.J.'s bottom grillwork. More blood curdling
screams. Blood flows for real now. His willpower shattered,
T.J. can only lisp...

T.J. (CONT'D)

Okay, okay, I tell you everything.

MALLIK

My Pops taught me to never quit a
task once you started it.

Mallik work on T.J.'s lower molars until he breaks...

T.J.

Okay, okay, we did it!

MALLIK (V.O.)

I know you did it. You gotta tell
me why you did it, son.

T.J.

We been blackmailing Chief for
years, but few months ago he stop
paying. Things got real tough for
the club.

MALLIK

Like so tough you guys might need
to get jobs?

T.J.

We didn't ask too much... just a half share for the club.

MALLIK

Sounds to me like you made a demand that crossed a line.

T.J.

Call it what you want... the money belonged to us anyway. It was rightful ours.

MALLIK

Rightful share? What the fuck are you talking about?

T.J.

Chief's been throwing us outta the tribe for years, just so he could take our rightful share.

T.J. is tired and thirsty. Mallik gives him potable water.

T.J. (CONT'D)

Casino's take is about a billion dollars per year. Net's each member a cool million, plus or minus.

MALLIK

(Sarcastic)

But your whole gang settles for maybe half a million per year? Doesn't make sense to me. Why settle so cheap?

T.J.

(dead serious)

Me either! You think maybe we should asked for five or ten millions?

MALLIK

Ask him for the moon if you want.

T.J.

(Dazed and confused)

Why you say that?

MALLIK

Look fella, Chief cut you guys out of the Tribe because your ancestors enslaved tribe members, took their women, and wrecked their crops.

(MORE)

MALLIK (CONT'D)

Your clan was evil. You are of evil seed.

T.J.

We gots DNA to prove we are just as Indian as Chief. It's all about the finances... he's gotta rob Peter to pay Paul.

MALLIK

So the gang is Peter. And, who is Paul again?

T.J. eyes Mallik as if he is incredibly stupid.

T.J.

I-10 casino! Do I gotta spell it out for you, asshole dumb copper?

MALLIK

Want Mr. Pliers to fix your potty mouth?

T.J. simmers down rapidly and gets much more polite.

T.J.

But I-10 Indians have no business in Temecula, why they get paid by Chief? Ain't kosher.

MALLIK

You gotta have access to lots of cash to start a Casino. You think it was built from old lady bingo money? Chief borrowed cash from I-10 and it's gotta be paid back. You guys really this stupid?

T.J.

(Logically)

Why'd they let us in to begin with?

MALLIK

Let you guys in? You stupid fuck! Your ancestors raped and pillaged their way into the tribe.

T.J.

Huh?

MALLIK

Tribe had to play ball or be slaughtered. They chose to live, and chose right.

(MORE)

MALLIK (CONT'D)

But a chicken-shitted asshole like you thinks it's not fair you gotta get real jobs and work for a living, like the rest of us.

T.J.

But why he pay us for years and then just cut us off?

MALLIK

Man, you are a special kind of dumb fuck... Chief made payments to help you guys transition.

T.J.

(Slow to catch on)
Transition?

MALLIK

Transition... transition into working stiffs. The whole tribe is tired of carrying you guys.

T.J.

But he paid for years. Why stop now?

MALLIK

(In disbelief)
Maybe you just hit him for cash at a bad time.

T.J.

Yeah, I guess so. But we not the only ones... I-10 goons come to see Chief, they always leave wits a bag... sometimes, two.

Mallik studies T.J. closely now.

MALLIK

A bag or two? Bag of what?

T.J.

We tailed them few weeks ago...

T.J. becomes a bit unsteady, so Mallik shakes him just to keep him awake.

MALLIK

What's in the bag?

T.J.

They went to... Casino... off I-10.

MALLIK

How do you know what's in the bag?
Stay with me, fella.

Mallik slaps T.J.'s face hard to keep him focused.

T.J.

Had to... knock 'em around a bit...
but they... eventually... let go of
the bags.

MALLIK

What was in the bags?

T.J.

We took... those bags... from them
other side of Perris... full of
cash.

MALLIK

Where'd they go after you robbed
'em?

T.J.

Big Casino... off I-10.

MALLIK

Which one?

T.J.

Gold glass... one across... from
dinosaur.

MALLIK

Who'd they meet with?

T.J.

Visited executive suites... kinda
like they worked there... seemed
to... known their way around, too.

Mallik applies a duct-tape gag and jams T.J. back into the trunk.

MALLIK

I tell I-10 what you did, maybe
they smite you and your whole damn
gang.

Mallik slams the trunk closed.

MALLIK (V.O.)

I surely impressed myself tonight.
Solved two crimes with nothin' but
a pair of old pliers.

EXT. INSIDE MALLIK'S CAR - TRAVELING - DAY

Mallik drives towards the I-10 Tribal Casinos.

EXT. I-10 CASINO VALET PARKING - NEAR CABAZON - DUSK

Mallik pulls into the beautiful casino and leaves his
Chrysler with the VALET.

I-10 VALET

Good evening sir. Your keys,
please?

Mallik hands his keys to the young man.

MALLIK

Park it close. I'll be back in a
few minutes. Keep an eye on it.

I-10 VALET

Yes, sir! Twenty-five dollars,
please.

MALLIK

Gunna need to comp this one, fella.
I came to see your boss.

The Valet looks like he's just been cheated out of a tip.

I-10 VALET

(Pissy)

I'll drop it at the handicapped
spaces over there.

MALLIK

That'll do. Pop the trunk for me. I
gotta get my bags.

I-10 VALET

(Under his breath; rude)

Funny how comp'd dudes always make
you work the hardest.

MALLIK

Get the trunk open and bitch to the
next guy who cares.

The Valet opens the trunk - sees T.J. beaten up - then staggers back in shock. Horrorified.

T.J.
(Tied and gagged)
Mmmm... heeeelllppppmmmm!!

The Valet frightfully backs away from the trunk and tosses the keys to Mallik - still scared shitless.

VALET
Park it yourself, mister!

Mallik catches the keys, which dangle from his hand.

Mallik pulls out the blue Coach bag and slams the trunk. The Valet now has a better understanding of Mallik - and is SCARED!

MALLIK
Wanna ride in my trunk, too?

The Valet carefully retakes the dangling keys - starts the Chrysler and drives it a short distance before parking. He then leaps out as if it were haunted.

VALET
(Scared, intimidated)
Here, you keep the keys.

The Valet very politely hands the keys back to Mallik.

MALLIK
As you wish. Don't let HIM outta your sight.

Mallik stuffs the keys into a pocket and enters the casino.

INT. EXECUTIVE SUITES - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Mallik exits the elevator and heads towards a SECURITY OFFICER in front of the management suites. Mallik places his bag of cash on the officer's desk and opens it.

The Guard peers into the bag; not too shocked by the money.

MALLIK
I'm here to see the General Manager.

GUARD
You got an appointment?

MALLIK

Do I need an appointment to give
him a boatload of cash?

GUARD

I get your point. Who may I say is
calling?

Mallik hands a business card and Chief's letter to the guard.

MALLIK

Chief sent me from Temecula, to
clear up a... misunderstanding.

GUARD

Mr. Mallik? I say that right?

MALLIK

Yes.

GUARD

One moment, please, Mr. Mallik.

The Guard upends the bag of cash and quickly counts it,
throwing the cash back inside. Then picks up a phone, presses
a few buttons, and speaks softly (O.S.) into it.

Seconds later, two VERY LARGE GUARDS appear and watch Mallik.
The Guard takes Mallik's business card and Chief's letter
into G.M.'s office.

Moments later, the casino G.M., late 30's, in very nice
business suit, educated, no-nonsense, walks out a door and up
to Mallik.

G.M. Has Chief's note in open in his hand, but he doesn't
believe a word. G.M. does not offer a handshake.

G.M.

(Derogatory manner)
Chief Martinez needs a L.A. Rent-a-
Dick to mend the fences?

MALLIK

I'm from Orange County.

G.M.

(Arrogant and
condescending)
L.A... O.C... Same thing. Cheating
thief is too embarrassed to pay
back the funds he stole, so he
sends a flat-footed flunky.

MALLIK

You got the wrong story, mister.
Your guys screwed up and got rolled
by a Biker gang.

G.M.

(Disbelief)

Biker gang? That's a good one.
Martinez finally showed his true
colors and ripped us off.

MALLIK

You're wrong. I got the proof in my
car downstairs, if you care to see
it.

G.M. Motions to the muscle guys to follow him to the parking
lot to look at what Mallik brought.

G.M.

(Sarcastically)

I gotta see this... You muscle tag
along.

EXT. I-10 CASINO VALET - A SHORT WHILE LATER

The group goes down to the Valet, who is smoking a bulbous
marijuana blunt with wafts of oily smoke rising. He is
listening to tunes on his iPod plugged into his ears

The G.M. and the others walk towards the Valet, who is now
SCARED SHITLESS, and he ditches the blunt into some bushes,
as he exhales he tries to waft away the stink. Too late.
Caught.

G.M.

(Commanding)

Get Mr. Mallik's car over here.
Now.

VALET

Yes, sir.

The Valet jogs quickly over to the key box and searches it.
Then remembers something. Moments later, he jogs back to
Mallik and sticks his hand out; embarrassed.

Mallik laughs and hands the Valet his keys, who pirouettes,
jogs back to Mallik's car and starts it up. Puffs of smoke
exit the tailpipe. Oil has leaked onto the pavement.

The Valet slowly backs out the Chrysler and drives it to the G.M. He exits the car, expertly guesses what they want and puts the key into the trunk. It pops open.

T.J. is face up; his eyes need a moment to adjust to the overhead flood lights.

T.J.
(Through duct tape)
Mmm-mmm-mmm...

Mallik leans in and rips the duct tape from T.J.'s lips and mouth. T.J. shrieks in pain.

G.M.
What the hell happened to him? Who
is this?!

MALLIK
Biker gang's inside man at Temecula
Casino.

G.M. stares menacingly at T.J., who is scared to death.

G.M.
What'd you do, Champ?

T.J. is scared shitless; he starts telling his story without hesitation.

T.J.
I spotted some guys who visit on a
regular basis. Can I have some
water?

Mallik digs around the trunk for a bottle of water. MUSCLE MAN 1 pulls out a buck knife and slices T.J.'s hands free. Mallik hands him the water.

T.J. (CONT'D)
When these guys leave, they always
got a nice new leather gym bag...
(Sips some water quickly)
It don't take no rocket scientist
to guess what's in the bag.

The G.M. looks at the two plainclothes Muscle Men with him. He just now starts to realize that they are stupid. The Muscle Men get real nervous, real fast.

G.M.
(Incredulous)
You didn't hide the bag in
something?

MUSCLE MAN 1

(Offering up excuses)

You told me to get the bag. You never told me to hide nothin'.

G.M. is disgusted with the men he employs, shakes his head at their obvious stupidity and focuses back on T.J.

G.M.

(Looking at T.J.)

Go on.

T.J. takes another long gulp of water, then...

T.J.

I put a couple of slow leaks onto their tires and then I called my guys who followed them up to Perris... and when the tires blew, they stuck 'em up and made off with the loot.

G.M. thinks a beat, backs away from the trunk and turns to Mallik to speak.

G.M.

(Contrite)

Give Chief Martinez my apologies. I had no idea I employ morons instead of muscle.

G.M. gives an accusatory look to the Muscle Men.

MALLIK

(Winking at T.J.)

Take this guy with you. I heard you got a new meat grinder in the kitchen.

Mallik re-wraps T.J.'s hands with duct tape.

G.M.

(Slight snicker)

You've been watching too many movies, Mr. Mallik.

MALLIK

I'm serious. I don't want him. Don't you want your money back?

G.M.

I got my money. You just handed it to me. Far as I'm concerned, he stole Chief Martinez's money.

(MORE)

G.M. (CONT'D)

(beat)

He served his purposes here. We'll tighten up the ship 'cause of him.

T.J. sighs in relief that the boys are not gonna "Casino" his ass.

MALLIK

If you don't want him... what'm I gunna do with him? I don't need a manservant.

G.M.

Cut him loose... Drop him at a hospital... Bury him.... I don't care. But... get him out of here.

MALLIK

All right.

G.M.

What do we owe you for your detective services?

MALLIK

Nothing. Chief Martinez has me on retainer. Can you comp the parking?

G.M. nods to Muscle Man 1, who pops out a crisp new one hundred dollar bill and hands it to the Valet.

G.M. is now speaking to the Valet.

G.M.

We square?

VALET

(Delighted)

Yes, Sir! Thank you, Sir!

G.M.

(Very stern)

You talk about any of this tonight...

VALET

(Scared, intimidated)

Huh???

(beat)

Ah... no, Sir!

G.M.
(Even more stern)
And... if I catch you puffing
stinkweed on my clock again...

G.M. makes a throat-slashing move with his finger; Valet gulps in terror.

I-10 VALET
No, Sir! I mean... Yes, sir!

The Muscle Men laugh a nervous sort of laugh, glad that some other dumb-ass is the focus of the G.M.'s wrath.

The Valet slams the trunk closed and hands the keys back to Mallik - then stuffs the crisp hundred dollar bill into his wallet. The G.M. turns to Mallik; serious.

G.M.
(Serious and business-like)
I could use a man like you, from
time to time. I'm gonna keep your
card... Give Chief Martinez my full
apologies for the... uh...
misunderstandings.

The G.M. again takes a menacing look at his Muscle Men. Then he offers to shake hands with Mallik, who gives him his 35-pound bone crusher.

The G.M. re-takes his hand from Mallik, in severe pain, but says nothing. He just rubs his aching and crushed hand as he walks back inside.

Mallik smiles and stuffs more Wrigley's into his rank pie hole. Then enters his Chrysler, cranks it up and drives away.

Watching, the Valet sighs dramatically; glad that is fucking over.

EXT. INSIDE MALLIK'S CAR - TRAVELING I-60 WESTBOUND - NIGHT

Mallik tunes his radio to K-USC FM and listens to a mournful dirge - Beethoven Piano Sonata No. 23.

This scares the shit out of T.J., who wails (O.S.) from the trunk, but which pleasantly matches the music. Mallik bangs on the dashboard.

MALLIK
Shaddup back there! Or I'm gunna--

Mallik exits the freeway and SLAMS on the brakes hard, rattling T.J., who remains in the Chrysler trunk. This effectively quiets down T.J.

EXT. SIDE ROAD - MOMENTS LATER

Mallik pulls out again and drives a few miles until he spots a road sign pointing towards a hospital.

EXT. E.R. PARKING - LOMA LINDA HOSPITAL (MURRIETA) - NIGHT

Mallik extracts a wheelchair from the shrubbery that someone discarded, and wheels it toward his Chrysler. He pops the trunk open, leans in and removes T.J.'s gag.

Mallik lifts T.J. out of his Chrysler trunk. As he does so, Mallik accidentally slams T.J.'s mouth and remaining teeth again. T.J. squeals and sobs in pain, then lisps...

T.J.

(In great pain)

Ouch! Mother-fucker! Ohhhh!

MALLIK

(Rhetorically)

Shaddup, you want me to put you
back in the trunk?

Mallik tries to keep the wheelchair steady with his feet and legs as he manhandles T.J. into the wheelchair.

T.J. holds his bloodied mouth; all beat up. Mallik leans down to adjust T.J.'s foot-stops - showing unexpected kindness - then places T.J.'s feet into them.

Mallik and T.J. are near face-to-face. Mallik is very serious.

MALLIK (CONT'D)

I need you to tell me about the
Coup Stick.

T.J.

What's a Coup Stick?

MALLIK

I don't got the time, mister. It
looks like a miniature hockey stick
with feathers, and maybe some old
leather straps; some feathers.

T.J.
From Chief's office?

MALLIK
Yeah, that's right. Chief wants it
back. Where'd you put it?

T.J.
We got it on the wall in our party
shack. It's supposed to bring the
gang good fortunes and better luck.

MALLIK
How's that been working for you
guys?

T.J.
Not so good.
(beat)
Boss beat on some dudes with it...

Humor and good nature has completely drained from Mallik's
face. T.J. can now fully understand Mallik's malevolent and
dire warning.

MALLIK
If I see you again, I'm gunna put
you outta my misery. You understand
me?

T.J. nods as bloody bubbles drip. Mallik strips away the duct-
tape from T.J.

INT. E.R. LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

The Emergency Room automatic doors open as Mallik shoves
T.J.'s wheelchair inside although Mallik stays out.

The wheelchair continues to move on its own kinetic energy.

LONG SLOW PULLBACK

as T.J.'s wheelchair slowly rolls into the middle of the
lobby.

INT. HOSPITAL LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

T.J. holds his bloody mouth; a disgusting mess. A UNSEEN LADY
in the waiting area lets loose with a blood-curdling scream.

Mallik enters carrying box of T.J.'s teeth and some of his grill work; oblivious to the lady's continuous yelps.

CLOSE ON T.J.'S MOUTH AND TEETH

Thick blood bubbles and leaks out, oozing between his fingers.

MALLIK WALKS UP

to T.J.'s wheelchair and sets a small box full of teeth and grill work onto T.J.'s lap.

MALLIK

(In a kindly manner)

I thought maybe you're gunna need
some o' these.

EXT. ER PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Mallik exits and walks back to his car holding one of T.J.'s pointy canine teeth. He examines it closely; opens his own mouth and touches one of his teeth with his tongue - as if trying to figure out which tooth he collected as a prize.

Mallik places T.J.'s knocked-out tooth into his jacket pocket as a memento. Then removes T.J.'s shirt and etc. from the trunk - hurls them into the bushes and slams down the hood.

Mallik moves to the driver-side door and climbs in.

EXT. INSIDE MALLIK'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Mallik glances back into the hospital windows towards T.J.; He feels a tad sorry for the poor dumb bastard. But he quickly shakes this thought out of his head.

INT. ER - SAME TIME

Doctors and nurses run to T.J. and work on him. A nurse cart with monitors and critical equipment is pushed towards T.J.

A HOSPITAL GUARD peers out the window, mad-dogging Mallik. But he cannot quite see Mallik clearly.

EXT. ER PARKING LOT - SAME

Mallik snickers to himself. A low siren is heard increasing in amplitude. Might be cops. Time to roll. Mallik starts his Chrysler and slowly pulls away.

FADE OUT:

EXT. CHIEF'S COMPOUND - EARLY MORNING

FADE INTO Mallik as he pulls in and sees several COP CARS and a few AMBULANCES. A new GATE KID, 19, thin smallish, pimply-faced, mans the gate.

GATE KID
Can I help you?

MALLIK
Open up, kid, I work here.
(Looking around at all the
comotion)
What's up with all the cops?

Kid hits the gate open button.

GATE KID
Horrific bloody attack.

MALLIK
(Distressed)
Who?!

GATE KID
Dunno. Someone beat-up a Chief or
something.

MALLIK
Oh no!

Mallik barrels through the gate. EMPLOYEES wait out front for the POLICE and PARAMEDICS to finish. Mallik spots Elvis and Norris, parks near them, and quickly exits his Chrysler.

MALLIK (CONT'D)
Elvis, Norris... what happened?!

ELVIS
(Drained)
We just got here. Someone got into
the building and beat-up Chief.

MALLIK
Who would do such a thing?

NORRIS

Blackmailers. Murderous bikers.
Disgruntled business partners.
Congenital losers. Dauphine... List
is long.

As Norris says "Dauphine" he looks at Elvis a beat - then
dismisses the thought.

MALLIK

Bikers?

NORRIS

Yeah, maybe. I thought the same
thing.

MALLIK

It ain't I-10 tribe, that problem
is resolved. Must be the Bikers. I
picked up their inside man
yesterday... T.J. the gate guard.
Their leader saw me do it... tried
to prevent it.

(beat)

Turns out they did the I-10
robbery. Made it look like Chief
did the dirty deed.

ELVIS

(In disbelief)

Who told you this?

MALLIK

Straight from T.J.'s mouth. Mr.
Pliers convinced him to talk to me.

ELVIS

Wait... Who's Mr. Pliers?

NORRIS

I prefer Mr. Ball and Mr. Pein.

MALLIK

(Smiling at Norris)

A device I use to extract
confessions. And teeth.

NORRIS

What'd he tell you?

MALLIK

I-10 tribe sent muscle guys to pick-
up the monthly payment. T.J.
spotted them and cut their tires.

(MORE)

MALLIK (CONT'D)

He called in his Biker buddies to follow them. After a few miles, the tires blew and the gang robbed 'em.

NORRIS

Sounds very professional.

MALLIK

Yeah. I-10 thought Chief planned the job. Turns out, T.J. set up a nice and professional score. I underestimated him.

ELVIS

I can't believe it. T.J.'s been here for years. We went to school together.

MALLIK

He broke yesterday. I took him over to see the I-10 G.M., he told 'em the same story. Admitted his part.

NORRIS

Where'd they bury him?

ELVIS

(Nervous)

Don't talk so loud. Cops all over.

MALLIK

I-10 didn't want him... as far as they're concerned, T.J. robbed Chief's money. I dropped him and a box of his teeth at the hospital.

NORRIS

Dude goes through an awful lot of teeth.

MALLIK

I suppose you're right. I got me one right here.

Mallik pulls the tooth out of his pocket and hands it to Norris, who is impressed.

NORRIS

Ah, Canine. It'll make a nice necklace.

MALLIK

Huh? Yeah. Maybe.

ELVIS
(Grinning)
You guys are sick.

Behind Mallik, Elvis and Norris, an ambulance is quickly loaded and Chief is transported.

Elvis, Mallik and Norris approach a ~~second~~ ambulance. Elvis is very worried.

MALLIK
(To the paramedic)
How's the Chief doing?

PARAMEDIC 1
He's a tough old goat, but someone gave him a hell of a wallop in the head -- used a shillelagh... maybe a cudgel. You or me would be fine after a few weeks. More serious for the elderly.

Elvis is more worried, a tear or two mists her eyes.

PARAMEDIC 2
Don't worry too much, Hun... we've decided to transport him on account of his age.

MALLIK
You think we should follow?

PARAMEDIC 1
Wait here for a hour... give the E.R. some time to evaluate him. Plus, cops want a statement from everybody. That'll take an hour, easy.

EXT. E.R. WAITING ROOM - DAY

DOCTORS report clearly tragic news to TRIBE OFFICIALS and FAMILY, including Elvis, who break down in tears.

Norris and Mallik watch. Heart sunk.

Chief Martinez's BOATLOAD OF DAUGHTERS wail in grief.

Elvis does not wail; not a screamer. She is angry and vengeful.

Mallik comforts Elvis as Norris looks on; livid and saddened.

INT. CHIEF'S COMPOUND - LATER THAT DAY

Mallik, Elvis, Norris, etc., assemble in one of Chief's offices, grieving. They have no idea what happened.

A phone rings, Norris answers it and turns to Mallik.

NORRIS

You have a visitor at the gate.

Odd; who might be looking for him now?

EXT. PARKING LOT GATE - DAY

Mallik enters and sees T.J. outside the gate. He walks over to T.J. with malice and menace. Guard opens the gate for Mallik.

MALLIK

I told you I'd hurt you next time I saw you.

T.J.'s toothy grills have been re-installed; a tad out of kilter and misaligned. He struggles to speak, lisping -

T.J.

I came to pay my respects. Chief was flawed man; we are all flawed. You and me, too, Mallik.

MALLIK

(Incredulous)

You risk your life and new teeth to tell me I'm a flawed human?

T.J.

I had no idea of the depth of evil of these cunning men.

MALLIK

What the fuck are you trying to tell me?!

T.J.

Bikers hurt Chief... payback for de-enrollment and other offenses over the years.

(beat)

Boss struck Chief with his own Coup Stick.

MALLIK

They thought this plan up all by themselves?

T.J.

No... Boss... he... he thinks he's a reincarnated Indian warrior.

MALLIK

Why are you telling me this?

T.J.

I had nothing to do wits it. I'm more of a lover than a killer.

MALLIK

I can see you're a babe magnet.

T.J.

Yeah. It's my "Athlete's Foot."

MALLIK

You mean it your "Achilles Heel?"

T.J.

Yeah. That it.

MALLIK

Anything else?

T.J.

Yeah, gang bragging they will kill Elvis next, if she don't play ball right away. They wants their money now -- ain't gonna wait long.

BAM!

Mallik sucker-punches T.J. hard enough to knock out his upper replaced teeth and bridgework.

MALLIK

I told you to not let me see you again.

Mallik helps T.J. up and assists him back to his car.

MALLIK (CONT'D)

You want me to drive you to the hospital?

T.J. sounds like he says "mmmm-NO."

Mallik helps T.J. into his car, then steps back and watches T.J. drive slowly away.

MALLIK (CONT'D)
(Speaking to himself)
The poor, pathetic Dumb fuck...
why'd he make me do it again?

INT. CHIEF'S COMPOUND - DAY

Mallik walks back in to see Elvis and Norris.

MALLIK (CONT'D)
That was T.J. He had a fantastic
story. Told me the Biker Boss
killed Chief... revenge for
disenrollment... Struck him down
with his own Coup Stick.

ELVIS
What the fuck? They were not even
tribe members. Chief carried
them... felt sorry for them.

NORRIS
Helluva way to pay back kindness
and...

MALLIK
T.J. told me the gang threatens to
kill Elvis, unless she plays ball,
quickly.

ELVIS
(Confused, slow to take in
the data)
Biker Boss killed Chief?

MALLIK
Yes. T.J. told me.

Elvis flashes an evil vengeance in her eyes.

ELVIS
Norris, bring Boss to me.

MALLIK
Wait! Elvis, these guys are
killers. They'll just kill Norris.

NORRIS
But I cull the herd a bit...

MALLIK

We gotta attack this as a team...
and right the wrongs. Chief would
have wanted...

ELVIS

How do you know what Chief wanted?

MALLIK

He told me about the I-10 troubles.

NORRIS

Mallik is right. Chief needed
Mallik's help... he expected to pay
for his own misdeeds one day.

ELVIS

We just gonna sit around, waiting
for the next shoe to drop?

MALLIK

No, we'll hit back, but as a team.
Not in vengeance, but in pre-
emptive retribution.

NORRIS

What the fuck does that mean?

ELVIS

Yeah, Mallik, what you talking
about?

MALLIK

If we burn 'em out, then no more
slow disenrollment... we disenroll
'em all at once.

Elvis and Norris snicker. Mallik smirks.

NORRIS

I say we preemptively kill all the
bikers.

MALLIK

Your job is to protect Elvis at all
cost. Chief would demand the same.
You'll get a crack at some bikers
later. Gotta keep your eyes on the
prize.

Elvis is sad, but grateful for Mallik's concern for her
health and welfare.

NORRIS
(Nods in agreement,
confessing...)
I see red, too, from time to time.
Clouds my vision.

EXT. CHIEF'S COMPOUND PARKING LOT - DAY

Mallik, Elvis, and Norris join forces.

MALLIK
Elvis, I'm not going to let you
take your little girly Prius
battery-car into a fight with these
killers.

ELVIS
It's got better pick-up than your
smelly old Chrysler.

MALLIK
You told me you loved my back
seat's rich Corinthian leather,
and...

Norris smiles. Elvis laughs, embarrassed - then playfully
punches Mallik.

ELVIS
Shut up, you pig!

MALLIK
(Smirking)
Oink!

Norris slams a pike into the front end of the Prius. Huge
electrical sparks start a battery fire. The Prius quickly
burns.

ELVIS
What the hell?! That's my car!

NORRIS
Not any more.

MALLIK
Ha-ha! Yeah! Problem solved.

Norris tosses keys to Elvis.

NORRIS
Take Chief's Jeep, it's yours now.

Elvis is shocked, and saddened as her car goes up in flames. She gives Norris a look that says a price will be OWED for his destructive insubordination.

DISSOLVE TO:

Some hours later...

EXT. BIKER PARTY CABIN - TEMECULA - NIGHT

Mallik, Elvis, Norris team up to preemptively counter-attack the Bikers at their hideout somewhere in the Temecula Hills.

MALLIK

Best way to drive vermin from their nest?

NORRIS

Smoke 'em out!

ELVIS

(Seething anger)
Flamethrower!

Mallik double-takes Elvis, normally the most level-headed.

MALLIK

Okay, I'll get the roof burning.

NORRIS

When they're driven out, I'll retrieve Chief's Coup Stick.

MALLIK

(Whispering a command to
Elvis)
Gotta take out their iron horses.

Elvis backs the Chief's Jeep quietly - close to a bunch of parked motorbikes. Then sneaks up, runs a cable-wire through several wheels, links the bikes together, and attaches the wire to the Jeep's rear tow-bar.

Norris helps Elvis as Mallik finds oily rags to set fire to, which he hurls up onto the roof. The building is set smoldering -- not the raging fire hoped for.

Party noises comes from inside.

Bon Jovi's "Wanted Dead or Alive" blares at ear-piercing amplitude as the door opens.

A Biker WARRIOR staggers out smoking a large blunt, with a whiskey bottle in the other hand.

Mallik finds himself face-to-face with the Warrior. It takes the Biker a moment to recognize his gang's arch enemy.

MALLIK (CONT'D)

Hiya, soldier!

The drunk Warrior goes for his knife in his belt but Norris CLUBS HIM from behind. Biker goes down in a heap but Norris reaches and miraculously saves the whiskey bottle.

Mallik and Norris drag the Warrior into the bushes.

MALLIK (CONT'D)

Next time, sonny, you gunna need
'ta bring a gun to a stick fight.

Mallik winks at Elvis and Norris.

NORRIS

(Weak smile for Mallik's
lousy joke)

Good one.

Elvis shakes her head in faux disbelief.

ELVIS

Why so many wisecracks?

Norris rips fabric from the Warrior's shirt and stuffs it into the whiskey bottle, building a crude, incendiary Molotov Cocktail. Norris lights it up and hands it to Mallik.

Mallik hurls the Molotov cocktail atop the shack. The bottle breaks and the roof erupts into a roaring inferno.

MALLIK

(Whispers to Norris)

Go cut the power.

Elvis and Mallik embrace quickly. She gives him a good-luck smooch as Norris bolts. The couple is illuminated by the fire.

MALLIK (CONT'D)

(To Elvis)

Get the Jeep ready.

Elvis runs to the Jeep, jumps in and starts it up. She waits as it idles.

The roof fire starts to burn for real. Lights and power go out in the Biker Party cabin. The silence is LOUD.

Suddenly, concerned commotion breaks out inside the shack. Mallik jumps to the back of the Jeep and yells to Elvis.

MALLIK (CONT'D)

Wait until they flee, then gun it!

A pack of BIKERS and PARTYGOERS burst out of the shack - they fall to their knees, hacking and coughing from the smoke.

MALLIK (CONT'D)

Hiya, fellas! Looks like your shack's afire!

More BIKERS and PARTYGIRLS bust outside. The shack is now empty. They cough, hack and rub their eyes.

Norris sneaks behind them and enters the burning shack.

A FEW MOMENTS LATER

Norris bolts out of the shack and raises the Coup Stick high for Mallik before sneaking away behind the bikers.

Norris stealthily moves to the nicest bike, wheels it out, and cranks it up. The Bikers notice just as Norris takes-off up the road.

Just then, Elvis floors the Jeep. The wire tightens and knocks all Bikers on their asses. They look up just as their bikes are torn from their parking spots.

Bike parts and bikers are knocked all around as half the assembled bikes are ripped to pieces. Bike parts follow the Jeep up the hill.

Elvis stops the Jeep. Mallik jumps off the back and disconnects the wire.

Norris ditches the motorcycle he stole in the bushes and jumps into the back of the Jeep along with Mallik.

Elvis drops the clutch and -

- The Jeep lurches forward but stalls. The worst possible time. Mallik and Norris are nearly thrown from the Jeep - just as the cabin completely collapses in a raging inferno.

ELVIS

(Contrite)

Oops. Sorry.

Some of the dirty bikers snicker as they rise from the knockdown. Some of them beeline towards the Jeep. The rest of the Bikers dart to their motorcycles.

Elvis restarts the Jeep and -

EXT. HILL - MOMENTS LATER

- barrels up to Mallik's Chrysler parked up the hill. Mallik jumps off the Jeep and into his car.

The Jeep screams up the road in low gear, taking Elvis and Norris out of sight.

Mallik starts up his Chrysler and burns off the opposite direction.

EXT. BIKER PARTY CABIN - SAME

The Bikers retrieve their cycles and -

EXT. GRAND AVENUE - CONTINUOUS

- the mad, massive motorcycle chase is on. The Bikers hunt down the Jeep - anger-crazed, full of weed, meth and alcohol - and gain on Elvis and Norris.

BIKER 1 gets too close. Norris shoves a push-broom into his spokes. Biker 1 crashes head over heels into the bushes.

They rest close the gap on Elvis and Norris. Elvis cuts left across all traffic lanes and knocks-out THREE Bikers - then sails across the 74/Grand Avenue parking lot and onto -

EXT. ORTEGA HIGHWAY - SAME

The Jeep goes airborne an insane distance. More bikers follow; flying even higher and faster than the Jeep. BIKER 2 closes in and -

SWINGS A CHAIN

which crashes into the Jeep, nearly killing Norris.

BIKER 2 SPEEDS UP

and smashes the chain again into the Jeep's window, which shatters and sprays glass shards.

Elvis swerves into this Biker and -

SENDS HIM OFF A CLIFF

to his certain death.

BIKER 3 shoots at a tire. Bikers seem to be everywhere.

NORRIS USES THE COUP STICK

as a tomahawk to take out a few bikers who get too close to the Jeep.

A passenger on one of the motorcycles tries to climb into the moving Jeep, but Norris prevents it and biker falls to the road.

The situation gets real. SIX MORE BIKERS storm up at top speed. This looks like certain death for Elvis and Norris but out of nowhere -

MALLIK SLAMS INTO THE WHOLE GROUP OF BIKERS

- knocking them all out of the game, except for one who ends up on the roof of the Chrysler.

Mallik rides with the biker roof-surfer for a moment, then -

SLAMS ON THE BRAKES

The surfer sails off the roof onto the road.

Mallik floors it again and the Chrysler goes bumpity, bump, bump, over the dirty biker, presumably killing him.

INSIDE THE JEEP

Amused, Norris gives an approving grunt and laugh. Elvis is somewhat disgusted with the whole affair.

EXT. ORTEGA HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS

Mallik races up to cover the rear of the Jeep. All the Bikers have been taken out except -

DUCATI AND NINJA

approaching at top speed.

Mallik sees them and slams on the brakes, skids to a stop and blocks Ducati and Ninja.

Ducati dumps his bike just to stay alive. Ninja swerves around and continues after the Jeep.

MALLIK LEAPS OUT OF THE CHRYSLER

and pulls a .38 Special handgun on Ducati. Chewing a bunch of gum, Mallik disarms Ducati of a variety of guns and knives - and hurls most of them down an embankment.

Mallik cocks his pistol at Ducati, who grabs at Mallik's dirty boots, groveling.

MALLIK

Get your filthy hands off's me, you
damn dirty biker.

Ducati takes his trembling hands away from Mallik; shaking in fear. He should have used the rest room at his last stop, because he just wet his leathers.

Mallik levels his gun at Ducati, then re-aims at Ducati's bike.

Ducati screams.

DUCATI

(In terror)

NO!!!!!!

Mallik unloads his whole set of shells into Ducati's motorcycle, killing the it DEAD.

Ducati's beautiful bike catches fire and burns - along with Ducati's anger and hatred.

Ducati leaps at Mallik, who pistol whips him in the mouth, dislodging a tooth and knocking him down but not out. Ducati's tooth hits the dirt.

Ducati extracts a hidden knife from his boot and lunges at Mallik, sticks him with it and knocks Mallik's gun away.

Mallik knocks away Ducati's knife, and both men brutally pummel each other with bare knuckles. Ducati delivers multiple punches directly into Mallik's mouth.

Mallik finally overcomes Ducati's rage and fury, and delivers a final series of gruesome blows to Ducati, exhausting his spurt of energy.

Ducati is spent and finished. Mallik spits out his huge wad of Wrigley's plus a few pieces of bloody teeth - then picks up the gum with his heel of his shoe.

Mallik scrapes his heel - and the gum - slowly across the ground - picking up dirt and whatever else is on the ground as he walks slowly towards Ducati.

Defeated and beaten to a pulp, Ducati lies in a heap. Mallik picks up Ducati's head; barely still breathing and alive.

MALLIK

You hungry? I got something I think
you're gunna like.

Ducati grunts a defiant grunt, too beaten and weak to speak, but with an evil glimmer in his eyes.

MALLIK (CONT'D)

(Cheerful)

You are? Well, that's good. Open
up, fella.

Ducati resists opening his mouth. Mallik squeezes the sides of Ducati's mouth with a thumb and fingers and finally forces it open.

Mallik pinches the dirty ass Wrigley's from his boot and pushes it into Ducati's mouth - then drapes his hand over his rival's nose and mouth - forcing Ducati to gulp down the offensive pile of gum.

MALLIK (CONT'D)

(Ominous, demanding)

Swallow it!

Ducati moans defiantly. He bucks his whole body up and down a few times, resisting. Mallik holds on until Ducati is forced to swallow if he wants to continue breathing. Ducati swallows the gum and is thusly thoroughly humiliated.

Livid, Mallik throws Ducati's head towards the ground, and walks away.

MALLIK (V.O.)

Frankly, I was disgusted by the
evil vileness of the Biker gang,
and their disgraced and humiliated
leader.

Elvis and Norris return. They race their beat-up, limping and smoking Jeep and screech to a stop and jump out.

Behind Mallik, Ducati is bent over on all fours, puking. With each puke, Ducati's body heaves violently.

Mallik raises his arms and dances like a prizefighter, in total victory.

Elvis is very happy that Mallik remains alive, and they continue their romance with a big embrace and enormous smooch. Elvis wipes her mouth with the back of her hand.

ELVIS

Yuck! You taste like leathery
dogshit again!

MALLIK

Shaddup and gimme more lip, lass.

Mallik grabs Elvis and they passionately kiss in the swirling dusty aftermath. Elvis is somewhat repulsed by the dogshit taste, but reluctantly allows the smooch-fest to continue.

Behind them, unseen by either, Ducati slowly and laboriously crawls towards a gun discarded in the dirt.

Ducati retrieves the gun, and crawls toward Elvis and Mallik from behind - but has trouble focusing.

Ducati rises as if from the dead - and he wipes out his mouth with the back of his arm. We see dust, dirt, grains of sand stuck to his crotch where he pissed his leathers.

Ducati is just about to tear hot lead into the smooching couple when -

WHAP! NORRIS APPLIES THE COUP STICK

to the back of Ducati's head.

It is lights out for Ducati, who goes THUD and collapses.

Shocked, Mallik and Elvis stop kissing, but only for a moment.

Mallik looks down towards Ducati - and spots another canine tooth in the ground, which he picks up and pockets.

NORRIS

You got the girl, Mallik, why you
stop kissing her?

Norris wipes down the Coup Stick with Ducati's shirt - then walks back to the Chrysler -smiling, happy and fulfilled.

WE PULL BACK TO REVEAL

total decimation around the smooching couple: Cars, bikes and bikers littered and strewn about.

A few lucky living Biker Warriors re-mount their bikes and drive away. Battle is over. Time to lick their wounds.

The Chrysler has a few more minor scratches and dents.

The Jeep is beaten-up as bad as Ducati; a smoking wreck.

From a great distance, lights are seen and sirens are heard, as the HIGHWAY PATROL comes up the hill towards the scene of mayhem and carnage.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PARADE GROUNDS - TEMECULA - WEEKS LATER

An elaborate inter-tribal ceremony. CHIEFTAINS and WARRIORS from many tribal nations are present. We see brilliant traditional tribal dancing, singing and drums.

Wounds are healing, bruises are lightened-up.

INT. TENT - PARADE GROUNDS - HOURS LATER

A huge, elaborate ceremony has an international flair - like a formal dinner the State Department might host.

TRIBAL ELDER 1

... We now call upon our
storyteller to recount the events
of those who we honor here today.

TRIBAL ELDER 1 steps away from the podium and gives the mic to STORYTELLER, an ancient man with white hair and many accoutrements. When he speaks, a great hush develops.

STORYTELLER

We are greatly honored to have
gathered here today many different
nations, who will indeed witness an
historic event for our peoples.

Storyteller respectfully nods to TRIBAL AMBASSADORS.

STORYTELLER (CONT'D)

Today we install and honor our
newly elected tribal head, Chief
Elvis Martinez, and...

Storyteller motions towards the honored guests: Chief Elvis,
Chief Norris, and Mallik.

STORYTELLER (CONT'D)

We recognize and install War Chief
and Protector Norris, who you know
is a man of few spoken words...

Some hushed laughing is heard.

STORYTELLER (CONT'D)

... I attest that he does own
access to a small vocabulary of
words... he just has trouble
stringing them together in a
meaningful pattern.

NORRIS

(Laughing, embarrassed)
Asshole.

MALLIK

(Snickering)
Shaddup, Norris... can't you see
the man is trying to tell us your
story?

ELVIS

Norris... SHUT IT!

STORYTELLER

Elvis Martinez, having been duly
elected, is hereby installed as
tribal Chief.

Elders bestow upon Elvis an important and elaborate and
decorative headdress. Elder 1 hands her the Coup Stick.

STORYTELLER (CONT'D)

We also honor Chief Norris for his
selfless protection of others
during times of strife and
lawlessness; who faithfully carried
out his duties regardless of
threats to his life and limb. He is
a great and modern warrior.

An Elder hands a new and elaborate Coup Stick with an
integrated tomahawk and compass to Norris.

STORYTELLER (CONT'D)

And to Mr. Rick Mallik...

(beat)

A distinguished detective of the W.L. Norton Detective Agency, who suffered greatly under the torment of evildoers whose intent was to grievously harm our nation, who was brought in to help our tribe at a time of great need...

(beat)

assisted Chief Elvis, and Chief Norris thwart an evil plan which prevented a larger tragedy, and safely returned to this tribe a historical and significant relic.

(beat)

So significant is this artifact to our Nation, that it allows for these proceedings to...

(Now unartfully)

proceed... here today.

An Elder places a cheap plastic casino points badge, with a cheap fabric lanyard around Mallik's neck.

MALLIK

(Feels cheated)

Son of a bitch!

Mallik looks down at the badge; a personal humiliation.

NORRIS

(Horrorified)

Son of a bitch.

ELVIS

(Pissed-off)

Son of a bitch!

STORYTELLER

(Trying, failing to hide a cruel smile)

On behalf of my tribe, let me be the first to offer Mr. Rick Mallik my hardy handshake.

Storyteller hands the mic back to Elder 1, waves to the crowd and walks to Mallik to give him a hardy handshake.

ELDER 1

Thank you, Storyteller. Dancing 'til dawn, or 'til the cops break it up.

Elder 1 places the mic into the stand and exits.

EXT. TENT - PARADE GROUNDS - DAY

Mallik starts to leave the festivities; tired. Elvis, Norris and Tribal Elders catch-up with Mallik.

ELDER 1
Mallik, wait up!

MALLIK
Yeah?

ELDER 1
(Resolutely)
Ancestors forbid...
(beat)
It is forbidden for the Chief to
mix with non-Indian race.

ELVIS
(Saddened, clearly torn)
I'm sorry, Rick.

The Elders watch Elvis; quite pleased with her. Norris looks suspicious but stays quiet. Overcome with emotion, Elvis exits in tears.

Also near tears, Mallik is stoic and resigned.

The Elders nod in agreement and watch Elvis walk away. Some appear to understand and recognize her anguish.

ELDER 2
(In a goofy, yet curt
manner)
In consolation, the Elders have
awarded you with free buffet
benefits for life. Works every day
except national holidays.

ELDER 3, mid-50's, who is a colossal fat-fuck, smiles, licking his chops.

ELDER 3
(Pavlov slobber dripping)
Very valuable honor, my friend.

The Elders present Mallik with Tribal Buffet badge which is ceremoniously placed around his neck. Mallik now has two cheap plastic badges hanging.

Mallik grabs and moves both badges so he can read them. He stares at the badges and then at Elvis moving away from him. Mallik just now realizes just how screwed he truly is.

ELDER 1

Please, send us your bill. You are a triumph for your firm.

ELDER 2

When we need your help again, we will surely call you first.

MALLIK

You guys steal my girl, and now I'm fired?

Elder 1 glad-hands and backslaps Mallik, just like W.L. Norton did.

ELDER 1

No, sir, your job is complete. We just don't want... don't require... your services any longer.

Later...

EXT. NEAR VISITOR BLEACHERS - PARADE GROUNDS - DAY

A morose Mallik is leaning against the bleachers; he adds a few new sticks of Wrigley's to his mouth.

The festivities continue in the background.

Mallik observes the festivities from a distance and now as an outsider. Sad, he turns his back and walks away. He passes a trash can and tosses in his Tribal badges and then he continues to his car.

EXT. INSIDE MALLIK'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Mallik cranks up the old Chrysler and drives away slowly, wafts of oily smoke rises as he drives away.

EXT. INSIDE MALLIK'S CAR - TRAVELING - DAY

Mallik on a long, sad, lonely drive back to the Beach Cities.

EXT. I-10 AT I-215 FREEWAY - TEMECULA AREA - DAY

CLOSE SHOT of "BEACH CITIES" sign, with an arrow pointing to the route, which Mallik's old smoking beat-to-shit Chrysler follows.

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. OFFICE SUITE - NORTON DETECTIVE AGENCY - NEXT DAY

FADE INTO Mallik as he checks back in. Same old shit.

W.L. NORTON
(Fatherly-like)
Welcome back, Rick... very nice
work. Happy to have you back.

MALLIK
(Lying, depressed)
Thanks, Boss. Good to be back.

Norton places one hand on Mallik's shoulder and shakes with the other.

W.L. NORTON
Take a couple days off. Re-adjust
to being a working stiff again.

MALLIK
With pay?

W.L. NORTON
You are one funny guy, Mallik.

MALLIK
(Slightly under his
breath)
Son of a bitch.

Norton hears it, but knows he's an SOB and isn't offended.

W.L. NORTON
(Jovial, but always in
charge)
You wanna eat... you're gonna need
ta work!

MALLIK
(Emotionally moving on)
Eat... work... yessir.

W.L. NORTON

Go home, Mallik. You did a great job. Take a rest... I will need your expense report and time-cards tallied by morning... Great job, mister.

Jeffery walks behind Mallik, out of earshot of the boss, and whispers so only Mallik can hear.

JEFFERY

Boss is a big fuck-face.

Mallik is too depressed to pinch Jeffrey's ass, but manages a weak smile.

MALLIK

Hiya, Jeffery.

EXT. NORTON DETECTIVE AGENCY - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Mallik exits, saunters back towards his Chrysler and slips in.

EXT. INSIDE MALLIK'S CAR - SAME

Mallik slams more Wrigley's into his chompers, chewing slowly, deliberately, reminiscing of more cheerful times. Then starts the Chrysler up and -

EXT. INSIDE MALLIK'S CAR - TRAVELING - DUSK

- drives home. Life on the streets whiz by, but he cares not.

EXT. NEAR MALLIK'S CONDO COMPLEX - DUSK

Mallik parks his Chrysler, exits, slams the door shut and steps onto the sidewalk. He looks down the street and focuses on a new electric Prius Sedan that reminds him of something. He shakes his head a little to remove a thought.

A loud motorcycle breaks Mallik's mood. The Biker glances at Mallik who returns the favor. They mad-dog each other.

As the motorcycle moves past Mallik, he forms a gun with his fingers and he squeezes one eye closed. Mallik aims directly at the Biker - makes a loud ka-click sound - cocks his finger-gun - and winks -

MALLIK
(Weird smile)
Pow. Pow. Pow.

Mallik's weird little smile to the Biker scares and intimidates him. The Biker looks straight ahead and politely accelerates away.

MALLIK (CONT'D)
Wise move, damn dirty biker.

Mallik spits a colossal wad of white-ish gum onto the grey sidewalk and snickers to himself a bit. We see several other gum-stains on the sidewalk. Mallik grins and wipes his mouth with the back of his hand.

MALLIK (CONT'D)
I can sure be a stinker, sometimes.

EXT. CONDO COMPLEX - MOMENTS LATER

Mallik slowly climbs the stairs. Worn-out, tired, beaten. He is clearly a tad depressed. He opens his condo door.

INT. DOORWAY INTO MALLIK'S BEDROOM - MALLIK'S CONDO - DUSK

The View is inside Mallik's bachelor pad el-cheapo condo - looking towards the bed. It is dark but details can be seen.

Elvis is in bed, under the covers, presumably naked and waiting for him.

ELVIS
What took you so long?

MALLIK
Norris with you?

ELVIS
WHAT?! No!

Mallik smiles a knowing and strange smile as he closes the door, locking all the bolts and chain.

Then hits the light switch and we -

CUT TO BLACK