

The Dry Run
Pilot Episode: Purgatory

FADE IN

EXT. GOULBURN CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - DAY

Goulburn jail, located in the outskirts of New South Wales.

A grim brick prison home to some of Australia's most notorious criminals. Murderers, rapists, gangsters - the scum of Australia. But they're not all violent offenders...

The gates of the jail CLANK open.

FELIX PHILLIPS (34) walks free. Tall, wiry, clean shaven with wispy blonde hair and a smile that could charm the paint off walls. He wears jeans, a faded gingham farm boy shirt, and carries a half-full cardboard box.

EXT. GOULBURN CORRECTION FACILITY CAR PARK - CONT.

Outside, Felix breathes in his first breath as a free man.

A woman waits for him, leaning against her beat up car. SHARON (40), his sister, just as tall as Felix, with long bleached blonde hair.

Their accents are quintessentially outback Australian.

SHARON

Look at you; you've put on a bit of muscle.

FELIX

Fending off rapists for five years. What did you expect?

SHARON

Told you that pretty blonde hair would get you into trouble.

They share a smile and get in the car.

INT. SHARON'S CAR - DAY

They drive along the maze of Sydney skyscrapers.

FELIX

Thanks again for picking me up, sis.

SHARON

Anytime. Though this is the last time.

FELIX

Sure it's okay to crash with you?

SHARON

Yeah, no problem. You're in luck actually; we just got a new couch. Pulls out and everything. You'll be christening it.

FELIX

What an honour. I'll try not to intrude on you guys too long.

SHARON

Long as you stay outta trouble, don't care how long you stay. Be good for you to get used to city life again. Maybe visit the harbour. Go to Bondi. Climb the bridge. Sit in the park. All that touristy shit.

Felix laughs.

FELIX

Not sure that's my style. But who knows. Maybe beach volleyball will be my new calling.

SHARON

Travis said you can work at one of his pubs, too. If you want? Just pulling beers, wiping tables. Nothing fancy.

FELIX

More than I deserve.

SHARON

Don't fuck this up.

FELIX

Don't stress, Shaz. I don't ever plan on going back.

INT. SHARON'S APARTMENT - DAY

The apartment is small, stylishly-furnished, pearly white, but SOULLESS - like someone recreated an IKEA catalogue.

FELIX

Nice place.

Felix looks awkward. Doesn't know where to put his box; his social cues are a little rusty.

SHARON

So, this is our new couch.

She shows off the bright white leather couch, like an assistant on a game show.

SHARON (CONT.)
No drinking red wine on it.

FELIX
Very fancy.

He picks up a framed photo of a happy Sharon and Travis.

SHARON
Travis and I thought we'd treat you to a nice dinner. A French place. No snails, but. Not that snooty.

FELIX
Oh, you don't have to. I'm happy with just a burger or something.

SHARON
Don't be silly. It's a special occasion. Oh, here, I got you something.

She goes over to a bureau and takes out a smartphone.

SHARON (CONT.)
They're pretty sophisticated now. Games, maps, and all sorts. I've set it all up for you.

Felix turns it over like a caveman.

FELIX
Oh, wow. This is great, thanks.

SHARON
It's fully charged. Programmed my number in there. Even put some of your old numbers in there. The ones I found when I cleaned out your place at least. I put all your other stuff in storage. I'll dig out the key.

The door opens and TRAVIS (34) walks in. Dressed in a suit, sharp haircut, carrying a briefcase. He's trying to act cool in front of the first convict he's ever met.

TRAVIS
Hey man, you must be Felix.

FELIX
Oh, do I have to be?

He smiles and they shake hands. Travis kisses Sharon.

TRAVIS
Welcome to our little abode.

FELIX
Cheers. Sharon was just showing
me the new couch.

TRAVIS
Oh, yeah. Brand new. From
Denmark. Designed by Wegner.

FELIX
(Sarcastic)
No way! *The Wegner*.

Sharon back slaps him playfully.

TRAVIS
(To Sharon)
Did you tell him about *La Roux*?

SHARON
He said he wants burgers instead.

TRAVIS
Oh, no, no. You'll love it! It's
amazing. They do a croquembouche
to die for.

FELIX
Long as it's not ladled outta a
giant tub by a sweaty bald guy,
I'm happy.

SHARON
Fine, but no promises.

INT. LA ROUX RESTAURANT - DAY

A pretentiously French restaurant. Travis and Sharon savour every mouthful.

Felix looks down at his TINY PLATE OF FOOD like he might accidentally blow it away. He smiles politely.

INT. SHARON'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Felix lies awake on the couch, staring up at the ceiling. His first night is THUNDEROUSLY QUIET. He tosses and turns, then gets up.

He goes over to Sharon's purse and takes \$20.

EXT. GREASY TAKE-OUT - NIGHT

Felix wolfs down a burger in a deserted burger joint as he tries to work out how to use his phone.

EXT. TRAVIS' PUB - DAY

The pub's deserted save for a single BARFLY nursing a flat schooner.

Felix stares longingly through the BARRED WINDOWS out at the sunshine.

Travis walks in.

TRAVIS

Hey there, champ! How's your first week going?

Felix plasters on a fake smile.

FELIX

Oh, thrilling.

Travis grips his shoulder, happy. He walks off to the back office. Felix goes back to hating life.

The barfly orders another. Felix pulls the tap and it bursts and splashes all over him.

He tries to contain the beer as it spews all over the bar.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY - HOURS LATER

His shift over, Felix waits for a bus when a hood is thrown over his head and he's DRAGGED into a BLACK MERCEDES.

INT. MERCEDES - DAY - CONT.

The hood is removed, his arms held by two brutal BODYGUARDS, dressed in suits.

FELIX

Hooper!? Jeez. Scared the shit out of me.

HOOPER, sits across from him. He's a soft-looking man of forty, with a balding top and wired rimmed glasses. He's dressed in a pin-striped suit.

FELIX (CONT.)

Bit cliché isn't it? Dragging me into the back of a car. Coulda just asked.

HOOPER

I prefer my style.

FELIX

Explains the shitty suit.

Felix smiles at the thugs - "AmIRight, Boys?" - Hooper makes a gesture to one of the thugs who PUNCHES Felix in the face.

HOOPER

It's not how it use to be, Felix.
I seem to remember you use to
pride yourself on having style.

Felix massages his chin.

FELIX

Style and flare are very
different things.

HOOPER

They let you out?

FELIX

Still the brains, I see.

Another punch. His nose is BLEEDING.

FELIX (CONT.)

Fuck me! Easy, chief. I'd like to
eat solids again at some point.

HOOPER

How's life on the outside?

FELIX

Apparently not that much
different.

HOOPER

So, what, you're pulling pints
now? This is your future?

FELIX

Beats sitting in a cell.

HOOPER

You still owe me fifty large.

Felix scoffs.

FELIX

How'd you figure that?

HOOPER

You were supposed to get it for
me five years ago. You never did.

FELIX

First off, it was ten grand. And
second, I got busted doing that
job. I think I've paid that debt.

HOOPER

Not the way I see it. And five
years...interest attached...I'm
making it fifty.

FELIX

Shit, wish I had your accountants.

HOOPER

Now, I know you're readjusting to civic life. So I'm going to be uncharacteristically generous and give you three months to get me my money.

FELIX

Where am I supposed to get that kinda cash? They gave me \$20 when I got out and I've spent at least half of that.

HOOPER

Guess it's time to put that flare to good use.

FELIX

Like you said, I pull pints. I'm not a thief anymore.

HOOPER

Tigers don't change their spots.

FELIX

Leopards. Leopards don't change their spots.

Hooper sighs. Felix braces for the inevitable PUNCH that comes swiftly.

HOOPER

Three months.

Hooper opens the van door.

HOOPER (CONT.)

You're staying with your sister, right? Always liked Sharon. Nice girl.

Felix tenses.

HOOPER (CONT.)

My boys are gonna rough you up a bit. You understand. Can't be seen to be playing favourites and don't know who's watching. Don't worry - they'll avoid your hands.

Felix looks resigned to his fate. He gets thrown to the pavement. One of the thugs holds his arms behind the back, while the other breaks his nose.

INT. SHARON'S APARTMENT - DAY

Felix walks into the apartment, beaten and blooded. Sharon immediately notices and rushes over.

SHARON
Jesus Christ, Felix! What
happened to you?

Felix brushes her away, trying to downplay it.

He leans on the white couch; Sharon notices the blood.

FELIX
Just had the welcome wagon rolled
out by some of the old boys. Such
characters.

SHARON
You were supposed to be staying
outta trouble.

Sharon rushes to the kitchen, comes back with a steak and a wet cloth. She gives the steak to Felix for the eye and starts cleaning the couch.

FELIX
I never was good at hide and
seek.

SHARON
Dammit. This isn't a joke. You've
been out less than a week and you
already look like sausage meat.

FELIX
I've spent the last five years
avoiding beatings. The irony is
not lost on me.

SHARON
What did they want?

FELIX
Nothing. Just letting me know
they're still around.

Sharon drops her voice.

SHARON
You can't bring that shit into my
life anymore, Felix. Travis is a
good guy. He doesn't know the
half of it. And I don't want him
to.

FELIX
Obviously I didn't want this.

Sharon looks concerned, but her patience is draining.

FELIX (CONT.)

Look, I'm really not trying to get you guys involved. I'm not trying to get involved. So, I'm gonna get outta town for awhile. Maybe visit Russ. Wait till the heat dies down.

SHARON

You can't just up and leave. You've got a job now. Responsibilities. Travis stuck his neck out for you.

FELIX

We can call it long service leave.

SHARON

You've been there three days!

FELIX

Really? Feels like a lot longer.

SHARON

Please. Promise you won't run off. This is your chance, Felix. You've taken your licks. Time to move on.

He takes a moment.

FELIX

Okay. I'll stay.

She looks him up and down, doesn't believe him.

SHARON

Go have a shower. Clean yourself up. Travis will be home any sec. Don't want him getting the right idea about you. And give me that.

Sharon takes back the steak.

SHARON (CONT.)

That's your dinner.

INT. COOPER'S ARMS - DAY

A busy beer garden, PACKED WITH PEOPLE enjoying an after work drink.

Felix, with fresh black eye, queues behind a WORKMAN (28) at the bar. He watches him closely as he pays with a pin number.

The workman wanders back to a table of ROWDY BUILDERS. He puts his beer down, then slaps his CAR KEYS and WALLET on the table.

Felix, beer in hand, wanders over to the builder's table, then DROPS his beer.

The builders think this is hilarious. Felix steadies himself on their table as he picks up his glass. Apologises. Walks off.

EXT. COOPER'S ARMS CAR PARK - CONT.

The car park outside the pub. Felix takes out the WALLET and the CAR KEY and he just stole. He goes to an ATM and uses the stolen cards to withdraw money.

He moves around the car park pressing the car key until he hears a car unlock.

It's a lime green ute. Felix is not impressed.

FELIX
Seriously?

He throws a duffel bag in the ute tray.

Drives off.

EXT. OUTBACK ROAD - DAY

The orange dirt of the Australian outback stretches out endlessly. The blistering sun beats down on the dying FARMLANDS.

Barbed wire fences mark out the farm borders.

The ute belts down the shimmering tarmac, shattering the silence.

Malnourished cows glance up as the ute roars past.

A KANGAROO suddenly JUMPS in front of the ute! Felix has no time to react, and he plows the car right into it.

The ute veers off the road and comes to a stop, kicking up blooms of dust.

Felix gets out. Examines the kangaroo, it's got two broken legs, but is still alive - albeit barely.

FELIX
You idiot. Millions of hectares
you got to bounce around in...

His farm instincts kick in and he knows what he has to do. He goes to the back of the car and rummages around. There's nothing back there.

FELIX (CONT.)
You kidding me? City boys.
Where's ya fucking tools?

He returns to the kangaroo. Exhales. Kneels down behind the kangaroo.

FELIX
I did not miss this.

In one quick motion, he snaps the kangaroo's neck.

EXT. OUTBACK ROAD - DAY - MINUTES LATER

Back on the road.

A MID-SIZE TOWN grows in the distance. It could be one of hundreds of dying Australian towns - big enough to be on a map, small enough to forget it exists.

A rusted sign says "Welcome to Yaama - Population 30,000" - the final 0 has been spray painted out.

EXT. YAAMA, NSW - CONT.

The ute drives into the dying outback town.

Felix looks around, nostalgia mixed with sadness. The changing economy has hit this place hard.

Most of the shops and stores are boarded up. A petrol station lined with rusted pumps and guts of old tractors.

The corner pub - THE RODEO DRIVE - is the only place with any life.

Atop a distant hill, there's a huge CONSTRUCTION SITE. Trailers and building supplies sit amongst idle trucks and cement mixers.

He drives through the town before turning into a LONG DRIVEWAY. The gate sign reads: "THE KOOKABURRA'S NEST".

EXT. "THE KOOKABURRA'S NEST" - CONT.

At the end of the long, long dirt driveway sits a small farmhouse. Despite the dry surroundings, the area directly around the farmhouse flourishes with greenery.

Felix parks the ute and gets out. BAXTER, a CHOCOLATE LABRADOR, rushes out from behind the house to greet the new visitor. Felix presses up against the ute.

The fly-screen opens and out steps RUSS (34), grinning from ear to ear. He's a farmer, built like a storybook giant, with a baked-in tan and a sun-weathered face.

He whistles and Baxter obediently rushes to his owner's side.
Russ laughs at Felix.

RUSS
Baxter won't hurt, ya.

The two hug. Russ puts his arm around his friend and leads him toward the house.

FELIX
Good to see ya, Russ.

RUSS
Nice shiner.

FELIX
Thanks. It was a welcome home gift.

RUSS
Guess the ute was too?

FELIX
Nope, no idea who owns it.

RUSS
Good, cos I've seen nicer colours coming out the back of cows.

INT. ROSE BAY POLICE STATION - DAY

MAJOR CRIMES UNIT

The Major Crimes Unit is a busy open-plan bullpen, with DETECTIVES working away.

DETECTIVE PIPPA GREY (30), sits at her desk, exhausted, propping her face up with a knuckle, a phone to her ear. Her bright eyes glazing over.

PIPPA
Uh huh...uh huh...Listen, considering it's *his* property I'm trying to recover, the least he can do is take a meet -- fine. Can you at least get him to call me?

She throws the phone down and fights back a scream.

DETECTIVE GILBERT (40) wanders over to her desk with a folder.

GILBERT
Hey, Pippa, got something for ya.

PIPPA
Oh yeah? Another thrilling *Manly*
Mansion burglary?

GILBERT
Car theft, actually.

Pippa takes the file in annoyance. Starts speed reading it.

PIPPA
And why would I want that?

GILBERT
This is not your regular stolen
car. It was taken from a pub in
Rose Bay.

PIPPA
Ah, so a rich asshole got his car
stolen?

GILBERT
Not quite. CCTV caught the thief
withdrawing money from the
owner's stolen cards. We got a
match on facial recognition.

Pippa has caught up in the file. Looks up in surprise.

PIPPA
Felix? When did he even get out?

GILBERT
Last week, apparently. Didn't
take him long.

Pippa's not buying it.

PIPPA
Any idea where he is now?

GILBERT
No idea. Goulburn's got his
address with his sister. But he
ain't there. We did get a hit on
an e-tag heading out of Sydney.
But, could be anywhere by now.

PIPPA
One of the first things a master
thief does when he's released
from prison is steal a wallet and
a ute? Doesn't that seem a bit
rash?

Gilbert smiles -- interested yet?

INT. "THE KOOKABURRA'S NEST" - DAY

A quaint farmhouse-cum-sad bachelor pad. Kitsch wallpaper that's peeling. Dusty photos of Russ and his family hang crooked on the walls. Linoleum floors. Shag carpets.

KITCHEN

The kitchen's stuck in a 70's time warp. Wood-paneling. A single plate in the drying rack. One knife. One fork.

Felix sits at the kitchen bench. Russ brings him a beer and sits down opposite him.

RUSS

I was glad to hear from ya. How's Shaz doing?

FELIX

She's alright. She's an accountant now. Got an apartment. Got a fella. He owns a couple pubs. Nice bloke. Oh, and they own a lovely couch.

RUSS

She landed on her feet.

FELIX

I suppose. If white leather couches are how you want to put them up at the end of the day. How's the farm?

Russ shifts in his chair, inhales through his teeth.

RUSS

Not great. Got tough after the fire. Dad was the one whose heart was in it. Money's tight. But that's nothing new. You know Phoebe left? She moved to Sydney for work. Took the kids. Just been me here, working the farm.

FELIX

Yeah, I heard about Pheeb's. Sorry, mate.

Russ plows on, as if he hadn't been interrupted.

RUSS

We'd been hard by drought. Everyone has. You musta seen it driving in. Place is drier than a dead dingo's donger. Haven't seen decent rainfall in years.

(MORE)

RUSS (CONT'D)

Shops are empty. People barely surviving. Anyone with half a brain is selling up and leaving.

FELIX

The town actually looks better than I remember. All this space is inviting.

Russ chuckles.

RUSS

Guess anything looks better than four concrete walls and a metal toilet though. Which way did you come in? See that monstrosity they're building on top of Hangman's Hill?

FELIX

Only from a distance. What is it?

RUSS

Couldn't tell ya. Something to do with mining or drilling. All I know is it's being built with big Asian money. They bought up a lot of the cattle farms up 'round here. Most of the town works up there now, if they work at all.

FELIX

Didn't seem busy when I drove in.

RUSS

Everyone's away for the Christmas holidays. Place is a ghost town. They'll be back next week. It's already made a lot of people rich though. Farmers who sold up especially.

FELIX

Why didn't you sell? Move to Sydney, be closer to the kids?

RUSS

Oh mate, wasn't for lack of trying. I would have sold in a heartbeat. But nobody wants it. My land doesn't border any of the others they bought. Wasn't part of the big picture, I guess.

FELIX

So, what are you going to do?

RUSS

Not much I can do. Keep farming
the land.

FELIX

Least you get to spend a lot of
time outdoors.

There's an awkward pause as Russ scans Felix's words for something.

RUSS

Ah, look Felix...I know that you
blame me for what happened -

Felix swats him away, as if expecting it.

RUSS

Shit, mate, I shoulda been there.
Who knows, maybe it wouldn't have
gone down how it did. You'd have
been out.

FELIX

Don't be ridiculous. It wasn't
your fault. The whole job was
fucked from the get go.

RUSS

I just chickened out. Phoebe was
pregnant again, I just...I just
panicked.

FELIX

Mate, I don't blame you. Whatever
happened that day...it wouldn't
have made a lick of difference
you being there. You'd have been
locked up with me. You'd have
lost the farm. The kids wouldn't
have had a dad. Woulda been a
shit show.

Russ is at a loss.

RUSS

Just feel you lost five years of
your life. Cos of me.

FELIX

Honest, I don't blame you. Or
anyone. It was my decision to go
ahead with it. I'm out now.
That's the main thing. Onto new
things. Speaking of...

Felix takes a swig of his beer.

FELIX (CONT.)

Heard any rustlings around the campfire? Any jobs going? I need cash. Pretty sharpish.

Russ looks at Felix as if understanding him for the first time.

RUSS

This got anything to do with what happened to your face?

FELIX

I'm just looking for an opportunity. That's all.

RUSS

Can't help ya. I'm outta the game. Got you to thank for that. You going down scared me straight.

FELIX

What about the rest of the old crew? Hear anything?

RUSS

Most of them have pulled the pin, too. Far as I know.

Felix collapses back into his creaking dining room chair.

FELIX

Seriously? Nothing? What about Peter? Or Risko?

RUSS

Risko moved to Brisbane with his missus. Peter got skin cancer. Called it quits. It's tough out there now, man. Extra security every where you look. Besides, most of the banks are all digital. Only the farmers carry cash, and they ain't got much.

Felix looks disappointed.

RUSS (CONT.)

You just got out, mate. Why you wanna risk it going back? Enjoy freedom. Settle down. Find a girl. Raise some sprouts.

FELIX

I've got time for all that later. I just need a score to get back on my feet. One more job.

Russ looks at Felix like he's an addict.

RUSS

It was one more when you got
busted.

Felix stands up, smiling, embarrassed.

FELIX

I know. But I mean it this time.

Russ laughs awkwardly.

RUSS

You'll never hang up your
shingle. You like it too much.

FELIX

We can get into the dime store
psychology later. Right now, I'm
just tryin' to use the skills God
gave me.

RUSS

I'll keep my ear to the ground.
You wanna stay here. You can have
Shelly's old room.

FELIX

Cheers, I don't wanna be a
burden. I'll be right at
Martha's. She still bat-shit
crazy?

Russ laughs as his Baxter appears for some chin rubs.

RUSS

Yep. Now with added racism.

INT. MARTHA'S MOTEL - DAY

Martha's motel was likely fashionable back in the day. Now it's just a rundown place for drifters looking to crash for a night between places actually worth visiting.

A buzzer sounds somewhere in back when Felix walks in. A mostly empty rack of tourist brochures collects dust in a corner.

A plump woman with a soft smile trots out. This is MARTHA (60), the owner. She fits the decor perfectly.

MARTHA

G'day, mate. How can I help?

FELIX

I've got a reservation. Felix
Phillips.

Martha checks the check-in notebook. Empty, except for Felix's name.

MARTHA

Felix. Yep. Here you are.

She takes out some forms.

MARTHA (CONT.)

Nice to see some Australians staying here for a change. Been nothing but Chinks for last year.

Felix's eyes widen at the blatant racism.

MARTHA (CONT.)

How long you staying?

FELIX

Just a couple days, if that's okay?

MARTHA

'Course, course. Always room in the inn. I've got you in Room 4. It's all set up for ya. Air con's been on the fritz, but think it's sorted. Any issues, let me know. Otherwise you'll cook up there. Ever been to Yaama before? Plenty to do here.

She points to the dusty brochure stand.

FELIX

Actually, I grew up here. I'm just back visiting friends.

MARTHA

Oh, Phillips...You wouldn't be Bertie's boy by any chance, woulda ya?

Felix nods.

MARTHA (CONT.)

How is he? Old Bertie, I mean? Haven't see him in years.

FELIX

Um, he died. Long time ago.

MARTHA

God, that guy could charm the colour from a farmer's back. Good to see you back. Not much has changed around here.

MATT, the local handyman, walks out from the back. In his thirties, with a beer belly and a crop of black hair. He's wearing a tool belt and wiping his hands on a filthy towel.

MATT
All done, Martha.

MARTHA
Cheers, love. What was it this time?

MATT
Just a clogged pipe.

He spots Felix and his face creases.

MATT (CONT.)
Well, look who's come crawling back.

FELIX
Sorry?

MATT
You don't remember me do you?

Felix stares.

FELIX
Matt? Matt Grimace.
(To Martha)
We went to school together.

MATT
It's Grimshaw. You douche. You made my life hell for years, least you can do is get my name right.

FELIX
(Still to Martha)
We weren't close.

MATT
What are you doing here?

FELIX
Up to no good. I swear.

MATT
Heard you went away. What was it? Five years. Goulburn as well. Ouch.

FELIX
Wasn't all bad. All those naked mens' showers. You'd have loved it.

He looks around the office. Matt doesn't get it.

MATT

What the fuck does that mean? You saying I'm queer?

FELIX

If the shoe fits.

Matt looks like he wants to fight.

MARTHA

Put your purses away, ladies.

MATT

Whatever. I'll be back later, Martha. I'll have another look at number 3 for ya.

Matt leaves, glaring at Felix the whole time.

FELIX

He's just a jester, that one.

Martha beams and hands him the keys.

MARTHA

You kids. Tell Bertie I said hi.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

The motel room has seen better days. It's musty and dank. A double bed with a paper thin mattress.

The air conditioner belongs in a museum. Felix turns it on. It sputters into life. Dusty air VOMITS from the vents.

He spreads the blinds with his fingers and sees a pair of BIKIES on a park bench, eating cakes.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

CELLS

SHAUN (36) is head of the Yaama Police Department. He's a fat fuck, with a belly that droops over his Longhorn belt buckle. He's a Down-to-Earth villain; approachable at a BBQ, brutal if you cross him. He's dressed like a farmer, but most farmers these days aren't eating as well as he is.

He wipes the sweat from his forehead. He's holding a phone book.

SHAUN

It's too fucking hot for this, Ben. Tell me what I wanna know and we can go and get a nice cold drink.

Shaun stands over BEN (16), who's curled up on the floor, struggling to breathe, one hand cuffed to the prison bars. Shaun places the phone book over the boy's chest and punches him several more times. The boy cries out.

MATT (O.S)
Shaun? Shaun? You 'round?

Shaun hears the voice, and walks from the cells to reception.

RECEPTION

Matt the Handyman is here, looking ashen.

SHAUN
What is it?

MATT
You'll never guess who just came back into town.

INT. RODEO DRIVE PUB - NIGHT

The pub is half full of FARMERS bending the elbow after a hard day's work. There's a general rumble of laughter as they share stories they've all heard a hundred times.

Russ walks in, trailed by Felix. Russ is greeted by the bartender, JENNY (34), who is dressed in a plaid shirt, knotted in the middle. A permanent smile is hitched on her face, long brunette hair in a ponytail, wash cloth draped over her shoulder.

JENNY
Evening, Russ. Usual?

Before he can answer, Jen sees Felix.

JENNY (CONT.)
Shut the front gate. Felix!?

Felix smiles.

FELIX
Good to see you, Jen.

Jenny runs around the bar and gives him a giant hug.

JENNY
What a sight for sore eyes.

RUSS
I'll let you two catch up.

Russ wanders off to sit at a table. Jenny goes back around to the bar and starts pouring two beers.

JENNY

I never thought you'd darken my door again. Russ said you moved to Sydney.

FELIX

Yeah, and its surroundings. How are you? Married? Kids?

JENNY

No such luck, I'm afraid. All the good men move to Sydney. Nah, it's all about the same here.

FELIX

Funny how everyone seems to say that. Everything sure feels different though.

JENNY

Ah, can't go home again, Felix. You know that.

FELIX

How's Brendo?

JENNY

He moved to Denmark, of all places. Got married to a human rights lawyer. Can you believe that? My brother, who once pissed in the church Holy Water for a dare, is married to a human rights lawyer.

Jenny puts the TWO BEERS in front of Felix.

A queue is forming at the bar, the patrons restless.

JENNY (CONT.)

Hey, I've gotta keep working, but I've got a break due. I'll come join ya.

Felix carries the two beers over to Russ's table.

FELIX

Didn't expect her to still be here. God, she looks even better than I remember.

RUSS

She did leave for while. Came back six months later.

FELIX
What happened?

Russ shrugs.

RUSS
Dunno. Just remember coming to the pub one day and there she was. I asked once. She didn't tell me. I never asked again.

They clink glasses - buds back together - and drink.

RUSS (CONT.)
Hey, if you're planning on stickin' around, I could always use an extra pair of hands on the farm. Pay's rubbish. It's back breaking labour. But it comes with a chance to step in a lot of cow shit.

FELIX
Who could turn down an offer like that?

RUSS
If it'll sweeten the deal, you'll be standing outside in forty-six degree heat.

FELIX
You had me at "standing outside". I'll book few more days at Martha's. Fingers crossed she's got a room spare.

RUSS
Sure you don't wanna stay at mine?

FELIX
Nah, I like having my own space for a change.

Two burly men appear next to their table. One is Shaun and the other is TOM (35), his deputy. Tom's smaller than Shaun, and looks like a slimy grub. Shaun looks like he's just stepped in shit. Felix doesn't look overly happy to see him.

SHAUN
Felix Phillips. As I live and breathe.

FELIX
Shaun. Nice to see you.
Tom...that you hiding behind there?

SHAUN

Heard you were back in town.

FELIX

Good news travels fast.

SHAUN

Surprised you came back.

FELIX

I'm surprised you learned how to tie your shoelaces. But every day's a school day.

He looks at Shaun's shoes - they're lace-less Chelsea boots.

FELIX (CONT.)

Oh. Maybe not. You'll get there one day, champ.

Shaun smirks.

SHAUN

You know, when I heard you went down, thought to myself "Couldn't happen to a nicer bloke". Figured maybe the joint would beat that smart ass attitude out of you.

He motions to his black eye.

SHAUN (CONT.)

Looks like somebody tried and failed.

FELIX

What do you want, Shaun? I'm just trying to have a quiet drink.

SHAUN

You should be careful who you associate with, Russ. Don't wanna get tarnished with the same brush as this felon.

RUSS

I think I can take care of myself, thanks.

SHAUN

Shame you couldn't take care of your family the same way.

FELIX

Why don't you just both fuck entirely off, before I fucking make you.

TOM

Watch yourself, Phillips. A lot's changed since you've been gone.

FELIX

So I keep hearing.

Shaun thrusts his pelvis out, showing a POLICE BADGE on his belt, alongside a GUN.

FELIX (CONT.)

I got the same one in my *Corn Flakes*.

SHAUN

You know, I'm not real fond of ex-cons causing trouble in my town.

RUSS

Since when does having a swifty at the local constitute causing trouble?

SHAUN

Maybe that's for me to decide. I'm in charge here.

Shaun and Tom stiffen. Felix throws his stool back, stands up and goes eye-to-eye with Shaun. The pub chat stops.

FELIX

Do you feel in charge?

JENNY (O.S)

There a problem here, Constable?

Jenny appears behind Shaun and the situation simmers down.

SHAUN

Not at all, Jen. Just making peace with my old friend Felix here.

JENNY

Oh yeah? You hiding the olive branch in your fist?

He claps Felix on the shoulder, squeezes it tight.

SHAUN

I'll be seeing ya round, friend.

FELIX

The anticipation is killing me.

Felix and Jenny sit back down.

JENNY

Already making friends, I see.

FELIX

Who gave that mug a badge?

RUSS

His daddy's friendly with the mayor. He pulled some strings.

FELIX

Who are those fellas they're hanging with?

Russ and Jenny follow Felix's gaze over to a table of three ASIAN BUSINESSMEN, dressed in dark suits. They stand out like a sore thumb amongst the farmers. Shaun and Tom have walked over to their table and sat down with them.

RUSS

They're those Asian investors I was telling you about.

FELIX

Shaun's as racist as they come. Why's he hanging 'round them?

RUSS

Guy's an asskisser. Probably angling for a free beer.

JENNY

The Asian's have been in and out here all week. Putting together the show is my guess.

FELIX

What show?

JENNY

Some big exhibition thing. It's a cattle sale, really. Disguised as an exhibition. Gonna be the biggest for years. Mighta seen them setting it up in town?

Felix shakes his head.

FELIX

Must'a missed it.

RUSS

Supposed to be a big morale boost for the town. What a crock.

A man walks over to the table of Asian men carrying a tray of beers. It's STUART GOODREEM, the MAYOR of Yaama. In his late fifties but looking haggard, with a fake tan and a garish sky blue polyester suit.

FELIX

Isn't that...? What's his name?

RUSS

Stuart Goodreem.

FELIX

Fuck, he's aged like milk.

RUSS

He's the mayor now. He's the joker been selling off the farms like they're going outta fashion.

JENNY

That's what the exhibition's really for. To sell off all the cattle the Asians bought.

RUSS

Two day fire sale. Every cow must go! Gonna try rustle up a bit of cash to buy a bull myself.

FELIX

What do the Asians doing with all that land if they're not raising cattle?

JENNY

Rumours are they've had it surveyed for mining. I reckon that big factory they're building is a refinery of some sort.

FELIX

So the town's sitting on a gold mine and Stuart's just selling it off? Surely folks won't stand for that.

JENNY

The town's going under, Felix. People see this as a get outta jail free card. Asian's offered most people five times what their properties were worth.

FELIX

Why don't you leave?

JENNY

I did, once. Didn't take. Place has got a pull. Can't seem to get out, but got nowhere else to go. It's purgatory.

Felix pinches his shirt to let in some air.

FELIX
In this heat, feels more like
hell.

INT. SHARON'S APARTMENT - DAY

Back in Sydney, there's a knock on the door, Sharon answers it. Detective Pippa Grey, leaning on the doorframe.

SHARON
Pippa?

PIPPA
Hey, Shaz. Got time for a cuppa?

INT./EXT. INSIDE CAR/CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY

Felix sits in the stolen ute, smoking a cigarette. He's staring over the road at the exhibition construction site.

BUILDERS are erecting make-shift stadium seating, rides, scaffolding, etc.

A sun-bleached plastic banner drapes lazily across a fence.

THE YAAMA EXHIBITION
10 - 11 FEBRUARY

As a BUILDER disappears from view, Felix gets out, and walks over to the site.

He finds a construction hat, slaps it on and wanders around the site, taking it all in - "Casing it".

There are multiple mobile trailers. Felix notices one of the trailers is getting more attention than the others. An ELECTRICIAN is fitting several alarms fitted onto it.

Another ELECTRICIAN #2 sits in a harness connecting wires to an electrical pole.

Felix takes out his smart phone. He manages to figure out the camera function. Takes some subtle photos of the electricians; the trailer; the entire set-up.

BUILDER (O.S)
You lost, mate?

Felix turns and sees a BUILDER, carrying wood over his shoulder.

FELIX
Oh, no. Sorry. Was just having a
look around.

BUILDER
You work here?

FELIX
No, but I was hoping to. I used
to work in construction myself.

BUILDER
So, what? You want a medal?

SONNY (O.S)
No, no - it goes over there. The
other shipment is arriving
tomorrow.

Felix recognises the voice. He looks over and sees SONNY CAMERON (30), meek, baby-faced, wearing a regular short-sleeve office shirt, a hard-hat and holding a clipboard. He's bossing around a WORKER, but appears out of his depth.

Felix quickly turns away from Sonny.

BUILDER
So, you want a job, or what?

FELIX
(To the builder)
Sorry, mate. Maybe it's not for
me, after all. See ya round.

The builder's too hot and too busy to worry about Felix.

INT. "THE KOOKABURRA'S NEST" - DAY

KITCHEN

Felix wanders into the kitchen.

FELIX
Russ?

Felix looks out the kitchen window and sees Russ out near the barn.

BARN

The barn is old and falling apart.

One cow is tied up in front of Russ. Felix can't contain his disgust at the smell. The cows are antsy, filling the barn with agitated "moo's".

Russ is covered in orange dirt and manure. He's got a plastic glove on his right hand that goes up to his shoulder.

FELIX
Got the condom on the wrong
appendix, mate.

Russ is not in the mood.

RUSS
My bull carked it a month ago.
Got to impregnate some cows by
hand if I want any calves for
next season.

Felix watches as Russ takes some paper towels and puts his
arm up the back of the cow, right up to his shoulder.

RUSS (CONT.)
No points for guessing why the
kids are leaving in droves.

Felix squats next to him.

FELIX
Your luck might be changing. I
think I've got us a job.

RUSS
I told you. There's no "us"
anymore.

FELIX
You know Sonny is working at the
exhibition?

Russ pulls his arm out. It's covered in shit. Felix jumps out
of the way as Russ shakes it off.

RUSS
Sonny Cameron? No. I had no idea.

FELIX
You haven't stayed in touch?

RUSS
See him round town a bit. Enough
to say hi, but I don't know his
cycle if that's what you're
asking.

FELIX
Looks like he's in charge of the
whole exhibition build.

RUSS
He couldn't organise a root in a
brothel.

FELIX
Even so, he'll know the set-up.

RUSS

So?

FELIX

So , my friend, that's what we call an inside man.

Russ is confused.

RUSS

What the hell are you talking about?

FELIX

We're going to hit the exhibition.

RUSS

No. We're not.

He puts his hand back up the cow with fresh paper towels.

FELIX

Look, it's a two day exhibition, yeah? All the farmers will be rocking up to get cattle at bargain basement prices. And you said it yourself; farmers still use cash. It'll just be sitting there. Thousands of bucks. Soon as they move the money, bam, we rob 'em.

RUSS

Come on, man? You want to pull off some sort of stick-em-up?

FELIX

Well, don't make it sound so amateurish. We'll plan it out. It'll be a pro job.

Felix moves away from Russ as he repeats his cow-colonoscopy. Russ takes out an artificial insemination gun - a small metallic rod - and prepares it.

RUSS

Fuck man, even if I did, which I don't, you can't be pulling this sorta shit in your own backyard.

FELIX

If we can pull it off, this won't have to be our backyard anymore. You can move to Sydney. And I can move on.

RUSS

What makes you think I want to leave all this?

Russ inserts his hand right up the cow. He's in deep, his face an inch away from the cow's rectum.

FELIX

Just a hunch.

Russ can't get it done, pulls out, annoyed.

RUSS

Mate, with all due respect, you've been gone years. This is my home and yeah, I'm not a massive fan, but it's still my home. I can't just rob these guys. They're my neighbours, I gotta look 'em in the eye.

FELIX

We're not robbing the farmers. We're robbing from a big Asian industrial conglomerate.

RUSS

However you wanna slice it. It's just too risky.

FELIX

You said you wanted a way out. This is a way out.

RUSS

This isn't a way out. It's a way to get locked up. Then how am I going to get my kids back?

FELIX

Come on, it'll be fun! They'll never know it's us.

RUSS

Convicted thief rocks back into town and suddenly the place gets robbed? I think they'll be asking questions.

Russ is nervous how excited Felix is. Felix notices and dials it down.

FELIX

Okay. How about you help me talk to Sonny? If it's sour, I'll forget about it. Deal?

Russ' still unsure, but knows there's no point arguing.

RUSS

I'll come with you to speak to
Sonny. But that's as far as I go.
He ain't going help you. He's
been out longer than me.

FELIX

I'll convince him.

RUSS

You reckon?

FELIX

Sonny's always had a soft spot
for me.

Russ sighs. Then goes for the cow again. Felix steps back
smugly and steps in a cow pie.

RUSS

Be useful and help me out here
wouldya?

Russ hands Felix the rod.

EXT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

Sonny walks out of the supermarket heaving under the weight
of a few bags.

Felix and Russ appear and take the bags off his hands.

RUSS

Sonny! How are ya, mate?

SONNY

Oh, hey Russ. I'm alright --

FELIX

Here, let me get that for ya.

Sonny is confused at Felix's appearance.

SONNY

Felix? Oh, you can fuck right
off.

FELIX

Aren't you happy to see me?

SONNY

I'd be happier to see a tumour
growing on the side of my knob.

RUSS
 (To Felix)
 Soft spot for ya, huh?

FELIX
 We wanted to talk to you about something.

SONNY
 I bet you do. Let me save you the trouble. No. Russ, what are you doing, man? You know I'm clean.

RUSS
 I told him that. I'm on your side.

SONNY
 I'm straight now. Got a good job. Even got a girlfriend. I'm doing good.

FELIX
 You've got a girlfriend? You have all the luck. I'm chuffed for ya. And you're in charge of that construction outfit?

RUSS
 Great they hired a convicted felon.

FELIX
 Amazed they hired a convicted felon, actually. Unless...

Felix feigns concern.

FELIX (CONT.)
 Sonny...do they know you're a crook?

SONNY
 Ex-crook.

There's an air of annoyance as Sonny arrives at his ute, takes the bags off the boys and throws them in the back.

SONNY (CONT.)
 And they do actually. And they don't care. So, you got nothing on me.

FELIX
 Sonny, you've got me all wrong. I just wanna catch up. Float something by you.

SONNY

Let me guess, it's a job, that'll get me killed. Last time I almost got my head blown off.

FELIX

So dramatic. You were barely grazed.

SONNY

Doc said my hearing in my right ear might never be right again.

Felix puts his arm around him and shouts into his right ear.

FELIX

Come on. Let me buy you a beer.

INT. RODEO DRIVE PUB - DAY

It's a quiet afternoon at the pub.

The three are in a quiet corner, nursing beers. Felix and Russ forming a PINCER MOVEMENT on poor, meek Sonny. Sonny is looking around nervously.

FELIX

You're right. We've got an idea for job.

RUSS

You've got an idea. I'm only here for moral support and free beer.

FELIX

Free beer?

RUSS

We'll talk.

SONNY

Didn't you just get out, Felix? Prison food so good you wanna go back?

FELIX

Just hear me out. If you think it can't be done, we finish our beers. We shake hands. Walk away.

SONNY

Pfft, heard that before.

FELIX

I swear.

SONNY

I'm going to say no.

RUSS
I've already said no.

FELIX
Good. Tell me I'm crazy. I'd love to hear that.

RUSS
I've told you that a thousand times.

SONNY
What's the job?

FELIX
The exhibition.

Sonny stands up, brushes down his shirt.

SONNY
See ya, boys.

FELIX
Sit down, come on - finish your beer.

SONNY
You said I could leave.

FELIX
You haven't heard the plan yet!

Sonny sits back down.

SONNY
Don't need to hear it. I've seen the security: Guards. Police patrols. And look around - where you going run? It's hundred miles to Parkes. Two hundred to Griffith. Nothing between here and there 'cept dirt.

FELIX
That's why I need your help.

SONNY
I can't help.

FELIX
Can't? Or won't?

SONNY
Take your pick.

He looks at Felix's black eye.

SONNY (CONT.)
I've seen the work perks.

FELIX
Tell me about the trailer.

SONNY
What trailer?

FELIX
The one that'll be holding all
the money.

Sonny's surprised.

SONNY
How'd you know about that?

RUSS
It's true?

SONNY
I didn't say nothing one way or
another.

FELIX
I saw some guys rigging up a
pretty sophisticated alarm
system. Wouldn't be doing that to
protect a few blueprints.

SONNY
For fuck's sake.

RUSS
I hate it when he's right.

FELIX
I'm always right.

Sonny grapples with his conscience.

SONNY
Ahh. Fine. Yes, the trailer'll be
used to hold the money. But don't
matter; banks hold money, doesn't
mean you can just walk in and
take their cash.

FELIX
Sometimes you can. My plan is to
hit 'em on Sunday, just as
they're emptying the trailer and
readying it for transport to the
bank -

Sonny cuts him off.

SONNY
They're not moving it the bank on
Sunday.

Felix is caught off guard.

FELIX

Wait...what? Why not?

SONNY

Well, for one, we ain't got no bank in town no more. Guess they figure it's too far to Parkes or Griffith to drive at night. They've storing the money 'til Monday.

FELIX

Why'd they close the bank?

RUSS

They figured people don't need an actual bank anymore. You gotta drive to one of the bigger towns.

FELIX

Fuck. Okay, fine, so they'll move it Monday? We'll hit them then.

SONNY

Security will be even tighter Monday. They're getting armoured vehicles coming in.

Sonny's annoyed at himself. Felix thinks on the fly.

SONNY (CONT.)

Dunno why I'm telling you any of this.

FELIX

So, they're going to leave hundreds of grand sitting in a fucking trailer for two days?

SONNY

It ain't like it's gonna be in the open air. I told ya - security is gonna be brutal.

RUSS

Doesn't smell right. Leave it.

SONNY

Nobody was supposed to even know it was being kept there.

FELIX

Wasn't half bloody obvious.

RUSS

Only for an experienced thief.

FELIX

Fine. So, we rob the trailer.
It'll be easier anyway. What
kinda safe they using, Sonny?

Sonny's had enough.

SONNY

God, mate, do I look like an
expert? I don't know. A big
fucking steel one.

Sonny gets all serious.

SONNY (CONT.)

You don't get it, do ya? This
trailer is gonna be locked up
tighter than a nun's ass. It is a
bank. There's gonna be guards
staying in the trailer overnight.
The place is wired with some hot-
shot alarm system. Shaun's got
every man and his dog to be his
security. And that's before you
even get to the safe.

FELIX

Come on, man. Give me something.

Sonny panics, noticing someone looking over at him.

SONNY

No, I've already told you too
much. I can't afford to lose this
job. I'm in a good place. Shaun
even sees me talking to you...I'm
out.

Felix leans back in his chair. Sonny stands up.

SONNY (CONT.)

It is good to see you again.

He drains his beer then leaves. Russ looks relieved. Felix
looks annoyed with himself.

RUSS

That's settled it then. Another
round?

EXT. THE RODEO DRIVE - DAY - MINUTES LATER

Outside the pub, Felix gets a phone call - Great, more
problems.

FELIX

Sharon! How are ya?

INT. SHARON'S APARTMENT - DAY

Sharon is looking anxious as she paces around her apartment.

SHARON

Don't "Sharon!" me. Where the fuck are you?

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION

FELIX

I'm in Yaama, told ya. With Russ.

SHARON

No. You told me you were staying here.

FELIX

Did I?...Oh...sorry. It was a spur of the moment thing.

SHARON

Pippa came to see me, Felix.

FELIX

Pippa? What? Why?

SHARON

Something about you stealing a ute and some guy's wallet.

Felix winces, angry with himself. He plays dumb.

FELIX

Got no idea what she's on about.

SHARON

Don't treat me like an idiot. I saw the pictures. Just thought you should know that Pippa's knows you're in Yaama.

END OF PHONE CONVERSATION**EXT. THE RODEO DRIVE - DAY**

Felix walks over to where Russ is waiting by his car.

RUSS

All good?

FELIX

Yeah, just Sharon checking in. Hey, you got anywhere I can hide a ute?

Russ gives him a "I knew it" look.

RUSS

I got an empty shed out near one of the paddocks that might work.

A THUNDEROUS ROAR comes down the road. TWO MOTORBIKES appear on the horizon. BEARDED-BIKIES, the same ones Felix saw outside the motel, drive by.

They pass Russ and Felix without a glance and speed off over the horizon.

FELIX

That's the second time I've seen them. When did Yaama become a bikie hangout?

Russ chuckles.

RUSS

Forgot you missed the meth craze.

FELIX

Meth craze?

INT. RUSS' CAR - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Russ is DRIVING them back to his farm, telling his tale.

RUSS

You remember Tristan? He was Billy's boy. Billy, who used to run that sheep farm over the hills.

FELIX

Vaguely.

RUSS

Billy was a good egg but Tristan. Well, he was a real piece of work.

INTERCUT BETWEEN FLASHBACK SCENES AS INDICATED

INT. TRISTAN'S FARM - DAY - FLASHBACK

TRISTAN (15) is a gross looking teen. Sporting unclean ZITS, a raggedy MULLET and BRACES full of biscuit. He's smiling at the flame of a lighter.

RUSS (V.O)

He had a face like a dentist's dustbin. Used to kill animals for fun.

Tristan has tied a firework to a lamb. He lights it and runs behind a rusted car as it explodes. Blood lands on Tristan, who's loving it.

FELIX (V.O)
Oh yeah, I remember him.

BACK TO:

INT. RUSS' CAR - DAY - CONT.

Russ DRIVES. Felix takes out a CIGARETTE.

RUSS
Well, Billy died a few years ago - crushed under a tractor, can you believe it? - and Tristan inherited the farm. Got a bit of a payout from the insurance company and pissed most of it up against a wall. Had no idea what he was doing on the farm either. Cattle started dying in droves. People offered to help, but he told 'em to stop nosing. Creditors stepped in. He was going under for sure.

FELIX
I'm guessing there's a but...

CUT TO:

INT. RODEO DRIVE PUB - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Tristan, older now, but still disgusting; the braces didn't work. He walks into the pub and starts FLASHING CASH. He starts doing shots and getting DRUNKER.

RUSS (V.O)
But then out of nowhere, he's suddenly flush with cash. He wanders into the Rodeo one day, starts buying everyone drinks.

Tristan's buying everyone drinks. KNOCKING over glasses, SMASHING the place up. Getting overly FRIENDLY with the girls. Eventually he gets hauled outta the pub by two MASSIVE BLOKES.

BACK TO:

INT. RUSS' CAR - DAY - CONT.

Russ takes a left. Passing more closed stores.

RUSS

Got chucked out, but somehow kept bribing himself back in. Banned from the only pub in town when you like a drink is like starving a man of oxygen.

FELIX

So, what, he hit the lottery?

RUSS

That's what we all thought. He started treating the pub like he owned the place. Jen wouldn't tell me what's going on, but he was getting away with blue murder and nobody could figure out where he was getting the money from--

FELIX

Don't worry about finishing the story -- not like I'm trying to cherish every moment.

RUSS

Yeah, yeah, so this was before all that Asian cash, remember? Some figured he'd sold the farm and was just waiting for the sale to come through. Others reckoned someone stepped in at the eleventh hour, pumped some cash into the place. But he wasn't even working the farm. Wasn't selling the meat, razing the cattle. Nothing.

A bottle shop appears on their right -- only place that looks like it's doing a roaring trade.

RUSS (CONT.)

Mind if I make a quick stop? I'm outta beer.

Russ pulls into the car park of a bottle shop.

INT. THIRSTY CAMEL BOTTLE SHOP - DAY - CONT.**COLD ROOM**

The cold room is packed to the rafters with cases of beer. Russ checks out the SPECIALS. Felix shivers.

RUSS

So, this went on for a bit. Then one day. Tristan starts getting with Maggie.

FELIX

Who?

CUT TO:

INT. RODEO DRIVE PUB - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

In the pub, Tristan is wasted, flirting with MAGGIE (32), a rough-rider of a farm girl, who is receptive, especially to the cash he's flashing.

RUSS (V.O)

Stuart's youngest. Remember her? Big girl. Could tear a phone book in half. They go back to his farm to continue the party.

Tristan and Maggie stumble out of the pub and into Tristan's car.

BACK TO:

INT. THIRSTY CAMEL BOTTLE SHOP - DAY - CONT.

Russ picks up a case. Felix is shocked at the beer prices.

FELIX

Beer has gotten expensive.

RUSS

Telling me. Anyway, next day people ask her, "So, what's it like over at old Billy's farm?" You know, trying to find out something.

They leave the cold room and head to the counter.

COUNTER

RUSS (CONT.)

(MORE)

RUSS (CONT.) (CONT'D)
 She tells everyone the farm is fucked. Falling apart. It's disgusting. Said Tristan sleeps in the living room, which looks like a crack den. She said the mattress felt like it was filled with rocks.

Russ pays for the beer and they leave.

INT. RUSS' CAR - DAY

Back in the car. Felix has another smoke, his arm dangling from the window.

RUSS
 Next morning Maggie said she took a wrong turn going to the john and stumbled upon his secret.

CUT TO:

INT. TRISTAN'S FARM - MORNING - FLASHBACK

Maggie is hungover and disorientated, wearing last night's clothes. She's stumbling through Tristan's hovel. She pushes open a door and the room...

...is full of meth. Packets of blue powder, piled high.

BACK TO:

INT. RUSS' CAR - DAY

Back in the car.

FELIX
 Tristan's a drug maker?

RUSS
 Pfft - you remember the kid? He couldn't make his bed. Nah, someone's using his land as a meth lab.

FELIX
 The bikies?

Russ nods.

RUSS
 Their chemists make it somewhere out there on his acres of land.
 (MORE)

RUSS (CONT'D)

Tristan transports it to the city
in his truck. The bikies collect
the cash.

FELIX

Why isn't Constable Care Bear
doing anything about it?

Russ pulls into up to Maggie's Motel. Felix sits in the car.

RUSS

Nobody's really got that figured.
Most figure Shaun's on the take.
And 'cos they don't cause no real
trouble, they let sleeping dogs
lie.

Russ chuckles.

RUSS (CONT.)

Also, good for the economy.
Probably the most profitable
business in town. How sad is
that?

FELIX

What's sad is the town's full of
fucking cowards?

Felix opens the door. Russ stops chuckling.

RUSS

Hey, they're allowed to be a bit
scared. Maggie, the Mayor's
daughter, a week after telling
everyone where Tristan was
getting the money - she
disappeared.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

CHIEF OF DETECTIVES' OFFICE

Pippa sits opposite CHIEF INSPECTOR TERESA BRADY. Teresa
Brady is in her fifties, a no-nonsense sort of woman, wearing
a uniform that showcases her glittering career.

She attacks a hot meat pie for lunch as she looks through the
file.

TERESA

And this Felix fella -- he got
outta Goulburn a week ago?

PIPPA

Yep. He's the one that stole the ute. His sister said he mighta gone back to his home town.

TERESA

Fine. Tell the local boys to deal with it.

PIPPA

I think there's more to it.

Teresa raises an eyebrow. Pippa hands her a file. Teresa looks through it.

PIPPA

Sister said that the day before he left, Felix met up with some old associates. They beat him up pretty bad.

Teresa continues to look through the file.

TERESA

So? He gets out, wants to go straight. They beat him up. He flees. We've all heard the song. Don't need to sing it again.

She takes another enormous bite of pie.

PIPPA

With all due respect, ma'am. I don't think that's what's happening here.

The chief inspector is not used to people disagreeing with her.

PIPPA (CONT.)

I think something else is going on. The job Felix got busted on was for Hooper. An old associate. Hooper lost a lot of money on that. I think Hooper's got him involved in something out. A lot of Felix's old friends still live out that way.

Teresa sighs.

TERESA

Seems like a stretch, Pippa.

PIPPA

Felix used to be Hooper's go-to for big jobs. What if he's planning another one?

TERESA

You're basing this elaborate narrative on a stolen ute and a beaten up thief?

PIPPA

I know, it's not much. But Felix is involved in something. I know it. Please ma'am. Just a couple of days. Let me at least talk to him. If it's nothing, I'll arrest him for stealing the ute and be back, tail between my legs.

TERESA

Okay. I'll give you a little rope. Don't hang yourself with it. And keep organised crime in the loop. Last thing I need is McCamp getting his knickers in a twist.

Teresa hands Pippa the file and she leaves. Teresa shoves the rest of the pie into her mouth.

INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Stuart Goodreem sits in his wood-panelled office, this time wearing a green polyester suit. He's got his feet up on his desk and he's running an ice cube over his sweaty head, his fake tan streaking.

SHAUN leaning against an open window, sucking an ice lolly. They're both sweating.

A ceiling fan ROTATES SLOWLY, doing nothing but pushing hot air around.

STUART

And you're sure he was talking to them?

SHAUN

Yeah. Pete saw 'em.

STUART

What was he talking to them about?

SHAUN

Pete couldn't hear, looked important.

STUART

What's Felix doing back in town?

SHAUN

Dunno. Said he was just passing through.

STUART

How long's he planning on staying?

SHAUN

Dunno that either.

Stuart takes his feet off his desk.

STUART

Christ sake, you don't know much, do ya? What bloody good are ya? We're too close, Shaun. You know that. Can't have some pelican waltzing in now and fucking it all up! The Asians are a fickle bunch of fuckers. They get one whiff of a problem -

SHAUN

He ain't a problem.

STUART

He better not be.

He leans back in his chair.

STUART (CONT.)

Jesus, Mary and Joseph -- it's so goddamn hot.

He presses an intercom on his desk.

STUART

(Into the intercom)

Ava, get Matt on the blower, wouldcha? I need that air conditioner fixed. It's a million degrees in here.

INT. SOPHIA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

In Sydney's affluent suburbs sits a beautifully designed, stunningly styled Victorian Georgian terrace house.

Tasteful art on the walls. Bespoke furniture. Lots of plants.

DINING ROOM

There's a dinner party going on. SOPHIA (33), classy, confident, knows how to hold a room, sits at the head of her table.

Her FOUR GUESTS - two couples - take up the rest of the seats.

SOPHIA

And I said, I wouldn't eat that.
You don't know where it's been!

The guests LAUGH. A phone RINGS. Sophia excuses herself to answer it.

SOPHIA (CONT.)

Hello?

INT. MOTEL ROOM - SAME TIME

Felix is in his room, on the phone, using his free hand to continue to bash the air conditioning. He's sweating.

FELIX

Sophia? That you? It's Felix.

He HITS the air-conditioner in anger. He gives up, and pulls up the blinds, then forces open the rusted window.

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION

Sophia passes the phone to her other ear. Smiles at her guests.

SOPHIA

My god, of course it is. Good to hear from you! I heard you were doing a stretch in Goulburn?

FELIX

Yeah, long story. I'll bend your ear sometime, but right now, I need some help.

She puts her hand over the mouthpiece to talk to her guests.

SOPHIA

Sorry guys, this won't take long. Amelia, why don't you open that lovely *Chateau Palmer*?

She backs out of the room into the hallway.

SOPHIA (CONT.)

A job?

Outside the motel, Felix sees TWO KIDS (7) laughing and running down the street, playing cops and robbers. The "robber" is pulling a little wagon behind him full of toys while the "cop" chases him.

FELIX

Yeah. Real tricky one. Maybe impossible. My original plan has just gone up in smoke.

SOPHIA

So? Walk away. There'll be other jobs.

FELIX

Well, that's the thing, I still think there's potential here.

The "robber" hits a hill, jumps in his wagon and rolls away from the "cop".

Felix smiles as the "cop" begrudgingly chases the "robber" down the hill.

INT. "THE KOOKABURRA'S NEST" - NIGHT

Felix walks into Russ' house. Russ is putting on his work boots.

FELIX

I brought the ute. You right to drop me back at Maggie's later?

RUSS

No dramas. You can follow me out to the shed. It's not far. Fancy a spot of hunting tonight?

FELIX

Foxes?

RUSS

That's the least of it. Rabbits. Feral cats. Maybe roos. Whatever we can find. Farm's infested. They've been running rampant trying to get closer to the food in the barn.

Russ opens a locked cupboard, takes out a hunting rifle and hands it to Felix.

RUSS (CONT.)

Remember how to fire one of these?

EXT. SCRUBLANDS - NIGHT

They're driving in Russ' car over the scrublands, fog lights cutting through the all encompassing darkness.

Russ stops the car at the edge of a tree line. They get out. Russ climbs into the trayback and turns a SPOTLIGHT at the surrounding bush.

They ready their rifles.

RUSS

There!

Russ points at a darting rabbit. Felix aims, shoots. Misses.

FELIX

Shit. I'm rusty.

RUSS

Don't sweat it.

This pattern of spot and the shoot continues. Russ is a crack-shot.

FELIX

I spoke to Sophia today. I'm going to go see her up in Sydney next week.

RUSS

Seriously? You're still going ahead with this? It's a dead end.

FELIX

I just want to see what she thinks before I rule it out completely.

RUSS

So, me and Sonny saying it's no good isn't enough?

FELIX

In the meantime, we're going to need a bit of money. To get us through the planning phase.

RUSS

Stop saying "We."

Russ shoots another rabbit.

FELIX

Fine, fine - I'm going to need some money.

RUSS

Well, don't look at me. I haven't got two brass razors to rub together.

FELIX

I was thinking of someone who might.

Russ fires and a feral cat goes down. Felix fires at something and misses.

RUSS

Who?

FELIX

Tristan.

RUSS

You wanna borrow money from a meth head?

FELIX

I prefer to think of him as an unwilling investor.

RUSS

So, you're gonna rob him?

FELIX

He must be storing that money somewhere. And if it's drug money, he's not gonna be banking it, is he?

RUSS

You reckon it's on his farm?

FELIX

Remember Maggie said his mattress was bulky? He'd be paranoid enough to wanna keep his money close. So, what you reckon? Fancy a good old fashioned break and enter?

RUSS

I'll cover you from the outside. But I'm not going in.

He fires and gets a rabbit through the neck.

EXT. TRISTAN'S FARM - NIGHT

Tristan's property is massive. The moonlight illuminates the sprawling scorched earth.

A simple farmhouse is overshadowed completely by the large dry trees next to it.

A TV FLICKERS inside. Felix and Russ are CROUCHED behind a tree overlooking the farmhouse. They're about fifty metres away.

FELIX

I thought you said he'd be out.

RUSS

He should be. Jen said he's
always at the pub on Friday.

They crouch-run a bit closer and can see the driveway is empty.

RUSS (CONT.)

His ute's gone.

FELIX

Come on, let's go have a look.

RUSS

This was a dumb idea. Should have
at least bought a gun.

FELIX

Just like old times, eh?

RUSS

Hopefully not too much like the
old times...

Closer still. They're under the windowsill. Felix peers in the window.

The TV is on, but there's nobody inside. Felix looks into a few of the windows.

FELIX

Yeah, he's definitely gone.

Felix stands up and tries the window. It's LOCKED. They move around to the front door, which is also locked. It's a flimsy lock. Felix shows Russ the secondary DEADBOLT.

FELIX (CONT.)

Deadbolt. Fuck. He's more
cautious than I gave him credit
for.

RUSS

Can you pick it?

FELIX

Not the deadbolt. Could bust in,
but it'd be obvious we'd been
here.

RUSS

What do you wanna do?

BACK OF THE HOUSE

No luck with the back windows either. Felix contemplates his next move. Looks up.

FELIX

Here, give me a boost up.

RUSS

Up where?

FELIX

The roof.

RUSS

Are you nuts?

But he holds his hands down anyway and boosts Felix up to the roof. Felix finds some loose tiles, removes them, making a man hole in the roof.

FELIX

Back in a sec.

Felix slides into the house. Russ anxiously keeps watch.

INT. TRISTAN'S FARM - NIGHT - CONT.

The noise of the TV echoes throughout the house.

Felix drops into a bathroom. He takes out a torch. The farmhouse is a HOVEL.

Felix finds the master bedroom.

MASTER BEDROOM

The master bedroom is a time capsule. The bed's made but is covered in dust; nobody has slept in it for years. The colours of the duvet have faded to a soft hue.

Nothing to see here.

Felix moves on.

LIVING ROOM

The living room is dump site full of beer bottles, cigarette butts and rubbish.

The thick bulgy mattress sits in front of the TV screaming at no one.

Felix heads for the mattress, and examines it. He lifts it up and looks underneath. A hole has been cut out. He reaches up, pulling out wads of loose cash.

EXT. TRISTAN'S FARM - NIGHT - CONT.

Russ hides behind the house, chewing his nails.

Headlights cut across him and a UTE bounces down the drive, trailed by TWO MOTORBIKES.

INT. TRISTAN'S FARM - NIGHT - CONT.

A headlight from outside the window sprays across Felix's face. Then the sound of a vehicle and the roar of motorbikes.

There's a knock on the window.

RUSS (O.S)
Felix! Get outta there!

Felix PANICS. Shoves a few of the plastic wrapped wads into his pockets. Throws the rest back in the mattress.

VOICES are near. He realises he won't have time to get back to the toilet. He heads for the master bedroom.

MASTER BEDROOM

He OPENS A CLOSET and almost screams when he sees MAGGIE tied up, her mouth covered in tape. She pleads with her eyes. Felix has no idea what to do. He closes the closet door.

Then presses himself behind the door, peeking through a crack.

The door UNLOCKS and Tristan tumbles in, the bikies follow.

Felix recognises the TWO BIKIES from outside the bakery - MARK and RICK. They could be 30, they could be 60 - their trailing beards hide their faces. They're wearing leather jackets, carrying duffel bags and just look like genuinely brutal people.

TRISTAN
Come in, come in. You guy's want
a beer? I got beers.

MARK
Just get on with it.

Mark and Rick head straight for the living room.

Tristan DISAPPEARS into the kitchen, MUTTERING to himself before returning.

Felix can't see them anymore, and the TV drowns the chat. The TV clicks off and Felix can now hear the conversation.

LIVING ROOM

We see the action transpiring in the living room. Tristan has the mattress turned over and is stuffing money into the duffel bags.

TRISTAN

It's all here. As usual. You wanna count it?

RICK

Do we need to count it?

TRISTAN

No, no, it's all there.

Rick starts pacing the room, flexing his muscles.

TRISTAN (CONT.)

So, how long you boys in town?

RICK

Does it matter?

TRISTAN

Of course not, no, no. Just saw you yesterday in town. All good. All good.

MARK

We might have another job for ya.

TRISTAN

Oh yeah? Sure. Definitely. Well, maybe. What is it?

Tristan is looking increasingly nervous.

RICK

We need to use your farm.

TRISTAN

You...you already do?

MARK

It'll be different this time. Just keep the eleventh of February free.

TRISTAN

Ah, show day!

TRISTAN

Sure, sure. You...you wanna stay here for it?

MARK

Something like that.

TRISTAN

That's no problem. Yep. No problem.

MARK

I know it's no problem. Wasn't a question.

RICK

Right, that it?

BEDROOM

Felix hears the duffel bag zipper, followed by footsteps. Mark and Rick come back into view, Tristan behind them like a yapping puppy.

TRISTAN

Hey, you guys wanna hang out, get a little high? My treat!

Rick turns on him, picks him up and SLAMS him against the wall, right next to where Felix is hiding. The whole house rattles. We see for the first time that Rick's right arm is METAL PROSTHESIS.

RICK

You're not dipping into our supply, I hope?

TRISTAN

No, no, this is just my stash. Come on, guys. It's me. You said I could take a little. I only take a little. I swear.

Rick drops him and Tristan SLIDES down the wall.

MARK

I need to take a slash.

He steps over Tristan and heads to the bathroom.

Felix is SWEATING now, he backs further into the room.

Mark's piss is audible over the now dead silence of the house. Felix hears him walking back in and closes the closet and goes back behind the door.

MARK

What happened to your roof?

Tristan is confused.

TRISTAN

W-w-what? What do you mean?

MARK

Got some tiles need replacing.

TRISTAN

Oh. Um. I'll look into that.

Rick looks around the place. He takes out a couple of dollars from the bag, throws it to him.

RICK

Get a fucking cleaner before next time.

They leave, shutting the door. Tristan waits until the sounds of motorbikes dim.

Then he gets up and heads to the bathroom. Felix is looking from the closet to the door.

He hears Tristan's voice.

TRISTAN (O.S)

What the fuck?

Felix sees his chance and bolts for the front door. He opens it and runs out into the darkness.

EXT. TRISTAN'S FARM - NIGHT - CONT.

Russ waits at a tree when Felix meets him.

RUSS

Thank fuck for that. I thought you were cooked.

FELIX

He saw the tiles. We gotta go.

Felix starts to jog away, Russ follows.

RUSS

What? What did they do?

FELIX

I'll explain when we get away from the *Hills Have Eyes*.

RUSS

Did you get any cash?

FELIX

Yeah, yeah, I got it.

He pulls out the wads of cash and starts stuffing it into a plastic shopping bag.

RUSS

This was it?

FELIX
Nowhere near it.

RUSS
What are the bilies doing here?

FELIX
Collecting cash. But that's not
all -

A GUNSHOT and a tree explodes besides Felix.

FELIX (CONT.)
Shit!

Another tree explodes. Tristan is outside the farmhouse
wielding a SHOTGUN. He can only see the outline of Felix and
Russ. The two shadows run into the dark safety of the trees.
More gunshots.

TRISTAN
Get back here you fucking pricks!

Another gunshot EXPLODES the shopping bag full of cash. Cash
rains down in the darkness.

FELIX
Fuck, fuck, fuck!

Felix grabs at it like he's in a game show. Russ pulls him to
keep moving. Gun shots are rattling around them.

Eventually they're a safe distance away. They lean against a
tree, and watch and wait for Tristan to give up. Felix huffs.

FELIX
I've gotta quit smoking.

RUSS
That was fucking intense. What
the hell happened back there?

Felix looks at him - "You don't know the half of it".

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Felix unlocks his hotel room, exhausted. He turns on the
light and sees Pippa lying on his bed, reading one of the
tourist brochures.

PIPPA
Felix! Fancy seeing you here.

Felix is so tired he can't even pretend to be surprised.

FELIX
Hi, Pippa. Welcome home.

FADE OUT