

THE RUNNING MAN

by  
Mario Grooters

Based on the novella by  
Stephen King

Mario Grooters  
van Nesstraat 12  
4671 AJ Dinteloord  
The Netherlands  
0031-6-40786813 or 0031-10-7072094  
mario.grooters@12move.nl

FADE IN:

EXT. HARDING - MORNING

The SKYLINE OF HARDING. A sinister cobalt blue coloring SKYSCRAPER attracts our attention. The weather is gray and we hear an ominous and bone-chilling WIND.

We move through a PARK... cross a STREET... and approach a BLOCK OF FLATS. The area is deserted. A PASSAGE under the block of flats takes us in a dilapidated COURTYARD. We know immediately that this is a gloomy time and place. Moving to an APARTMENT with balcony door, we hear a little girl CRYING.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

For men from the poor side of society with no work, no cash, and no hope, there's only one thing to do: become a contestant on one of The Network's Games. Shows where you can win more money than you've ever dreamed of... or die trying. Many men are going prime time on The Network's highest-rated participation-viewer show, THE RUNNING MAN. In the year 2025, the best men don't run for president, they run for their lives. No one ever survived the game... so far.

INT. BEN'S APARTMENT - CATHY'S BEDROOM/HALL - MORNING

In a bedstead lies CATHY RICHARDS, one-year-and-a-half-old. She cries. SHEILA RICHARDS, 26, pale, skinny, and hollow eyes, squints at a thermometer. She exits the bedroom. She walks through the hall and to the living room. We hear the howling SOUND of a TV, it sounds like a game show, or so.

INT. BEN'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

It is a poor home, there are few pieces of furniture and the walls are bare. BENJAMIN STUART 'BEN' RICHARDS, 28, tall, looking tough and rough, sits at a table. He watches TV.

ON TV

An OLD MAN runs in a treadmill. The game's name is TREADMILL TO BUCKS. The EMCEE grins. The audience YELLS and CLAPS.

Sheila holds in the doorway.

Ben turns his head to Sheila.

BEN

How bad is it?

Sheila walks to Ben.

SHEILA

Not so bad.

BEN

Don't shit me.

SHEILA

It's a hundred and four.

BEN

Damn.

SHEILA

Listen Ben, we'll get a doctor. Try not to worry so much. We --

A BUZZER.

ON TV

The old man runs in the treadmill. The emcee JEERS.

EMCEE

That's the wrong answer, old-timer. You lose your winnings and you got the treadmill speed up.

The treadmill speeds up. The old man stumbles and trips. He collapses. The audience CLAPS en CHEERS.

Sheila looks at the TV. Then she looks at Ben.

SHEILA

We'll get along, Ben. We will. Really, I... I --

Ben raises.

BEN

You what? Hustle? No more Sheila. She's got to have a real doctor.  
(Swiveling at the TV)  
And I'm going to see to it.

ON TV

COPS stretch the badly hurt old man offstage. The emcee CLAPS and LAUGHS. The audience CLAPS en CHEERS.

Ben walks to the hall. Sheila looks at the TV.

Then Sheila walks after Ben.

SHEILA

No Ben, no, I won't allow it. You're not going to that awful place.

BEN

Why not?

INT. BEN'S APARTMENT - HALL - MORNING

Ben turns to Sheila.

BEN

At worst, you get a few bucks.

(Indicating at Cathy's  
bedroom)

Then you'll have to see her through.

SHEILA

I won't take it. Should I take a  
bounty on my man?

BEN

How about her in an unmarked pauper's  
grave? How does that appeal to you?

SHEILA

Ben, this is just what they want,  
people like you.

Ben takes his denim jacket from a hook in the wall.

BEN

Maybe they won't take me.

Ben walks to the outer door. Sheila walks after him.

SHEILA

If you go now, they'll kill you!

BEN

I want her to go on living.

Ben opens the outer door.

Sheila blocks it.

SHEILA

Give me a kiss before you go, then.

Ben embraces Sheila. Sheila sobs.

BEN

Will you take the money?

SHEILA

I'll take it. You know I will.

Ben kisses Sheila. He exits. Sheila stays in the doorway.  
She shakes by soundless sobs.

INT. BEN'S APARTMENT - HALLWAY - MORNING

Ben plunges down the stairs. Sheila saunters into the  
hallway. The outer door of another apartment opens.

MRS. JENNER, 60, gray, small, and beady little eyes, creeps softly at Sheila.

Mrs. Jenner touches Sheila's arm briefly.

MRS. JENNER

Dearie, I can put you onto black market penicillin when the money gets here... real cheap... good quality --

Sheila shakes of Mrs. Jenners's hand. Sheila is mad.

SHEILA

Get out!

Mrs. Jenner recoils. She rises her upper lip.

MRS. JENNER

Just trying to help.

Mrs. Jenner scurries back to her apartment. We hear Ben DESCENDING the stairs and we hear Cathy CRYING.

Sheila saunters to the stairs. A door SLAMS. She shivers.

INT. MRS. JENNERS'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Mrs. Jenner sits in an easy chair in front of the TV. She writes Sheila's name in a notebook.

MRS. JENNER

We'll see... We'll just see, Mrs. Smell-So-Sweet.

She closes the notebook and settles herself in her easy chair. She watches TV.

EXT. HARDING - MORNING

Ben crosses a deserted street. Garbage lays spread around. Plumes of smoke rise from sewer drains. Fancy cars, stripped down, stand jumbled up the street. Ben passes empty shops, the windows and canopies are demolished.

A view of the Harding skyline with the sinister skyscraper.

Ben walks through an eerie and deserted narrow alley. He leaves the alley and ends up in a shopping street. Futurist busses drive by and few people walk the street.

Ben crosses THE CANAL.

At a shopping street, armed COPS guard fancy shops. A COP looks suspicious at Ben. Ben glances at him. Ben moves on.

Ben looks at a playground for kids:

THE PEOPLE'S FOUNTAIN PARK (ADMISSION \$7.00)

A COP guards the gate. A fountain squirts water. Fancy dressed MOTHERS sit on benches. They spy at Ben. They watch their CHILDREN. The children frolic on the Astroturf. Ben moves on.

The sinister skyscraper has huge and impersonal windows.

A line of MEN stretches out to the entrance of the creepy skyscraper. Ben queues up. Other MEN queue up behind him.

EXT. HARDING - AFTERNOON

COP 1 and COP 2 are heavily armed. They look at the men.

COP 1  
(Pointing at a man)  
That one looks like a half-wit to you,  
Frank? Looks like one to me.

COP 2  
Yeah, a guy down there asked if  
there's a bathroom. What a moron.

COP 1  
It'll be fun watching the Hunters go  
after them. I'll be clued to the TV,  
a beer in each hand.

They LAUGH at the men.

EXT. GAMES BUILDING - AFTERNOON

A sign is beside the exclusive entrance of the skyscraper:

THE NETWORK GAMES AUTHORITY

The Network's symbol, a silhouette of a human head superimposed over a torch, is beside it. COPS guard the entrance. The men in the line wait patiently. After a body-search, men are allowed into the building.

INT. GAMES BUILDING - FLOOR LEVEL - LOBBY - AFTERNOON

The lobby is huge. Ben walks to a counter. Behind it sits FEMALE DESK CLERK (25's). She looks impersonal and cold.

She sits behind a computer.

FEMALE DESK CLERK  
Name, last first middle.

BEN  
Richards, Benjamin Stuart.

Female desk clerk's fingers race over the keys.

FEMALE DESK CLERK  
Age, height, and weight?

BEN  
Twenty-eight, six-two, one sixty-five.

FEMALE DESK CLERK  
Do you use or have you used any drugs,  
such as Angel Dust, PCP?

BEN  
No.

A PRINTER RATTLES

The female desk clerk hands Ben an ID card.

FEMALE DESK CLERK  
Don't lose it, big fella. If you do,  
you've to start back at go next week.

A SCREAM

Ben and the female desk clerk look at the outer door.

At the OUTER DOOR, FOUR COPS beat up a JUNK. The junk CRIES.  
Two cops pick him up. They THROW him out of the building.

Ben looks back at female desk clerk.

FEMALE DESK CLERK (CONT'D)  
Tough Old World, big fella. Move on.

Ben walks away.

He walks to THE ELEVATORS. A group of men stand in front.

COP 3 and COP 4 hold Ben before entering the elevator.

COP 3  
Show me your card buddy.

Ben shows the ID card.

BEN  
You like turning them back, don't you?

COP 3  
You want to go downtown, maggot?

BEN  
Got a family, cop? Could be you next  
week out there.

COP 4  
You a smart-ass, Sonny?

BEN

Just as smart as you talk without that  
gun on your leg and your pants down  
around your ankles.

COP 4

They'll fix you, boy. You'll do some  
walking on your knees before you're  
done.

Ben grins. The elevator door opens. The men, Ben included,  
enter the elevator. The elevator door closes.

INT. GAMES BUILDING - FIRST FLOOR - STACK ROOM - AFTERNOON

The men exit the elevator. They walk into the immense stack  
room. Many chairs and many TV's. COPS walk around.

SIX COPS escort TWO MEN through a little door next to the  
elevator. Above it is a sign:

TO STREET

Ben walks to a cigarette machine. A BUZZER. Ben looks  
around. Where is that sound coming from?

A DOOR. A NEON-SIGN with the letter A is above it. Men walk  
through the door.

Ben gets himself a package of cigarettes. He sits down at a  
chair near a window. He looks outside and lights up a smoke.

EXT. HARDING - BEN'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Sheila, dressed as a hooker, leaves their block of flats. It  
is dark and chilly. She crosses the street.

EXT. HARDING - PARK - EVENING

Sheila walks into THE PARK.

HOOKERS and CLIENTS idle down the path.

Sheila talks to a CLIENT. We cannot hear what they say. The  
client hands over money at Sheila. They walk away. The  
client puts a hand on Sheila's bum. Sheila shows no emotion.  
The client grins sneaky.

INT. GAMES BUILDING - FIRST FLOOR - STACK ROOM - EVENING

Ben watches TV. The BUZZER.

The DOOR. The NEON-SIGN P. Men walk through the door.

ON TV

A logo:

THE RUNNING MAN

BOBBY THOMPSON, 45, wearing a Games singlet, good looking, and silver hair, sits behind a desk.

BOBBY

As you all know very few will survive THE RUNNING MAN. But come on, step forward, be a contestant. Run your way out of your misery. I'm Bobby Thompson, your host and emcee at world's most exciting game.

Again the BUZZER.

The DOOR. A NEON-SIGN R. Men walk through the door.

Ben raises. He walks to the door.

INT. GAMES BUILDING - FIRST FLOOR - MEDICAL ROOM - EVENING

A long and tiled medical room shows many desks with bored doctors standing aside. COPS guard them. Ben, in tattered skivvies, stands in line. Most men are naked. We watch the scene from a distance.

AT THE FIRST DESK

DOCTOR 1 depresses Ben's tongue with a ladle. He peers into Ben's eyes with a tiny bright light.

AT ANOTHER DESK

DOCTOR 2 places the circle of a stethoscope on Ben's chest.

AT THE NEXT DESK

DOCTOR 3 points at an eye chart. Ben looks at the chart.

CLOSE BY NOW IN AN INLET

DOCTOR 4 puts on a plastic glove.

DOCTOR 4

Bend over and spread your cheeks.

Ben bent and spread. Doctor 4 pulls down Ben's skivvies. He explores Ben's rectal channel. Ben looks ashamed.

DOCTOR 4 (CONT'D)

Move along.

Ben pulls up his skivvies and moves along.

IN THE NEXT INLET

DOCTOR 5 looks at a list.

DOCTOR 5  
I notice that there is a case of  
influenza in your family, your wife?

BEN  
No. My daughter.

DOCTOR 5  
Have you been immunized?  
(Suddenly furious)  
Don't try to lie. We'll check your  
health stats anyway.

Ben looks disturbed.

BEN  
Immunized May 2023. Booster July  
2023. At the Block health clinic.

DOCTOR 5  
Move along.

Ben turns around and walks away. He is mad.

IN ANOTHER INLET

Ben stands in front of a WOMAN DOCTOR.

WOMAN DOCTOR  
Are you homosexual?

BEN  
No.

WOMAN DOCTOR  
Do you have any severe phobias?

BEN  
No.

WOMAN DOCTOR  
You better listen to the definition.

BEN  
You mean, if I have any unusual or  
compulsive fears such as acrophobia or  
claustrophobia? No, I have not.

The woman doctor stays undisturbed.

WOMAN DOCTOR  
Have you, or do you have relatives  
ever been arrested on a felony charge  
against The Network?

BEN  
No.

WOMAN DOCTOR

Okay. Move on, Mr. Richards.

Ben moves on.

INT. GAMES BUILDING - FIRST FLOOR - MEDICAL ROOM - EVENING

The group of men, all dressed now, gets into an elevator. They move up from the first to the second floor.

INT. GAMES BUILDING - SECOND FLOOR - BEDROOM - EVENING

In a huge bedroom Ben sleeps in a bed.

INT. GAMES BUILDING - THIRD FLOOR - HALL - MORNING

The hall has booths left and right.

The men wear OVERALLS, dark blue, The Network's silhouette on the breast.

A GAUNT NURSE, in lab coat with Network symbol on it, stands in front of the men.

GAUNT NURSE

Good morning. Welcome to the third. You've all been issued Games overalls, that you may keep, no matter what your game resolution may be. You also received a card with a number. Please go to the booth with that number.

Men look at the cards and walk to the booths. Ben walks to a door:

BOOTH 6

INT. GAMES BUILDING - THIRD FLOOR - BOOTH 6 - MORNING

Ben enters.

RINDA WARD, 22, gorgeous, tall, blond, looking divine in her iridescent clothing, stands beside the desk.

RINDA

Good morning, I am Rinda Ward, your tester.

They shake hands. Ben startles.

BEN

Benjamin Richards.

RINDA

Please sit down, Ben.

Ben sits down at the desk.

RINDA (CONT'D)  
 Today we test your mental state.  
 It'll take the whole day. Lunch will  
 be later this afternoon. You may  
 begin after my signal.

Rinda puts down a test booklet and a pen in front of Ben.

RINDA (CONT'D)  
 Okay Ben, your exam has begun.

Ben leans back and eyes Rinda's body.

Rinda feels uneasy.

RINDA (CONT'D)  
 Go ahead, Ben, you had better --

BEN  
 Why does everybody in here assume that  
 a man from the other side of the canal  
 is always mental incompetent?

RINDA  
 I never think --

BEN  
 No, you never think... Jesus.

Ben starts the test. Rinda wanders around.

A BUZZER

Rinda takes the test booklet and puts down another. Ben  
 turns to it. TIME moves fast.

INT. GAMES BUILDING - THIRD FLOOR - BOOTH 6 - AFTERNOON

Rinda takes the test booklet and puts down another. Ben  
 turns to it. Rinda wanders around.

The clock in the room shows 3:59 PM. Ben writes hasty. THE  
 BUZZER. Ben stops writing. He puts down the pen.

Rinda collects the booklet from the desk. She looks pleased  
 with herself.

RINDA  
 Not so fast on the last one, Ben.

BEN  
 But the answers will all be right.

Ben raises and swats Rinda slightly on the back.

BEN (CONT'D)

Take a shower kid, you done good.

Rinda blushes furiously. She shakes of Ben's hand.

RINDA

I could have you disqualified.

BEN

Bullshit, you could have yourself fired. That's all.

RINDA

Get out! Get out of here.

BEN

Okay. You have a nice night in town and think about my kid dying of flu in a shitty Network apartment.

Ben walks away.

Rinda stares after him, white-faced.

INT. GAMES BUILDING - THIRD FLOOR - HALL - AFTERNOON

TWO MEN walk through a door:

TO STREET

Cops guard them. Ben's group, down to about ten men, walk into the elevator.

INT. GAMES BUILDING - FOURTH FLOOR - BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

In a bedroom the men walk to a bed. Ben walks to a cop at the door.

CHARLIE GRADY (50's), tall, and gray, blocks the door.

BEN

Is there a telephone, pal?

CHARLIE

Ain't got a cell phone, dude?

BEN

Do I look if I can afford one?

Charlie smiles. He jerks his thumb towards an inlet.

CHARLIE

Over there is a pay phone.

Ben turns his head and stretches his neck.

A PAY PHONE is against a wall in an inlet of the bedroom.

Ben looks back at Charlie.

BEN  
Listen, if you loan me fifty cents for  
the phone, I'll --

CHARLIE  
Screw off, Jack.

BEN  
I wanna call my wife. Our kid is  
sick. Put yourself in my place.

CHARLIE  
You types are all the same, a story  
for every day of the year.

BEN  
You bastard.

Charlie jams a hand in his pocket. He throws two coins on  
the floor. Ben kneels to pick them up.

Charlie looks down on him.

CHARLIE  
If I catch you spreading the word that  
Charlie Grady is a soft touch, I split  
your scalp with the butt of this  
revolver faster than you can say  
police brutality.

BEN  
(Looking up)  
Thank you... for the loan.

Charlie smiles. Ben rises. He walks to the inlet. He picks  
up the receiver and punches a number. It rings five times,  
but then:

FLAT-DWELLER (O.S.)  
Hello?

BEN  
I want to speak to Sheila Richards at  
five C.

FLAT-DWELLER (O.S.)  
She's out. Walking the streets I  
guess. The man there's shiftless.

BEN  
Just knock on the door.

FLAT-DWELLER (O.S.)  
Hold on.

Ben looks restless. We hear the flat-dweller KNOCK on a  
door.

FLAT-DWELLER (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
 She ain't there. I can hear the kid  
 yelling. Like I say, she's walking  
 the streets.

BEN  
 Take a message, will you. Write it on  
 the wall if you have to.

FLAT-DWELLER (O.S.)  
 No pencil, I got to go, good --

BEN  
 (Panic)  
 WAIT... I --

FLAT-DWELLER (O.S.)  
 Listen, I... Hold on. I believe she's  
 coming up. Mrs. Richards, telephone  
 for you.

Ben closes his eyes and collapses sweaty against the wall.

SHEILA (O.S.)  
 Hello?

BEN  
 Sheila!

INT. BEN'S APARTMENT - HALLWAY - AFTERNOON

Sheila stands at the pay phone.

SHEILA  
 Ben, is that you? You all right?

INTERCUT AS NEEDED

BEN  
 Yeah. Fine. How's Cathy?

SHEILA  
 The same. I hate to leave her, but I  
 turned two tricks last night, Ben.  
 I'm sorry, but now I got her some  
 medicine... good stuff.

BEN  
 That stuff sucks. Sheila, no more  
 tricks PLEASE! I think I made it.  
 They give advances. Stay home!

SHEILA  
 All right. I won't go out again.

BEN  
 Fingers crossed, Sheila?

SHEILA  
I love you, Ben!

INT. GAMES BUILDING - FOURTH FLOOR - BEDROOM - AFTERNOON  
Ben looks outside.

BEN  
And I love --

FEMALE PHONE OPERATOR 1 (O.S.)  
(Haughty)  
Three minutes are up. If you wish to  
continue, deposit a quarter.

BEN  
Wait a second. Get off the goddam  
line, bitch. You --

The hum of a broken connection. Ben pitches the receiver.

BEN (CONT'D)  
Shit!

Ben walks away.

He stops and looks outside the window. He is pissed off.

BEN (CONT'D)  
Somebody has to pay. SOMEONE has to.

Ben lies on a bed. He is looking into space.

INT. GAMES BUILDING - FIFTH FLOOR - AUDITORIUM - MORNING

Fifty men sit in a small luxurious auditorium. They TALK,  
but we cannot hear what it is all about.

ONSTAGE

ARTHUR M. BURNS, 50, portly and gray hair, walks to a  
lectern. He tabs the microphone... The HUM fades away.

Arthur smiles haughty.

ARTHUR  
Good morning, my name is Arthur M.  
Burns, Assistant Director of Games...  
Congratulations, you've made it!

Some men SIGH, other men LAUGH and do some BACKSLAPPING. Ben  
sits in a chair; he lights a cigarette.

ONSTAGE

Arthur smiles self-complacent, the HUM fades away.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Shortly, your program assignments will be passed out. The producers of your program will explain what is expected of you... Well, I find you to be a courageous group. On behalf of the entire Network, I wish you good luck and Godspeed... Well, there they are!

The side door opens. GAME USHERS, in red Network tunics, appear. They carry envelopes. The Game ushers call names. The men respond. A MALE USHER searches around.

MALE USHER

Laughlin?

LAUGHLIN, 25, blond, and cute, rises.

LAUGHLIN

Here.

Laughlin walks to the male usher.

Some men are eager to start and other men are afraid. We hear 'I DON'T THINK', 'MISERABLE', 'LIKE I EXPECTED', and 'WHAT THE HELL IS SWIM FOR CROCODILES'.

Ben smokes his cigarette.

The male usher searches around again.

MALE USHER

Richards... Benjamin Richards?

Ben drops his cigarette and rises.

BEN

Here!

Ben steps on his cigarette. He struggles his way to the male usher. The male usher hands Ben a white envelope. Ben opens it. A little card drops out:

ELEVATOR SIX.

INT. GAMES BUILDING - FIFTH FLOOR - ELEVATOR HALL - MORNING

Ben sits on a chair. A COP watches him. It is quiet. The elevator door opens, TWO COPS inside. Ben rises and enters.

INT. GAMES BUILDING - SIXTH FLOOR - LOUNGE - MORNING

Ben exits the elevator. He walks into the luxurious lounge. Laughlin and a SEXY GIRL, 18, silly and forged roguish, walk away from a closed door. TWO COPS flank them.

They meet Ben halfway the lounge.

LAUGHLIN

So, you're also in for the Grand Prize.

BEN

What do you mean?

LAUGHLIN

We got the big-money assignment. Not the one where you land in a hospital. No, this is the one where they kill you. Prime time, baby.

BEN

Well, we'll see.

LAUGHLIN

Right... Hey pal, good luck.

BEN

Good luck to you, man.

Laughlin and his party walk to the elevator.

A SECRETARY (50's) rises from behind a desk. She points at a door.

SECRETARY

Mr. Richards? Would you step in, please?

Ben nods at the secretary, and walks to the door.

INT. GAMES BUILDING - SIXTH FLOOR - DAN'S OFFICE - MORNING

Ben enters. A large window in a well-designed large office shows the skyline of Harding. At a large desk in front of it sits DAN KILLIAN, 40, very black, white teeth, amiable charisma. Ben looks overwhelmed. He walks to Dan.

Dan raises and extents his hand.

DAN

Mr. Richards!

Ben ignores the hand and sits down. Dan takes his hand back and sits down in his chair.

He does not seem particularly flustered.

DAN (CONT'D)

By now you've probably guessed why you've been brought here. You've been slated as a contestant on tomorrow's show of The Running Man. It's our biggest show, the most lucrative and the most dangerous. I'm Dan Killian, executive producer of the program.

BEN

Good for you.

DAN

I want you to understand fully what you're getting into. You're regarded as antisocial, however you're intelligent enough to stay out of any serious trouble.

Ben shrugs his shoulders. He looks indifferent.

DAN (CONT'D)

The program is a way to get rid of troublemakers such as yourself. We've been on for six years. To date, we've no survivors. We expect to have none.

BEN

Then you're running a crooked table.

DAN

But we're not. Don't forget that people want to see you wiped out and they'll help if they can. And there is EVAN MCCONE and his HUNTERS to content with... McCone never loses.

(Ben roars)

Okay, the rules are simplicity themselves.

Dan raises and walks to the big screen window.

DAN (CONT'D)

You, or your surviving family, win \$100 for each hour you remain free. We stake you to \$4,800.

Dan turns to Ben.

DAN (CONT'D)

If you last 30 days, you win the Grand Prize of \$1,000,000,000.

Dan walks back to his desk.

DAN (CONT'D)

Do you have any questions?

BEN

Just one. How would you like to be the one out there, on the run?

Dan LAUGHS exuberant.

DAN

Oh... Mr. Richards... You must excuse me...

Dan goes off into another gale.

DAN (CONT'D)  
Then sign the... Mr. Richards...  
You... I...

Dan chokes down a new laughter.

DAN (CONT'D)  
Please excuse me. You've struck my  
funnybone.

BEN  
I see I have.

Dan takes control of himself.

DAN  
Then sign the Games Release form, and  
you're ready to go.

Ben signs the form.

DAN (CONT'D)  
Thank you, Mr. Richards. There'll be  
a meeting before the program. If any  
question should develop in that  
fascinating mind of yours, please hold  
them until then.

Dan presses a button on his desk and we hear that the door  
opens. Dan invites Ben to the door.

IN THE DOORWAY

A very YOUNG WOMAN.

Ben and Dan walk to the door.

BEN  
Spare me the cheap snatch. I'm  
married.

DAN  
Are you quite sure? Fidelity is  
admirable, but you're all by your  
lonesome until tomorrow night. And  
considering the fact that you never  
see your wife again.

BEN  
I'm married.

Dan nods at the young woman. She leaves, emotionless.

Dan and Ben stand at the door.

DAN

Very well. Anything else we can do for you? You'll have a private suite on the seventh floor.

BEN

A bottle of bourbon and a telephone so I can talk to my wi --

DAN

Ah no, I'm sorry, Mr. Richards. The bourbon we can do, but you signed the Release form, so you're incommunicado until tomorrow night. Would you care to reconsider the girl?

BEN

No, but make that two bottles of bourbon.

DAN

Certainly.

Dan offers Ben his hand.

DAN (CONT'D)

Mr. Richards, I see you tomorrow.

Ben disregards and exits. Dan stares at him. He is not smiling.

INT. GAMES BUILDING - SEVENTH FLOOR - ROOM - AFTERNOON

Ben enters a sumptuous suite. An envelope stands prominent on a table. Ben takes it. He opens the envelope. He pulls out a note.

Ben saunters through the room. He reads the note.

DAN (O.S.)

Mr. Richards, I suspect one of the things you will not mention during our interview is the fact that you need money badly. You ain't a TV star, but a working Joe, paid extremely for undertaking a dangerous job. Despite rumors to the contrary, Games Authority doesn't give advances.

BEN

Shit.

DAN (O.S.)

However, Games Authority has no rule that forbids me from extending you a personal loan.

Ben sits down at a table. He looks in the envelope. There is money in it. Ben looks grateful.

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

Inside you will find ten percent of your advance salary. I suspect you'll send your wife the money, so she can arrange a reputable doctor.  
Sincerely, Dan Killian.

Ben writes his address on the envelope. He pushes the service button on the table. He rises and walks to the door.

COP 5 (30's) enters the room.

COP 5

Yes, Mr. Richards?

BEN

I want you to take this envelope somewhere. It's money for my wife. Name and address are on the back.

Ben hands Cop 5 the envelope.

BEN (CONT'D)

You know a cop named Charlie Grady?

COP 5

Charles?... Yes.

BEN

Give him this dollar, will you?

COP 5

Okay.

Ben hands cop 5 a one-dollar bill. Cop 5 exits.

INT. GAMES BUILDING - SEVENTH FLOOR - ROOM - EVENING

An empty bottle of bourbon lies on the table. Ben sits in a chair, looking well in the bag to boot. The other bottle dangles in his hand. A KNOCK on the door. Ben rises. He drops the bottle on the table. Ben stumbles to the door.

Cop 5 stands in the doorway.

COP 5

Your receipts, Mr. Richards.

Cop 5 hands Ben the receipts. Cop 5 closes the door.

Ben walks to the bed. He looks at a baby picture of Cathy. He looks at the back of a traffic ticket form says:

THANKS, MAGGOT. GET STUFFED. CHARLIE GRADY

Ben sits down on the bed.

BEN  
Thanks Charlie, I needed that.

Ben creeps into the bed.

INT. FUNERAL PARLOR - NIGHT

Ben is at Sheila's funeral. She lies in an open coffin. She is stuffed with dollar bills.

Ben tries to reach her. Hands grab him from behind. Charlie Grady, cop 4, and a few other cops hold him.

Charlie threatens Ben.

CHARLIE  
This is what happens to losers,  
maggot.

Ben is afraid. The cops stand around him. They put their pistols to Ben's head.

Cop 4 really looks mean.

COP 4  
Told you, you would do some walking on  
your knees, boy.

Ben winces.

INT. GAMES BUILDING - SEVENTH FLOOR - ROOM - MORNING

Ben startles from the nightmare. He sits up in the bed.

He looks around. He looks numbed.

BEN  
Jesus... What a nightmare!

INT. GAMES BUILDING - SEVENTH FLOOR - ROOM - AFTERNOON

Ben, dressed, stands at the window. A RAP on the door. Ben turns.

Arthur, accompanied by THREE COPS, enter.

ARTHUR  
Mr. Richards, it's time for your final  
briefing, would you --

Ben walks to Arthur.

BEN  
Sure.

INT. GAMES BUILDING - EIGHT FLOOR - CONTROL ROOM - AFTERNOON

Ben, Arthur, and the cops walk into a control room.

ARTHUR

The eight floor, Mr. Richards. Your  
final destination.

Dan and Bobby sit behind a desk. Dan rises.

DAN

Hello, Mr. Richards.  
(To Arthur)  
Hello, Arthur.

Arthur nods. Ben and Arthur sit down.

Dan sits down.

DAN (CONT'D)

Ben, do you know Bobby Thompson?

BEN

Yes, he's the asshole from the TV.

Bobby smiles, he straightens up.

BOBBY

That's funny, Ben. I was going to say  
the same thing about you. Take a look  
at your left.

Ben cocks his head to the left.

Through a WIDE WINDOW the FANCY RUNNING MAN SET springs into  
view.

ARTHUR (O.S.)

We don't do a run-through here. It  
detracts from spontaneity. You go on  
at six o'clock, Harding time.

The four of them sit around the desk.

BEN

What about Laughlin?

DAN

He comes on after you. But that's not  
of your concern. Backstage I'll give  
you the money, the camera, and sixty  
memory cards. Then I escort you to  
the street elevator. Once you're on  
the street, you're on your own.

BEN

Okay.

DAN

Notice you have to send us two memory cards a day. You can drop them into any mail slot. They will be delivered express. Failure to deposit will result in legal default of payment.

BEN

But I'll still be hunted down!

DAN

Just mail those cards, Ben, they won't give away your refuge to the Hunters.

Ben frowns, as if he has doubts about that.

BOBBY

Then straighten out a money detail, Ben. You, or your estate, will be paid an extra \$100 for any Hunter or cop you happen to dispatch. However, try not to bag any innocent bystanders, that's not kosher.

Ben smiles and nods his head.

DAN

People can call us when they spot you. A verified sight pays them \$100. A sighting results in a kill pays \$1,000. We pay independent cameraman \$10 a foot, so --

BEN

That they can retire to scenic Jamaica on blood money.

Dan rises.

DAN

That's enough! Miss Jones?

IN THE DOORWAY stands a gorgeous MISS JONES (25's).

MISS JONES

Yes, Mr. Killian?

Dan walks to her.

DAN

Will you escort Mr. Richards to the makeup?

MISS JONES

Certainly, Mr. Killian.

Ben walks to them. He glances at the The Running Man's set.

A prominent view of the THE RUNNING MAN SET.

INT. GAMES BUILDING - EIGHT FLOOR - ONSTAGE - EVENING

We hear the TUNE of The Running Man. The STUDIO AUDIENCE frantically APPLAUDS. They shout 'BOBBY, BOBBY, BOBBY'. Bobby urges the audience to hush... The music stops... The audience hushes, then:

BOBBY  
It's... ShowTime.

The audience CHEERS.

BOBBY (CONT'D)  
Tonight's main contestant is a screwed, resourceful man from our own home city.  
(Pointing at a screen)  
And watch that screen!

A WIDE SCREEN

PICTURES of Ben in old clothing. His retouched face looks like a bogeyman with a mocking smile.

BOBBY (CONT'D)  
Benjamin Richards, age 28. In half an hour, this man will be on the prowl. A verified sighting brings you \$100. A sighting result in a kill brings you \$1,000.

ON THE WIDE SCREEN

Ben's face dissolves to a painting of Sheila. Her retouched picture She looks like an overwhelming, greedy slut.

BOBBY (CONT'D)  
And this is the wife that'll scoop in all Benjamin Richard's rewards.

INT. GAMES BUILDING - EIGHT FLOOR - SIDE WING - EVENING

Ben flanked by COP 6 and another COP, lunges forward.

BEN  
You bastard.

Cop 6 and the other cop hold him back.

COP 6  
Slimmer down pal, it's only a picture.

INT. GAMES BUILDING - EIGHT FLOOR - ONSTAGE - EVENING

Bobby looks backstage.

BOBBY

Here he is ready to pay his fine.

The cops drag Ben onstage.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Benjamin Richards.

The audience SCREAMS, YELLS, and calls; we hear 'BOO', 'GET OUT, YOU CREEP', and 'KILL THE BASTARD'.

Bobby raises his arms to ease the audience. He walks to Ben.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Quiet people. Let's hear what he's got to say.

The audience quiets, but reluctantly. The cops release Ben. Ben stands bull-like.

Ben stares at Dan with hard red-rimmed eyes.

BEN

Someone will eat his own balls for that picture of my wife.

The audience YELLS and WHISTLES.

BOBBY

Speak, Mr. Richards! Nobody will hurt you... at least, not yet.

Ben suddenly wheels to face the audience. They become very quiet.

Ben looks at them with blood-hate in his eyes.

BEN

You bastards, if you wanna see somebody die so bad, why don't you kill each other.

The audience YELLS and SCREAMS. A few men try to get onstage. Cops hold them back.

Bobby urges the audience.

BOBBY

Thank you for those words of wisdom. Tell me Ben, would you like to tell our audience in the studio and at home how long you think you can hold out?

BEN

I would like to tell the audience here and at home that that wasn't my wife. That was a cheap fake.

The audience YELLS and SCREAMS.

BOBBY  
How long, Mr. Richards?

BEN  
I expect to go the whole 30 days, I  
don't think you've got a guy who can  
take me.

The audience goes NUTS again.

Bobby turns to the audience.

BOBBY  
With those last cheap words of  
bravery, Mr. Richards will be led from  
our stage. Remember his face. He has  
a start of twelve hours, so the hunt  
starts tomorrow at 6:30 AM. He can be  
anywhere.

(Raising his voice)  
Skulking outside your home? Will you  
report him?

The audience screams 'YES'. Ben gives them both fingers.

MEN get onstage. The cops cannot hold them back. The two  
cops lead Ben to the backstage door quickly. They push Ben  
through it. The cops stop the men who want to get backstage.

INT. GAMES BUILDING - EIGHT FLOOR - BACKSTAGE - EVENING

Ben walks to Dan. We hear the audience SCREAM and YELL.

Dan looks convulsed with amusement.

DAN  
Fine performance, Mr. Richards. God,  
I wish I could give you a bonus.  
Those fingers... superb!

BEN  
Give me the Goddamn camera and go fuck  
yourself.

DAN  
That's generically impossible, but  
here's the camera, your memory cards,  
and your money, minus my loan.

Dan hands Ben the camera, the memory cards, and the money.

BEN  
Where's the elevator?

Ben puts the equipment in a pocket of his overall.

DAN

Not so fast, Ben, you've got a few minutes left. Your twelve hours' leeway starts at 6:30 PM. I like you and I think you do well, so I'd like to give you a piece of advice.

Dan grabs Ben by the arm; they walk into a hallway.

DAN (CONT'D)

Stay close to your own kind and use your legs instead of using a weapon.

BEN

What if I could go up to the top?  
(Indicating his head up)  
Who could I kill up there?

They stop near an elevator. The door is open.

DAN

That's what I like about you, Richards. You think big.

Dan offers Ben his hand -- again.

DAN (CONT'D)

Mr. Richards, this is where you and I part company.

Ben lingers, but refuses the hand -- again. He enters the elevator. They stare at each other.

The elevator door closes.

DAN (CONT'D)

And remember... stay low.

EXT. GAMES BUILDING - EVENING

The elevator door opens at the side of the building. Ben appears. He inhales. He walks into an empty street. A COP glances at Ben. Ben quickly moves on.

Ben hails a taxi at the corner of a block.

BEN

Taxi.

INT. TAXI - HARDING - EVENING

Ben gets in. The CABBIE (40's) stares at him for a second.

CABBIE

Where, buddy?

BEN  
Robard Street!

The cabbie looks at the TV. Then at Ben.

CABBIE  
Hey, I just saw you on the TV. You're  
that guy Pritchard.

Ben slumps back into the cushions. The taxi moves.

BEN  
Pritchard... That's right.

EXT. HARDING - TAXI - EVENING

The taxi drives on the huge bridge over the canal.

INT. TAXI - HARDING - EVENING

The cabbie looks at Ben in his review mirror.

CABBIE  
Jesus, you got balls, buddy. You  
really do. Christ, they'll kill you.  
You must really have balls.

BEN  
That's right. Two of them. Just like  
you.

The cabbie is ecstatic.

CABBIE  
Two of them... Jesus... I've to report  
it... but Christ, I won't get \$100 for  
this. Cabbies gotta have at least one  
supporting witness.

Suddenly, Ben drops some money on the front seat.

BEN  
Let me out here.

The cabbie stops the car. He turns his head to Ben.

CABBIE  
Gee, I didn't say nothing, did I?

BEN  
No!

CABBIE  
Could you write me a note, saying you  
was in my cab.

Ben leaves the taxi.

BEN  
Get stuffed, maggot.

Ben SLAMS the door. He runs away.

EXT. HARDING - TAXI - EVENING

The cabbie opens the window.

CABBIE  
I hope they gonna take you for a ride,  
you cheap fuck.

Ben runs through a deserted ghostly construction site. He runs from a wide street into a narrow alley. He takes several turns. He stops at a high wooden gate. Ben looks around. He climbs up the wooden gate.

EXT. MOLIE'S HOUSE - EVENING

Ben drops down from the gate. He is in a backyard. He spies around.

Ben walks to a back-door. He KNOCKS on it... After a few seconds, a little peephole opens.

The SILHOUETTE of a man's face.

MOLIE  
Why don't you go away, pal. I never  
saw you.

BEN  
Come on, Molie. I've got money.

Ben waits. A heavy BOLT moves. The door opens.

MOLIE JERNIGAN, 60, white and long hair, appears in the doorway. He peeps outside. He grabs Ben and pulls him into the house. The door closes.

INT. MOLIE'S HOUSE - EVENING

Ben and Molie walk into an untidy and dusky room.

MOLIE  
What do you want, Ben?

BEN  
I need papers, Molie!

MOLIE  
What papers?

BEN

Driver's license. Military Service Card. Birth Registration Card. Street Identocard. Social Security Card.

MOLIE

Easy, sixty-buck job for anyone but you, Bennie.

BEN

You'll do it?

Ben and Molie stand at a desk.

MOLIE

For your wife, I don't put my head in a noose for a moron like Ben Richards.

Molie turns to the desk and thumbs on a light.

BEN

How long, Molie?

MOLIE

I'll hurry it, an hour for each.

BEN

Christ, five hours... Can I go?

Molie turns back at Ben.

MOLIE

Are you nuts, Bennie? The Network is four deep around your block. Anyone visiting your wife ends up in a cellar talking to a bunch of rubber clubs.

Molie turns back at the desk and starts to work.

MOLIE (CONT'D)

Even good friends don't need that scam. Got a name you want special on these papers?

Ben walks to a couch and sits down. A table, with cartons on it, is in front of him.

BEN

As long as it's English... Jesus, she needs food... and a doctor.

MOLIE

She sent someone out. They're okay. Stay away from them Ben... Look in the second box on the table.

Ben looks in the box. A disguise (gray hair, spectacles, mouth wedding, plastic teeth, and a suit) is in it.

BEN  
And you think that'll work?

Molie glances over his shoulder.

MOLIE  
Of course.

INT. HARDING - AIRPORT - NIGHT

Ben, dressed as JOHN GRIFFEN SPRINGER walks to a CHECKPOINT. COP 7 stands behind the counter.

COP 7  
Show me your ID, please!

Ben/Springer shows the ID card. Cop 7 looks at it, he also looks at a computer screen.

Cop 7 waves Ben/Springer through.

COP 7 (CONT'D)  
Thank you, have a good flight.

BEN/SPRINGER  
Thank you, officer.

Ben/Springer takes his ID card. He walks through a security gate. He looks anxious, but the alarm bell does not ring. Ben/Springer walks into a plane.

EXT. HARDING - AIRPORT - NIGHT

Planes land and take off.

EXT. NEW YORK - AIRPORT - NIGHT

Ben/Springer exits the airport. It drizzles. He walks to a taxi. He gets in.

EXT. NEW YORK - BRANT HOTEL - NIGHT

Ben/Springer leaves the taxi. He enters the BRANT HOTEL.

INT. NEW YORK - BRANT HOTEL - LOBBY - NIGHT

Ben/Springer stands at a counter, HOTEL CLERK 1 (30's) stands at the other side. He holds Ben's ID card.

HOTEL CLERK 1  
How long will you be staying, sir?

BEN/SPRINGER

Two days for now, all depends on the clients. I'm a businessman.

Hotel clerk 1 hands over a key and Ben's ID card.

HOTEL CLERK 1

Very well, here you are, sir.

BEN/SPRINGER

Thank you.

Ben/Springer turns around. Hotel clerk 1 writes in a book. Ben/Springer walks to the elevator. Hotel clerk 1 peeps at him.

INT. NEW YORK - BRANT HOTEL - HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Ben/Springer sets the camera next to the bed. He pulls a pillow slip over his head. He tips the record button. He lies down on the bed.

BEN/SPRINGER

Peekaboo, Ben Richards here. You can't see it, but I'm laughing at you shiteaters.

The camera stops recording. Ben/Springer is asleep.

INT. MOLIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Molie sits in a chair. He is tied and his face is swollen. A FEMALE HUNTER (20's) AND MALE HUNTER (30's), dark aura and dark clothing, investigate Ben's games overall.

EVAN MCCONE, 35, bald, five-eight, sophisticated, wearing a suit and round iron glasses, stands near Molie. McCone looks sophisticated, but there is something about him that gives you the creeps.

MCCONE

Please give me Mr. Richards's new name, Mr. Jernigan. I will stop the pain.

Molie hold his tongue. McCone nods at the Hunters.

The female Hunter ties Molie's arm on the armrest.

MOLIE

What are you doing, bitch?

FEMALE HUNTER

Sit tight, old fart.

The male Hunter pulls out a nail with a pincer. Molie SCREAMS from pain.

McCone punches Molie's crying face.

MCCONE

Tell me. Or do you want to lose more than a few nails?

MOLIE

Okay, I tell you, you bastard.

MCCONE

Yes?

MOLIE

Springer, his name is John Griffen Springer.

MCCONE

Thank you, Mr. Jernigan. On the contrary, nobody calls EVAN MCCONE a bastard.

McCone nods at the Hunters. They grab Molie.

EXT. MOLIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

An establishment's view. We hear Molie's SCREAM fading away.

INT. NEW YORK - BRANT HOTEL - ROOM - MORNING

Ben/Springer snaps awake. He is heavily sweating.

BEN/SPRINGER

Fuck!

INT. NEW YORK - BRANT HOTEL - LOBBY - MORNING

Ben/Springer puts the envelope in a mailbox. He looks around careful. He walks to the counter.

Hotel clerk 1 is waiting for him.

HOTEL CLERK 1

Good morning, Mr. ew --

BEN/SPRINGER

Springer, I seem to have struck oil, my man. I'll be occupying your excellent facility for an additional two days. May I pay in advance?

HOTEL CLERK 1

Certainly, sir!

Ben pays the money.

BEN/SPRINGER  
Here you are.

HOTEL CLERK 1  
Thank you, sir!

Ben/Springer turns away. He walks to the EMERGENCY DOOR next to the elevator. Ben/Springer peeps around, looking haunted. The counter is empty. He slips through the door.

INT. NEW YORK - BRANT HOTEL - EMERGENCY HALL - MORNING

Ben/Springer walks through the narrow hall. It ends with a door. Ben/Springer looks back. The hall is empty. He exits.

EXT. NEW YORK - BUS TERMINAL - MORNING

It is still gray and it drizzles. Ben/Springer walks into the cash deck of the New York Bus Terminal.

INT. NEW YORK - BUS TERMINAL - CASH DECK - MORNING

Ben/Springer stands at a counter. A CASHIER is behind it.

BEN/SPRINGER  
Boston.

CASHIER  
23 bucks, pal. Bus pulls out at ten o'clock sharp.

The station clock shows 09:54 AM.

EXT. NEW YORK - BUS TERMINAL - MORNING

Ben/Springer exits the cash deck.

COP 8 runs in his direction.

COP 8  
Hey! Hey, you!

Ben/Springer stares at cop 8. He is scared to death, unable to take flight.

Then cop 8 runs into another entrance of the bus terminal. A THIEF runs for the stairs, swinging a woman's purse.

COP 8 (CONT'D)  
Stop him!

Cop 8 runs through the terminal, disappearing from sight.

COP 8 (CONT'D)

Stop that guy!

Ben/Springer trembles. A hand grabs his shoulder. Ben/Springer is scared stiff and jumps. This is terrifying. He turns around slowly. He stares at the GREYHOUND DRIVER with the hand that grabbed Ben.

GREYHOUND DRIVER

If you wanna join me to Boston, Mister, you'd better get in. I'm leaving right now.

BEN/SPRINGER

Yeah... Okay... Thank you!

INT. GREYHOUND - NEW YORK - MORNING

Ben/Springer walks to the back seat. He collapses into it. He closes his eyes. The greyhound starts driving.

EXT. BOSTON - YMCA - EVENING

The greyhound departs from a bus-stop. Ben/Springer crosses a street. He walks to a building:

YMCA BOSTON.

INT. BOSTON - YMCA - LOBBY - EVENING

HOTEL CLERK 2 (30's) and a TINY BLACK BOY, nine years old, stand near a gum machine.

BLACK BOY

I lost my nickel, honky. I lost my fuckin' nickel.

HOTEL CLERK 2

Get out of here, or I'll call the house detective, kid. That's all. I'm done talking to you.

BLACK BOY

But that Goddam' machine took m'nickel and thass the only nickel I got.

Hotel clerk 2 walks away from the black boy.

HOTEL CLERK 2

I'm calling the house Dick right now.

The black boy kicks the gum machine.

BLACK BOY

Fuckin' white honky son of bitch.

The black boy runs off.

Hotel clerk 2 walks behind the counter, where Ben/Springer is already waiting.

HOTEL CLERK 2

You can't talk to niggers anymore.  
I'd keep them in cages if I ran The  
Network.

BEN/DEEGAN

He really loses a nickel?

HOTEL CLERK 2

S'pose so, but if I give him one, I'd  
have two hundred pickaninnies claiming  
the same thing. How long you'll be  
staying, Mr. ew?

BEN/DEEGAN

Deegan! I don't know. I'm in town on  
business.

HOTEL CLERK 2

That's \$15.50 for the night, Mr.  
Deegan.

Ben/Deegan pays cash.

HOTEL CLERK 2 (CONT'D)

Thank you, sir.

Hotel clerk 2 pushes a key over at Ben/Deegan.

BEN/DEEGAN

Thank you.

HOTEL CLERK 2

You're welcome, sir.

Ben/Deegan walks away. He walks to the elevators.

INT. BOSTON - YMCA - FIFTH FLOOR - PASSAGE - EVENING

Ben/Deegan walks through a narrow passage. He glances aside.

A very dirty BATHROOM

An AGED MAN (50's), wearing only a pajama bottoms, suddenly  
passes him -- that was scary. Ben/Deegan looks bewildered.  
The aged man walks into the bathroom.

Ben/Deegan sighs and moves on. He unlocks his room.

INT. BOSTON - YMCA - FIFTH FLOOR - HOTEL ROOM - EVENING

Ben/Deegan enters. He walks to the window and looks outside.

OUTSIDE

A clock shows 8:33 PM.

Ben/Deegan looks desperate.

BEN/DEEGAN

Fourteen hours... Jesus, it's just  
beginning... Fuck!

Ben/Deegan looks at the TV.

BEN/DEEGAN (CONT'D)

Shit... I missed the show.

Ben/Deegan walks to the bed and lies down. He closes his eyes.

INT. BOSTON - YMCA - FIFTH FLOOR - HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

Ben/Deegan, dressed in his pants, looks outside.

OUTSIDE

PEDESTRIANS hustle busily up and down the shopping street. A car stops and the CIGAR MAN, 30, handsome, blond hair, well built, and smoking a ten-inch cigar, gets out. The driver of the car, a DUDE (20's), wearing a brown and white hunting jacket, also gets out.

Ben/Deegan grabs a towel, his clothes, and walks to the door.

INT. BOSTON - YMCA - FIFTH FLOOR - BATH ROOM - MORNING

Ben/Deegan takes a shower in a dirty tub-bath.

He, dressed now, stands in front of a mirror and turns away.

He leaves the bathroom. Suddenly the dude walks through the passage and almost BUMPS into Ben/Deegan. He scares stiff -- this almost makes your heart stop beating.

Ben/Deegan sighs, waits, and then moves on into the passage.

INT. BOSTON - YMCA - FIFTH FLOOR - HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

Ben/Deegan enters. He walks to the window. He peeps outside.

OUTSIDE

A NEWSPAPER BUM walks around the street corner and disappears. THREE MEN sit at a bus stop. We suddenly hear someone POUNDING on the door.

Ben/Deegan stiffens like a bolt. He keeps quiet.

DRUNK MAN (O.S.)  
 Frankie? You in there, Frankie? You  
 eat shit, Frankie-baby!

Footsteps move away from the door. Ben/Deegan heart slips slowly down from his throat. He turns back at the window.

OUTSIDE

The newspaper bum idles along again, but slowly. More cops walk around. They occasionally look at Ben's hotel room. At the bus stop, a bus departs. One man is still sitting at the bus stop. He looks up at Ben.

Ben/Deegan backs aside from the window.

OUTSIDE

Two men exit a cab. The cigar man leans against a lamppost. A COP walks to him, nods, and walks away. The cigar man looks up at Ben's place.

Ben/Deegan turns away from the window.

BEN/DEEGAN  
 Shit... They got me... Fuck!

INT. BOSTON - YMCA - FIFTH FLOOR - PASSAGE - MORNING

The door opens. Ben/Deegan surveys left and right. He walks into the passage. He rushes into the bathroom.

INT. BOSTON - YMCA - FIFTH FLOOR - BATH ROOM - MORNING

Ben/Deegan walks to the sink. He pulls off an iron wire from a toothbrush holder.

INT. BOSTON - YMCA - FIFTH FLOOR - PASSAGE - MORNING

Ben/Deegan leaves the bathroom. He walks through the passage and to the elevator. He pushes the call button.

He looks around, restless, waiting for the elevator to come.

BEN/DEEGAN  
 Come on! Come on!

INT. BOSTON - YMCA - LOBBY - MORNING

The cigar man crosses the street. He walks to the YMCA.

INT. BOSTON - YMCA - FIFTH FLOOR - ELEVATOR - MORNING

Ben/Deegan enters the elevator. He jams the iron wire into the slot. He pushes the button: BASEMENT. A small tendril of blue smoke curled out of the slot. Nothing happens. Ben/Deegan looks desperate. Then suddenly the door closes. Ben/Deegan looks somewhat relieved.

IN THE PASSAGE

The dude runs towards the elevator.

DUDE

Hold on.

Then the door closes. The elevator moves down. Ben/Deegan removes the Springer/Deegan disguise.

INT. BOSTON - YMCA - BASEMENT - MORNING

In a dark, dusty, and messy basement, the elevator door slides open. Ben steps out. He throws away the Springer/Deegan disguise. We hear WATER DRIP and RATS SQUEAK. Ben sneaks forward. Suddenly THE FURNACE KICKS ON with a lot of noise. Ben is scared to terror.

BEN

Wohh... Fuck!

Ben relaxes a bit.

Piles of old papers are drenched with rat holes and rats. LITTLE RED EYES glittering in the dark. A litter of tools is in front of a large fuse box. Ben takes a crowbar.

Ben searches the ground, kicking rubble.

BEN (CONT'D)

Where's that fucking storm drain?

Ben walks to a big and rusty cover.

BEN (CONT'D)

All right!

Ben levers the cover with the crowbar. It CLASHES on the floor. Rats SQUEAK. Ben looks up, afraid. He turns the cover partly back on the pipe. Ben walks to a pile of paper. He grabs a sheet. Ben walks to the furnace. He turns the sheet into a spill.

INT. BOSTON - YMCA - LOBBY - MORNING

The cigar man talks to hotel clerk 2. We cannot hear what they say.

INT. BOSTON - YMCA - BASEMENT - MORNING

Ben stands near the oil tank of the furnace. He holds the spill in his armpit. Ben grabs a dog-eared book of matches. Three matchsticks are in it.

Ben lights the first match, but it gutters out in a draft.

BEN

Fuck!

Ben lights the second match.

It falls from his trembling hands.

BEN (CONT'D)

Goddamn!

INT. BOSTON - YMCA - LOBBY - MORNING

The cigar man saunters through the lobby, spying around. The dude jumps down the stairs.

INT. BOSTON - YMCA - BASEMENT - MORNING

Ben lights the third match. He flames the spill. Ben tucks the flaming spill in the paper wall near the oil tank.

He walks to the fuse box. Rats squeak, maybe sensing what was to come. Ben smashes the tubular fuses with the crowbar.

The fire spreads.

EXT. BOSTON - YMCA - MORNING

The lights of the YMCA went out, irregular.

INT. BOSTON - YMCA - LOBBY - MORNING

The cigar man and the dude deliberate. The lights went out. They look around, wondering. What happened?

INT. BOSTON - YMCA - BASEMENT - MORNING

Ben smashes the fuses. The lights went out. There is only the FLICKERING LIGHT of burning paper.

Ben walks to the storm drain. He sits down, his legs in the pipe. He slowly eases in. The cover drops into place with a clang.

INT. BOSTON - YMCA - STORM DRAIN - MORNING

Ben slides down the slimy pipe. He jams in a narrow part.

Ben sweats and he is covered with slime.

BEN

Shit!

Ben wriggles and groans. His eyes show panic.

BEN (CONT'D)

Come on.

The vented cover throws prison-bar shadows on Ben's face. He wriggles. We hear in distance the FIRE CRACKLING and we hear what look like men SHOUTING, 'WHERE IS HE', 'CLEAR', and 'GO'. However, we are not sure about that.

Suddenly Ben pops down through the pipe, launched like a champagne cork from a tight bottleneck. He SHRIEKS. Ben glides down, looking like he is in some kind of free fall water snake.

INT. BOSTON - YMCA - BASEMENT - MORNING

SHADOWS -- or MAN? -- search the basement.

The oil tank EXPLODES.

Parts of BODY'S -- or RATS? -- fly around.

INT. BOSTON - YMCA - LOBBY - MORNING

The elevator door bursts out. The SHOOTING FLAME roasts the cigar man.

INT. BOSTON - YMCA - STORM DRAIN - MORNING

Ben humps down on his buttocks. He drops down the storm drain. Ben flies through the air. He lands in a sewer.

EXT. BOSTON - YMCA - MORNING

The inferno is complete. Explosions and yellow-white flashes of fire run through the YMCA. People flee in panic.

INT. BOSTON - YMCA - SEWER - MORNING

Ben sits down in the sewage. He raises and stares into the storm drain.

A red glow is inside the storm drain.

Ben SPLASHES into the sewer. After a while, he holds and looks up at a ladder in a manhole.

A little daylight shines through the cover in the manhole.

Ben sits down on a dry spot. He looks exhausted. Ben closes his eyes.

FADE TO BLACK:

EXT. BOSTON - EVENING

STACEY, 11, black, and grubby, leans against a building. In distance we hear police sirens. Stacey smokes a cigarette. His eyes grow big.

The cover of a manhole rises. Stacey looks it. The cover suddenly slides aside with a clang. Ben boosts himself out of the manhole.

Stacey GRUNTS and runs. Ben looks up and chases Stacey.

Stacey trips over his own feet.

STACEY

Oh... shit.

Stacey tries to get up, scrambling.

Ben grabs him. Stacey really looks afraid.

STACEY (CONT'D)

Leave me alone, you son of bitch.

BEN

Sshh. Shut up. Shut up!

STACEY

You ain't the devil.

BEN

You'll think I am if you yell.

STACEY

I ain't gonna. What you think, I wanna get my balls cut off?

Ben releases Stacey.

BEN

You know a quiet place?

STACEY

Then you'll kill me!

BEN

I won't. Come on. I'm on the run.

Stacey hesitates.

STACEY  
Okay... Come on.

They walk into an alley.

INT. BOSTON - SHELTER - EVENING

In the dark, a small bulb flickers and lights up. It throws a weak glow on Ben and Stacey's faces.

STACEY  
You better not kill me. Bradley will make you shit your boot and eat it.

BEN  
I'm not doing any killings. What's your name, son?

STACEY  
Stacey.

BEN  
Okay Stacey. Who is Bradley?

STACEY  
My brother.

BEN  
Listen Stacey, I give you three bucks if you bring your brother over here... Okay?

STACEY  
You ain't got no three bucks.

Ben hands Stacey two dollars bills. Stacey stares at it.

STACEY (CONT'D)  
Jesus.

BEN  
There's another one if you bring your brother over here.

STACEY  
Won't do you no good try to kill Bradley. He'll make you shit your boot --

BEN  
And eat it. I know. You run and get him. Wait until he's alone.

Stacey moves to the exit.

BEN (CONT'D)

And when you bring the cops, you won't get anything.

Stacey pauses. He looks back over his shoulder.

STACEY

You stupid if you think I do that. I hate them fucking oinkers worse than the devil.

Stacey leaves the shelter and the board shuts it off.

Ben turns off the light. He leans back and dozes off.

FADE TO BLACK:

In the dark:

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

If he broke my light, I'm gonna make him pay.

BRADLEY (O.S.)

Sshhht.

The VOICES rip Ben to wakefulness. The board moves. The faintly figures of Stacey and an adult appear. The board shuts the exit. The bulb lights.

BRADLEY, 18, black, raw, and tall, looks at Ben with a mixture of hate and interest. Suddenly his eyes widen. He looks curious amused.

BRADLEY (CONT'D)

You're that guy on the TV. You offed the YMCA on Huntington Avenue.

STACEY

You gonna cut him, Bradley?

BRADLEY

(Nodding 'NO')

They say you fried five cops. That probably means fifteen. Man, you're hotter than the sun.

Ben shrugs his shoulders.

BRADLEY (CONT'D)

Where are you going to?

BEN

I don't know... Out of Boston.

BRADLEY

You gotta come with Stacey and me. We gotta talk.

BEN

All right... Fine with me.

BRADLEY

We go the back way. The pigs are  
cruising tonight. Now I know why.

They move out. Ben slips Stacey a one-dollar bill.

INT. BOSTON - STACEY'S HOME - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

A GLANCE IN THE KITCHEN

BRADLEY'S MOTHER (55's), black, grayish, looking decrepit,  
moves about the kitchen. She prepares a meal. She chews a  
cigarette, blowing out puffs of smoke.

Ben, cleaned now, and Bradley sit on a few old chairs in a  
worn out living room. We hear a little girl SCREAMING.

BEN

Who's that?

BRADLEY

My Sister Cassie. Five years old, she  
has cancer in both lungs.

BEN

What?

BRADLEY

Why're you doing it, anyway? Why you  
being their sucker?

BEN

My little girl has pneumonia. She  
cries all the time. And medicine and  
a doctor cost money.

BRADLEY

What a world! Maybe you'll go the  
whole month. Man, you'd have to buy a  
fucking freight train to haul  
\$1,000,000,000 off.

A GLANCE IN THE KITCHEN

Bradley's mother stands behind the cooker.

BRADLEY'S MOTHER

Don't swear, but praise the lord!

Bradley pays no attention to his mother.

BRADLEY

You would be on easy street then. You  
got two days already.

BEN

No, the game's rigged. I have to send two memory cards every day.

BRADLEY

Why not e-mailing it?

BEN

I think they trace me by checking the postmark.

BRADLEY

Easy to beat that.

BEN

Oh. How?

BRADLEY

Later. Mom, when's that stuff gonna be ready?

BRADLEY'S MOTHER (O.S.)

She's comin on.

BRADLEY

First you have to leave Boston.

BEN

How?

Bradley's mother enters the room with a hot dish.

Ben and Bradley raise and walk to the dinner table.

BRADLEY

Suppose we get a car. One of my buddies drives it to Manchester. I drive you in another car.

The three of them sit down at the dinner table.

BRADLEY (CONT'D)

Then we switch.

Bradley's mother fills the plates with meat sauce.

BEN

That's pretty dangerous for you.

BRADLEY

Oh, I wasn't gonna do it free.

The three of them eat. Suddenly a key SCRATCHES in a lock. They all look suspicious. Bradley rises slowly.

Stacey comes in, carrying a brown bag.

STACEY

It's prime dope.

Bradley sighs of relieve, and sits down.

Bradley's mother rises.

BRADLEY'S MOTHER

Good. Come sit and have dinner.

Stacey hands his mother the brown bag. She walks away.

Stacey's eyes widen. He stares at the plates on the table.

STACEY

Jesus, there's meat in it.

Stacey sits down. He fills a plate. Bradley grins at him. Stacey eats.

Ben lights a cigarette.

BEN

If they catch us, you'll go in for the long bomb.

STACEY

Any pig grunts at Bradley, he make 'em shit their boot and eat it.

BRADLEY

You're dribbling on your shirt, skinner?

BEN

Who's gonna take care of the boy?

BRADLEY

He'll take care of himself and Ma, don't you, Stacey?

Stacey nods.

Bradley rises.

BRADLEY (CONT'D)

Get some sleep, Ben.

INT. BOSTON - STACEY'S HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT

The bedsprings shift creakily as Bradley lay down on it. Ben sleeps on a blanket on the ground. We hear Cassie CRYING. In distance we hear POLICE SIRENS.

INT. BOSTON - STACEY'S HOME - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Ben watches TV.

Bradley enters.

BRADLEY  
How was your day?

BEN  
Swell! You send the memory cards?

BRADLEY  
All set, we go tonight!

BEN  
Now?

Bradley sits down. We hear The Running Man LEAD-IN.

BRADLEY  
Don't you want to see yourself coast-  
to-coast?

INT. GAMES BUILDING - EIGHT FLOOR - ONSTAGE - EVENING

Bobby stares deadpan at the camera.

Behind Bobby, ON SCREEN

A BLOWUP of Ben as John Springer.

Bobby points at it.

BOBBY  
Watch. This wolf walks among you.  
Yesterday he killed five young fine  
police officers. Where is he tonight?  
Look! Look at him! And look at his  
first memory card.

ON SCREEN

Ben sits in a room. The furniture is draped.

BEN  
All of you watching this, people in  
the Developments. The Network doesn't  
want you to meet each other and talk.  
I want to tell you about a monstrous  
conspiracy. The Network is lying --

ON SCREEN

Ben's mouth keeps moving, the sound fades away.

Bobby walks towards his audience.

BOBBY  
We seem to have lost audio, but we  
don't need to listen to any more of  
this murderer's radical ravings to  
understand what we're dealing with.

Bobby looks like a demagogue.

BOBBY (CONT'D)  
What will you do if you see him?

The audience SCREAMS 'TURN HIM IN'.

Bobby grins.

BOBBY (CONT'D)  
And what are we going to do when we  
find him?

The audience SCREAMS 'KILL HIM'.

Bobby points at the screen.

BOBBY (CONT'D)  
And this is his second card.

ON SCREEN

Ben opens his mouth, but his lips seem to move around  
different words - but who is going to notice that?

BEN  
Fuck all pigs. Fuck the Games  
Authority. I'm gonna kill every pig I  
see. I'm gonna --

The sound fades away. Bobby stares at the audience.

BOBBY  
Behold the man. This man would lie,  
cheat, and kill. Phil!

PHIL (O.S.)  
Ben Richards! Are you watching?

ON SCREEN

The faces of young, clear-featured cops appear. They look  
fresh, full of sap, and heartbreaking vulnerable.

PHIL (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
If so, you've been paid your dirty  
blood money, an extra \$500, \$100 for  
each of these five, young fine men.

ON SCREEN

PHOTOS of their FAMILIES, wives smiling, and laughing  
children. The photo's beam pleasant emotions.

PHIL (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
(Hoarse with emotion)  
And these were there families. Five  
police officers, five wives widowed  
and nineteen orphaned children.

The audience hushes in desperation.

Bobby stares in the camera. In his b.g. ON SCREEN we see a photo of a young mother and her young son.

BOBBY

Oh yes, you work cheap, Ben Richards.  
Somewhere, even now, a mother is  
telling her little boy that daddy  
won't be home ever again because a  
greedy maniac with a gun killed him.

A YOUNG GIRL in the studio audience JUMPS up.

YOUNG GIRL

Killer. Vile, dirty murderer.

The audience reacts. They SCREAM and CALL, 'MURDERER', 'COP KILLER', and 'STRIKE HIM DEAD'.

Bobby put up his hands, trying to speak down the audience.

BOBBY

Behold the man. The man who lives by  
violence shall die by it. So let  
every man's hand be raised against Ben  
Richards.

People in the audience raise their hands.

INT. BOSTON - STACEY'S HOME - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Ben pounds his fist against an armrest.

BEN

The bastards. Those weren't my words.  
They just made it up.

Bradley turns down the TV.

BRADLEY

That's what you're dealing with. How  
about it?

BEN

Maybe I kill 'em. Maybe, before I'm  
done, I get up the Games Building,  
hunt up the maggots who wrote this  
shit and kill 'em all.

STACEY (O.S.)

(Out bursting)  
Don't talk no more!

Ben turns his head to Stacey.

Stacey rises from the table and runs into the kitchen.

STACEY (CONT'D)  
Don't talk no more about it!

Bradley rises.

BRADLEY  
Let's go!

EXT. BOSTON - BRADLEY'S CAR - EVENING

Bradley looks like a sober executive. He and Ben stand at the trunk of a sedan.

BEN  
You look good... damn incredible.

BRADLEY  
I thought you'd enjoy the transformation. Listen, they check every tenth or twelfth car... Here, take this!

Bradley hands Ben a large revolver.

BEN  
Thanks man.

BRADLEY  
Just get in the trunk.

Ben climbs in the trunk. He lies down.

Bradley stands aside.

BRADLEY (CONT'D)  
Comfortable?

BEN  
Perfect.

Bradley closes the trunk. He gets in. Bradley drives off.

EXT. BOSTON - BRADLEY'S CAR - EVENING

The car stops at a traffic light.

INT. BRADLEY'S CAR - BOSTON - EVENING

A cruiser stops beside him. The PASSENGER COP smiles at Bradley. Bradley smiles back. Green light. Bradley pulls up.

In the REAR VIEW MIRROR

The cruiser drives behind Bradley. Then it turns right.

Bradley looks relieved, but suddenly his eyes widen.

EXT. BOSTON - ROADBLOCK - BRADLEY'S CAR - EVENING

Three cruisers block the road. There is a little gap. Bradley's car is first in line. The DRIVER of the car at the checkpoint closes his trunk. He gets in. Cop 9 urges Bradley to move forward. Bradley moves to the checkpoint.

INT. BRADLEY'S CAR - TRUNK - BOSTON - ROADBLOCK - EVENING

Ben's eyes move like trapped rabbits.

INT. BRADLEY'S CAR - BOSTON - ROADBLOCK - EVENING

Bradley stops at the checkpoint.

COP 9  
Step out your vehicle, sir.

INT. BRADLEY'S CAR - TRUNK - BOSTON - ROADBLOCK - EVENING

Ben closes his eyes, licking his lips.

COP 9 (O.S.)  
License and registration, please.

We hear a DOOR close.

EXT. BOSTON - ROADBLOCK - BRADLEY'S CAR - EVENING

Cop 9 checks the papers.

COP 9  
What's in the trunk, Mister?

Bradley and cop 9 walk to the trunk. Cop 9 investigates the car.

BRADLEY  
Oh, a spare cylinder that doesn't work half right. I get the key.

INT. BRADLEY'S CAR - TRUNK - BOSTON - ROADBLOCK - EVENING

We hear someone WHACKING the top of the trunk. Ben bits back a scream.

COP 9 (O.S.)  
If I wanted it, I'd ask it.

EXT. BOSTON - ROADBLOCK - BRADLEY'S CAR - EVENING

Bradley and cop 9 walk back to the driver's door.

COP 9

Move on.

Bradley gets in.

BRADLEY

Hang tight, fella. Hope you get him.

INT. BRADLEY'S CAR - TRUNK - BOSTON - ROADBLOCK - EVENING

Ben closes his eyes.

COP 9 (O.S.)

Drive on, Mister. Move your ass.

Bradley accelerates.

EXT. U.S.A. - BRADLEY'S CAR - EVENING

Bradley's car drives on a highway in the woods. The car approaches a town.

A sign besides the road says this is:

MANCHESTER

EXT. MANCHESTER - U-PARK-IT - BRADLEY'S CAR - EVENING

Bradley's car is in front of a barrier of the U-PARK-IT.

INT. BRADLEY'S CAR - TRUNK - MANCHESTER - EVENING

Ben blinks sluggishly. He looks sick. It looks like the car settles in an idle, then the engine dies.

INT. BEN'S CAR - MANCHESTER - U-PARK-IT - EVENING

Ben and Bradley smoke a cigarette.

BRADLEY

I'll tell you how I set it up. I reserved a room for you in The Winthrop House. You're Ogden Grassner. Can you remember that?

BEN

Yes. How much do I owe you?

BRADLEY  
Six hundred bucks.

BEN  
Bullshit. That doesn't cover even the expenses.

BRADLEY  
It does. Put us on easy street. Send us a million if you make it.

Ben hands Bradley the money.

BEN  
Do you think I will?

A BUZZER. Bradley smiles a soft, sad smile.

BRADLEY  
I gotto go.

BEN  
Someone'll kill you for this.

BRADLEY  
Would be a bad day for the maggots.

Bradley exits. He sticks his head through the window.

BRADLEY (CONT'D)  
And Bennie, you send me the memory cards. I'll mail them to Games from Boston.

BEN  
I'll be recognized here.

BRADLEY  
Look at the backseat.

Ben looks at A LONG BOX at the backseat.

BEN  
Thanks. How long do you think it will be safe in here?

BRADLEY  
I don't know. Your reservation's for a week. But play it by ear. And if the heat turns on, go to this address.

Bradley hands Ben a note.

BRADLEY (CONT'D)  
Fella in Portland, Maine. It'll cost, but they're safe.

BEN  
Thank you.

BRADLEY

And when they get you, take a few  
along.

Ben and Bradley shake hands.

BEN

Thanks anyway... for everything.

Bradley nods and rushes off. Ben looks at the note and stores it. In the b.g. Bradley drives away.

EXT. MANCHESTER - WINTHROP HOUSE - EVENING

Ben/Grassner TAPS a cane. He enters The Winthrop House. He misses a step and stumbles. COP 10 assists him.

INT. MANCHESTER - WINTHROP HOUSE - HOTEL ROOM - EVENING

Ben stands in front of the window, staring at the street.

ACROSS THE STREET

A LUNCHROOM. It is quiet.

Ben turns away from the window. He installs the camera. He lies down on the bed. We hear a CLICK. Ben is asleep.

INT. MANCHESTER - WINTHROP HOUSE - LOBBY - MORNING

Ben/Grassner puts an envelope in the mailbox. HOTEL CLERK 3 (30's) passes him by inches.

HOTEL CLERK 3

Good morning, Father.

Ben/Grassner JUMPS. He cocks his head like a blind man.

BEN/GRASSNER

Good morning to you, my son.

Ben/Grassner walks to the stairs. He TAPS his cane.

EXT. MANCHESTER - WINTHROP HOUSE - AFTERNOON

An establishment view of The Winthrop House.

INT. MANCHESTER - WINTHROP HOUSE - HOTEL ROOM - AFTERNOON

Ben/Grassner reads a book. A POUND on the door. He stops reading. Ben/Grassner puts on his glasses. He raises.

Another KNOCK. He walks to the door.

BEN/GRASSNER

Yes?

DELIVERY WOMAN (O.S.)

Dinner, referent.

Ben/Grassner opens the door.

A DELIVERY WOMAN (25's) enters. She carries a dinner-tray.

DELIVERY WOMAN (CONT'D)

Good evening, father.

BEN/GRASSNER

Good evening.

The delivery woman puts the dinner-tray on the table.

She spies through the room.

DELIVERY WOMAN

Well, have a good meal, Father.

BEN/GRASSNER

Thank you.

The delivery woman exits. She closes the door behind her.

Ben/Grassner thumbs on the TV. He sits down. He eats while he watches The Running Man on the TV.

INT. GAMES BUILDING - EIGHT FLOOR - ONSTAGE - EVENING

Bobby is onstage. In the b.g. ON SCREEN is Ben's face. The audience SCREAMS.

BOBBY

That monster that goes under the name  
Ben Richards is still on the loose...  
but...

Behind Bobby, ON SCREEN Ben's face turns into Laughlin's.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

...I'm pleased to give you some good  
news... We've got Laughlin.

ON SCREEN

Laughlin's riddled, sagged body is carried out of A SHED. We hear the audience BOOZING and HISSING.

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

And we all know that Laughlin was the  
second runner... Two kids from Topeka,  
Kansas, observed Laughlin. Billy and  
Mary Cowles.

The audience CHEERS. Behind Bobby, ON SCREEN are BILLY AND MARY COWLES, 12, black, shown grinning into a camera.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

And I'm thrilled to have these two Topeka's number one citizens as my guests in tomorrow's show of The Running Man.

The audience CHEERS.

ON SCREEN

Laughlin's dead body is displayed on a table.

Bobby stares into the camera.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

And Ben, I know you're watching. Look at Laughlin. Take a good look at him. That is your destiny!

INT. MANCHESTER - WINTHROP HOUSE - HOTEL ROOM - EVENING

Ben rises and turns down the TV. He turns in for the night.

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. HUNTER'S HOUSE - CELLAR - NIGHT

In the center of a vague and shimmy room, Bradley sits in a straight wooden chair with leather straps over his arms and legs. It looks like the chair. Bradley's head is shaved, like that of a penitent. We hear water DRIP, darkly. McCone and the male Hunter walk around.

The female Hunter PUNCHES Bradley in the face.

BRADLEY

I ain't the man!

FEMALE HUNTER

Yes you are, little brother.

McCone steps forward. He holds Bradley's head.

McCone pushes a pin through Bradley's cheek. Bradley SCREAMS from pain.

MCCONE

Are you the man?

BRADLEY

Suck it.

McCone pulls back. He hands the pin at the female Hunter.

She slides the pin into Bradley's eyeball. Bradley goes BANANAS. The female Hunter pulls the pin back. Bradley's eye sticks at the end of the pin.

McCone looks at it and then at Bradley.

MCCONE

Are you the man, little brother?

BRADLEY

Poke it up your ass, bastard.

MCCONE

You are the man.

Bradley LAUGHS. McCone and the Hunters step back from him.

Out of the shadow, Billy and Mary Cowles trip gaily. They skip around Bradley. They SING: 'WHO IS AFRAID OF THE BIG BAD WOLF?'

Bradley twists in his chair. He looks desperate.

BRADLEY

Noooooooooooooooooooo.

Billy and Mary heads elongate, growing dark with blood. They open their mouths. In the caves within, fangs twinkle like razor blades.

Bradley CRIES terrified. The monsters SNARL and ROAR at him.

BRADLEY (CONT'D)

No... Please... No.

BILLY

Are you the man?

BRADLEY

I'll tell. I ain't the man.

MARY

Who is the man?

BRADLEY

Ben Richards... He is the man.

BILLY

Where is the man, little brother?

Billy and Mary skip around Bradley. They SING 'WHO IS AFRAID OF THE BIG BAD WOLF?' Bradley twists in his chair.

Billy strains Bradley's corded neck.

BRADLEY

No... I'll tell. G-G-God... Oh God.  
He's in... He's in --

INT. MANCHESTER - WINTHROP HOUSE - HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

Ben wakes up. He sweats.

BEN

Jesus!

INT. MANCHESTER - WINTHROP HOUSE - LOBBY - MORNING

Ben/Grassner puts the tapes in the mailbox. He TAPS clumsily through the lobby.

Hotel clerk 3 looks up.

HOTEL CLERK 3

Going out, Father Grassner?

BEN/GRASSNER

Yes I am.

HOTEL CLERK 3

Well, have a nice day, Father.

BEN/GRASSNER

Thank you!

Ben/Grassner bumps into a potted plant on his way out. He MUMBLES.

EXT. MANCHESTER - WINTHROP HOUSE - MORNING

It is busy with street sellers and cops. People seem to hang around. It looks like some of them spy at him. Ben/Grassner stumbles out of the hotel. Ben taps his way down the stairs.

Cop 10 looks at him.

COP 10

Have a nice day, Father.

BEN/GRASSNER

Thank you.

A BOOR (40's) knocks Ben/Grassner over. Ben/Grassner's glasses shuffle on the little stairs.

The boor looks back at him, but moves on.

BOOR

Watch where you're going, old fart.

Cop 10 hurries to Ben/Grassner. Cop 10 picks up the glasses. Ben/Grassner gets up. Cop 10 returns the glasses.

Cop 10 looks at Ben/Grassner, somewhat suspicious.

COP 10  
Are you all right, Father?

BEN/GRASSNER  
Yes, thank you.

Ben/Grassner puts on the glasses. He moves on. Cop 10 looks suspicious after him.

EXT. MANCHESTER - U-PARK-IT - MORNING

Ben/Grassner leaves a store. He carries a long box. He crosses the street. Ben/Grassner walks into the U-PARK-IT.

EXT. MANCHESTER - U-PARK-IT - MORNING

Ben/Grassner walks to his car. He gets in.

INT. BEN'S CAR - MANCHESTER - U-PARK-IT - MORNING

Ben/Grassner removes the Grassner disguise. He tosses it in the back of the car. He takes a bandage out of the box. Ben wraps a bandage around his skull.

Suddenly somebody passes the car at the back real close.

Ben scares stiff. He looks around, but nothing happens. He pulls a crumpled piece of paper out of his pocket:

B-94 STATE STREET, PORTLAND  
THE BLUE DOOR, GUESTS  
ELTON (& VIRGINIA) PARRAKIS.

Ben puts away the note. He starts the car and drives away.

INT. BEN'S CAR - MANCHESTER - MORNING

Ben turns on a highway.

A sign:

ROUTE 17 PORTLAND

A cruiser drives up with him. The COPS look at Ben. The PASSENGER COP holds a microphone. Ben grins at them. The cruiser moves in front of Ben's car. The cops talk to each other. Suddenly a speed-hog tears by. The cruiser accelerates and chases the speed-hog. Ben heaves a sigh of relief.

EXT. PORTLAND - BEN'S CAR - AFTERNOON

A sign:

## PORTLAND

Ben's lonely car drives cautiously through a street of blasted, ancient brownstones.

## A PARK

It looks ashen. Ben pulls to the curb near the park.

## EXT. PORTLAND - ELTON'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Ben gets out. The area is abandoned. He walks to a crumbling and soot-encrusted building.

Ben makes his way up the stone steps. He ends up at a pale blue door. Ben KNOCKS on it. He waits. Nothing happens.

## THE PARK

October branches lose their leaves.

Ben KNOCKS again. He pauses at the door, then:

VIRGINIA (O.S.)

Who's out there? I don't buy nothing.  
Go away.

A peephole opens with a SQUEAK and someone peeps through it.

BEN

I was told to visit you.

VIRGINIA

I don't know you.

BEN

I was told to ask for Elton Parrakis.

A bolt moves and the door opens.

VIRGINIA PARRAKIS, 60, gray, scrawny, but unlined face, gazes at Ben. She looks muddled and afraid.

VIRGINIA

I am Virginia Parrakis. I'm Elton's  
mother. Come in.

Virginia steps back. Ben steps in. The door closes.

## INT. PORTLAND - ELTON'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

The kitchen looks old and shimmy. Ben sits at a table. Virginia stands at the stove, making two cups of tea.

VIRGINIA

Elton works. You're from that fellow  
in Boston, aren't you?

BEN  
Yes, Mrs. Parrakis.

VIRGINIA  
I told Eltie that what that Bradley's doing is against the law. It was his idea that Eltie should build an air pollution station. I told him it would mean prison. But he doesn't listen to me anymore.

BEN  
I --

Virginia warms her hands over the gas ring.

VIRGINIA  
I suppose they caught you testing smog and now you're on the run.

She now turns to Ben. Her eyes are hooded and bewildered.

VIRGINIA (CONT'D)  
It don't matter. It's the blacks. Rabble-rousers. I ain't so...

Virginia stares at Ben, like seeing him for the first time.

VIRGINIA (CONT'D)  
Oh, God have mercy.

She looks at the TV above the stove. She looks back at Ben.

BEN  
Mrs. Parrakis, please?

VIRGINIA  
No... No, no... oh no.

Virginia grabs a knife from the stove. She advances on Ben. She is furious.

VIRGINIA (CONT'D)  
Get out of here.

Ben gets up. He backs away slowly from Virginia.

VIRGINIA (CONT'D)  
Get out.

The kitchen door opens.

ELTON (O.S.)  
Mom, I'm home.

Ben and Virginia freeze and look at the door. ELTON PARRAKIS, 30, fat, baby face, lackluster blond hair, enters.

Elton looks thoughtfully at Virginia.

ELTON (CONT'D)  
Put that knife down, Mom.

The crumbling of defeat began to putty her face. She shrinks away.

VIRGINIA  
No. You have to make him go. He's that bad man. That... that Richards. I don't want you to go in jail.

Elton walks to Virginia.

ELTON  
I'm not going to jail, Mom.

Virginia DROPS the knife, and collapses in Elton's arms. Elton enfolds Virginia and rocks her gently.

ELTON (CONT'D)  
Come on, Mom. Please, don't cry.

Elton smiles at Ben, apologetic.

ELTON (CONT'D)  
Mr. Richards is Bradley Throckmorton's good friend. He is going to be with us for a couple of days.

Virginia SHRIEKS. She disengages from Elton with a rush. She CLAPS a hand over her mouth.

VIRGINIA  
No.

ELTON  
Yes, Mom. Yes he is. And I'm going to take Mr. Richards upstairs and show him his room.

VIRGINIA  
Mr. Richards? He's Poison!

ELTON  
Please come with me Mr. Richards.

Ben obediently follows Elton through the door. Virginia looks at them. She is full of disbelieve.

INT. PORTLAND - ELTON'S HOUSE - STAIRCASE - AFTERNOON

Ben follows Elton up the shadowy staircase.

BEN  
Maybe I better go.

They walk into a narrow passage. Elton stops.

Elton opens a door.

ELTON

This is your room.

INT. PORTLAND - ELTON'S HOUSE - ROOM - AFTERNOON

The door opens on this dusty damp room. Ben and Elton enter.

ELTON

It's a poor accommodation, but you may stay as long as you want. I'll watch after my Mom.

BEN

I better go.

ELTON

You can't, you know. The head bandage didn't even fool Mom for long. I'll secure your car. We'll talk later. Give me your keys, please.

Ben hands Elton the keys. Elton exits. He closes the door. Ben walks to the window. We hear a ponderously DESCENDING TREAD on the stairs.

OUTSIDE

Elton emerges on the front walk below. He walks at Ben's car.

Ben turns. He removes the head bandage. He tosses it into a corner. He lies down on the bed. Ben is looking into space. We hear Virginia weeping. Ben dozes off.

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. PORTLAND - ELTON'S HOUSE - ROOM - EVENING

In the dark, we hear a HEAVY TREAD on the stairs. Ben wakes up. It looks like he almost lost his bearings. He swings his feet onto the floor. A KNOCK.

Elton steps in.

ELTON

All set. My mother will mail your memory cards to Cleveland.

Ben looks confused.

BEN

Cleveland? They go to Boston.

ELTON

They go to Cleveland now. Bradley's on the run.

BEN

Jesus, will they catch him?

ELTON

I don't know. He's got quite an intelligence network.

Elton's eyes slip away from Ben. The SOUND OF SIRENS faintly rises.

Suddenly, Virginia stands in the doorway, her arms crossed.

VIRGINIA

(To Ben)

I've called the police. Now you'll have to go.

Elton's face drains into a pearly yellowish-white mask.

ELTON

You're lying.

Ben lurches his feet. He listens firmly. The SOUND OF SIRENS becomes louder.

BEN

She's not. Take me to my car!

ELTON

She's lying. They're fire trucks.

BEN

Take me to my car... QUICK!

Elton looks at Virginia. His face twists and beseeches her.

ELTON

Oh, mother.

VIRGINIA

(Bleating)

I called them. I had to.

Virginia seizes Elton's bloated arms as if to shake him.

VIRGINIA (CONT'D)

That darky has got you all mixed up. We'll get a reward for that Richards.

Elton GRUNTS to Ben. Elton tries to shake of Virginia. Virginia clung stubbornly.

VIRGINIA (CONT'D)

Eltie. I had to... For you.

ELTON

Eltie.

Elton flings Virginia onto the bed.

He walks to the door.

ELTON (CONT'D)

(To Ben)

Quick... Come quick.

Ben and Elton exit the room. They CRASH down the stairs.

EXT. PORTLAND - ELTON'S HOUSE - EVENING

The front door crashes open, and Ben and Elton rush out. Elton breathes heavily. We clearly hear the POLICE SIRENS.

VIRGINIA (O.S.)

(Protracted cry)

I did it for you.

They cross the street. Suddenly headlights pick them up.

A cruiser comes to a SCREECHING halt, fifty meters away.

COP 11 (O.S.)

Richards! Ben Richards!

Elton leaps to Ben's car.

The cruiser pulls up. It comes down directly at Ben. Ben backs up, pulling the gun out of his pocket. Ben squeezes off two shots at the cruiser. The windshield of the car starred, but it still comes on. The PASSENGER COP fires at Ben with an automatic gun. Ben kneels. Dirt strikes him.

Ben fires into the cruiser. The cruiser is on top of him. Ben jumps aside. He lands on his face. The cruiser digs through a power turn.

Ben gets up. The cruiser approaches Ben, the automatic gun rattles. A bullet punches Ben's left arm. It knocks him sideways. The cruiser veers and tries to get Ben. Ben fires.

The windshield implodes.

The cruiser screams into a digging, sideways roll. It goes up and over... The cruiser crashes into an old, tall tree... And EXPLODES.

Ben gets up. He struggles to his car. We hear more sirens.

INT. BEN'S CAR - PORTLAND - EVENING

Elton starts the car. We only hear a howling sound.

ELTON

Come on.

Ben falls inside. He looks at Elton and punches the wheel. Elton turns the key and the engine chops into life.

Ben grins at Elton.

BEN

Works all the time.

The car plunges forward.

EXT. PORTLAND - BEN'S CAR - EVENING

Two cruisers scream around a corner. They chase Ben's car.

INT. BEN'S CAR - PORTLAND - EVENING

Ben and Elton slam up violently as they cross a curb. We hear shots. The rear window blows in. Glass sprinkles them. Elton SCREAMS. The car whips left and right.

EXT. PORTLAND - PARK - BEN'S CAR - EVENING

The cruisers chase Ben's car.

At a sharp turn, the first cruiser loses it coming up over the curb... It veers wildly and crashes over on its side... It digs itself into a building... And EXPLODES.

The other cruiser chases Ben's car, but is far behind.

INT. BEN'S CAR - PORTLAND - EVENING

Elton GULPS in huge swatches of air.

ELTON

Are you all right?

Ben studies his left arm.

BEN

Yeah, just a flesh wound and a sprained ankle. Turn off. Into that alley.

ELTON

No, it's a dead end.

Ben hauls the wheel around. The car skids around and heads for a building.

EXT. PORTLAND - BEN'S CAR - EVENING

The car smashes into the building.

INT. BEN'S CAR - PORTLAND - EVENING

Ben pitches violently into the dashboard with his head. Elton GASPS for breath, as if it is his last.

EXT. PORTLAND - BEN'S CAR - EVENING

The car bounces and jolts into the alley. It strikes garbage cans and splinters crates. It stops against a brick wall.

INT. BEN'S CAR - PORTLAND - EVENING

Ben GROANS. His nose gush blood. He looks at Elton. Elton is a silent lump lolling over the steering wheel.

EXT. PORTLAND - BEN'S CAR - EVENING

The door of the car opens. Ben hops back to the mouth of the alley. He reloads his gun. He walks to the corner wall.

The second cruiser skids around a turn. It approaches Ben.

Ben SNUFFLES blood. He leans against the building.

The cruiser closes in.

Ben fires, almost at point-blank. The windshield crashes. Ben ducks. The DRIVER COP is dead. The PASSENGER COP raises his arms to protect himself. He SCREAMS.

The cruiser meets the building at high speed... It bounces back... And EXPLODES.

Ben hops back to his car.

INT. BEN'S CAR - PORTLAND - EVENING

Ben falls inside.

BEN

Go!

Ben pulls Elton from the steering column. It had gone into Elton's abdomen. Elton's shirt is full of blood. He stares at Ben.

ELTON

I'm hurt. I'm hurt so bad. Where's Mom? Where's my Mommy?

BEN  
Come on... drive.

Elton cries. He manages to back the car up.

ELTON  
I'm sorry. I should have known better. She... she doesn't think straight.

Elton COUGHS UP a glut of blood and spits it into his lap.

EXT. PORTLAND - BEN'S CAR - EVENING

The car abandons the city. The light turns down. The car swings from a smooth tarred road onto a dirt road.

INT. BEN'S CAR - PORTLAND - EVENING

Low-hanging branches SCRAPE the roof of the car. Ben looks up and outside.

BEN  
Do you where we're going?

ELTON  
To a place, I know.

They pass an old sign:

PINE TREE MALL  
UNDER CONSTRUCTION - KEEP OUT  
TRESPASSERS WILL BE PROSECUTED

They top a final rise and move forward towards the Pine Tree Mall.

EXT. PINE TREE MALL - BEN'S CAR - EVENING

A huge, but half-build MALL, covered with scrubby junipers. An immense parking place is grassed over. QUONSET HUTS, discarded lengths of BOARDS, and a lot of CONSTRUCTION WOOD.

Elton parks the car at a parking lot.

INT. BEN'S CAR - PINE TREE MALL - EVENING

Elton's place looks like a slaughterhouse.

ELTON  
Get out!

BEN  
You're in no condition continuing to drive.

ELTON

I'll play here... Drive as long as I  
can. Get out!

Ben pushes the door hard and gets out.

EXT. PINE TREE MALL - BEN'S CAR - EVENING

The car turns. He bunts a tree. Elton finds the way out.

Ben looks at the Pine Tree Mall.

BEN

Great!

A hunting owl circles the area. It is absolute quiet. Ben  
plunges towards the abandoned mall.

INT. PINE TREE MALL - HALL - EVENING

Ben sneaks into the mall.

INT. PINE TREE MALL - SHOP - EVENING

Ben enters and climbs towards a pile of insulation at the  
corner. Ben sits back against a wall. He wraps himself in  
strips of the insulation. Ben falls into a half-doze.

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. PINE TREE MALL - SHOP - NIGHT

Something large suddenly CRASHES through the hall.

Ben jumps, insulation slid off. He gets up, grabs his gun.  
He sneaks to the door.

All of sudden a WILD BOAR crashes through the hall.

Ben stumbles back. He is scared stiff. He points his gun at  
the door. The crashing thumps of the boar move away from  
him. Ben waits. Nothing happens. Ben walks to the door.

EXT. PINE TREE MALL - MORNING - DAWN

Ben exits the mall. Fog growls over the sand. We hear the  
Woods RUSTLE, birds WHISTLE, and crickets CREAK.

From an elevation Ben looks back at the deserted area. The  
area is mysterious in its loneliness. Ben walks to the woods  
that bordered the abandoned Pine Tree Mall.

EXT. PORTLAND - WOODS - MORNING

Ben walks through brambles and ground bushes. His face is a needlepoint of blood. He is wet from the dawn and brown sticker-balls stud to his cloth. We hear the WHINING of car engines. Ben pushes on.

Ben peers out on a macadam highway.

ACROSS THE ROAD. A CLUSTER OF HOUSES and a GAS STATION. Prominent, A MAILBOX.

Ben withdraws. He sets up the camera on a tree. Ben sits down in front of the camera. He closes his eyes.

INT. BEN'S CAR - LEWISTON - HARBOR - DAWN

Elton is badly hurt. McCone sits beside Elton.

MCCONE

Tell me, Mr. Parrakis. Where is Mr. Richards?

Elton hushes. McCone winks at the female Hunter, who stands outside. She grabs the steering column and twists it. Elton MOANS. He almost dies of pain.

McCone looks merciless.

MCCONE (CONT'D)

Come on, Mr. Parrakis. Tell me.

McCone grabs Elton's hair and pulls his head back.

MCCONE (CONT'D)

Tell me, you piece of shit, or I swear to God that when I'm done with you, even your own mother won't recognize you.

ELTON

(Dying)

He... took a ship... to... Auburn.

Elton dies. McCone throws down Elton's head. He leaves the car. We hear the CLICK of Ben's camera.

EXT. PORTLAND - WOODS - MORNING

Ben opens his eyes. He puts the memory cards in a crumpled envelope. He gets up. A sudden VOLLEY OF BARKS makes Ben jump. Something huge breaks cover.

It arrows him.

BEN

Oh, shit.

ROLF, a big German shepherd, flags his tail. The dog laps Ben's face and drools on his shirt. Ben looks confused. He does not exactly know what to do.

BRIAN (O.S.)

Rolf... Hey, Rolf.

BRIAN, 12, blonde hair, frank and innocent, appears. He pulls the dog of Ben.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Jeez, I'm sorry, Mister. He ain't...  
God, ain't you a mess. You get lost?

Ben sits up.

BEN

Yes, I got lost and I have fallen  
around somewhere.

BRIAN

You escape from a bughouse?

BEN

No, I'm on my way to the airport.

Ben snaps his fingers in a pantomime of it just slipped my mind.

BRIAN

You must mean Voigt Field in Derry.

BEN

That's the one. What's your name,  
son?

BRIAN

Brian, sir.

BEN

Listen Brian, do me a favor?

Brian looks cautious.

BRIAN

I guess so.

Ben takes the envelope out of his pocket.

BEN

Listen, I'm Government. I'm after  
some pretty hard guys. They worked me  
over pretty well, kid. As you can  
see. The cards in this envelope have  
to get through to my supervisor.

BRIAN  
I'll mail em... Government, Jee-zus,  
I'll tell...

BEN  
Nobody, tell nobody. There might be  
reprisals. So until tomorrow, you  
never saw me... Understood?

Brian looks excited. Ben hands Brian the envelope.

BRIAN  
Yeah! Sure!

BEN  
Then get on it.

Ben holds out his hand and Brian shakes it awfully.

BEN (CONT'D)  
And thanks, pal.

Brian turns around.

BRIAN  
Come on, Rolf!

Brian and Rolf trot down the hill.

BEN'S POV

Brian drops the envelope into the mailbox.

EXT. PORTLAND - CROSSING - MORNING

Ben makes his way down the gravel bank between the woods and  
the road. He sits down between a few trees.

A few cars pass by. A sports car stops at the intersection.

Ben gets up.

The driver, AMELIA WILLIAMS, 28, half Latino, beautiful, well  
dressed, does not look at Ben.

Ben rips the passenger door open.

INT. AMELIA'S CAR - PORTLAND - MORNING

The car accelerates. The sudden move picks Ben up. He is  
thrown into the car.

Amelia startles.

AMELIA  
What... Who... You can't --

Ben points his gun at Amelia.

BEN

Wheel it!

Amelia slams both feet on the brake and the accelerator. She SCREAMS.

EXT. PORTLAND - AMELIA'S CAR - MORNING

The car jolts across the intersection. It stops on the shoulder, just beyond the intersection.

INT. AMELIA'S CAR - PORTLAND - MORNING

Amelia SHUDDERS convulsively. She does not look at Ben.

AMELIA

You're that... that... R... R --

BEN

Ben Richards. What's your name, ma'am?

AMELIA

Amelia Williams. Don't shoot me. Don't kill me! I have money.

BEN

Shht. I have no intention of harming you. You understand that?

AMELIA

You want the car? Take it. I'll tell someone stole it.

BEN

We'll talk about it. Go up route 1, Mrs. Williams. Is it Mrs.?

AMELIA

Yes.

BEN

Are there any roadblocks?

AMELIA

N... Yes... Hundreds of them.

BEN

Don't lie, Mrs. Williams. Okay?

Amelia begins to drive. Driving seems to soothe her.

BEN (CONT'D)

Where are the roadblocks?

AMELIA

Around Lewiston... That's where they got that other so... fellow, about thirty miles from here.

Ben looks outside.

Amelia drives with frightened unhappiness.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Will you rape me?

BEN

No. I'm married.

AMELIA

(Disparaging)

Yes, I saw her?

BEN

(Mad)

You're my protection, Mrs. Williams. I have to reach Voigt Field, in Derry.

AMELIA

That's over a hundred miles.

BEN

Yes, it is.

AMELIA

You'll never make it to there.

BEN

I might, and so might you, if you play it right.

Amelia lips TREMBLE.

EXT. YARMOUTH - AMELIA'S CAR - MORNING

The car drives through the Woods. They cross a river. Trailers are tacked at the side of the road. Three cruisers stand at the side of the road. The COPS seems to have no interest in Amelia's car.

INT. AMELIA'S CAR - YARMOUTH - MORNING

Amelia bursts out.

AMELIA

Why can't you let me go?

A bubble of ironic LAUGHTER appears on Ben's face.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

You're laughing at me? Murderer. Why don't you find yourself a decent job? But you're too lazy. Your kind spit in de face of anything decent.

BEN

Are you decent, Mrs. Williams?

AMELIA

Yes! Isn't that why you picked on me? So you could drag me down to your level and laugh about it?

BEN

If you're so decent, how come you drive this fancy car, while my little girl dies of flu, and no one will help.

Amelia looks startled.

AMELIA

What? You're an enemy of The Network. It says so on the TV. I saw those disgusting things you did.

Ben takes a cigarette from a pack on the dashboard.

BEN

You know what's disgusting? It's disgusting to get blackballed. It's disgusting to watch your wife earning the grocery money on her back. It's disgusting to know The Network kills million's of people while they can prevent that... That's disgusting.

Amelia's knuckles are white on the wheel.

AMELIA

You lie.

BEN

When this is over, you can go home and get stoned. I met a little girl five years old with lung cancer. How's that for disgusting? What --

AMELIA

(Screaming)  
Stop! You talk dirty.

Ben stares outside. He watches the countryside flows by.

BEN

That's right... That's right... Dirty-talking old me.

The driving fills the silence between them, it lulls them.

EXT. AUGUSTA - AMELIA'S CAR - AFTERNOON

A sign tells us:

AUGUSTA

INT. AMELIA'S CAR - AUGUSTA - AFTERNOON

Ben stares outside, then at Amelia.

BEN

Listen, there is a good chance they'll sniff us here. So, if a cop stops us, you pull over. Immediately. You open your door and lean out. Your fanny is not to leave the seat. You holler: 'Ben Richards is holding me hostage. If you don't give him free passage, he'll kill me'.

AMELIA

And you think THAT'LL work?

BEN

It better, it's your ass.

Amelia looks detested.

AMELIA

You are crazy.

Ben shrugs his shoulders and lowers in his seat.

OUTSIDE

A roadblock. Two cruisers are parked at each side of the road. TWO COPS stay in one car.

COP 12 and COP 13 wave an old farmer through. Cop 12 holds a clipboard.

Ben looks nervous.

BEN

Drive up to twenty meters and then stop. Do it just the way I told you.

Amelia seems in control. She applies the brakes.

EXT. AUGUSTA - AMELIA'S CAR - AFTERNOON

The car stops in the middle of the road. Cop 12 waves Amelia forward.

Amelia opens her door and leans out.

AMELIA

Don't shoot, please.

Cop 12 glances at cop 13. They unhook, simultaneously, the straps that crossed their gun butts.

COP 12

Come out of the car with your hands over your head.

COP 13

You and your passenger, ma'am. We've seen him.

AMELIA

My name is Amelia Williams. I can't get out as you ask. Ben Richards is holding me hostage. If you don't give him free passage, he says he'll kill me.

The two cops look at each other. Cop 12 drops the clipboard. The two cops fall aside the road. They kneel. They draw their guns.

INT. AMELIA'S CAR - AUGUSTA - AFTERNOON

Ben thumbs his left foot on Amelia's right foot.

BEN

Drive!

Amelia SCREAMS. The car rips forward.

EXT. AUGUSTA - AMELIA'S CAR - AFTERNOON

The two cops shoot at the car. The windshield crashes in.

INT. AMELIA'S CAR - AUGUSTA - AFTERNOON

Bits of safety glass splatter them both. Amelia throws both hands up to protect her face. She SCREAMS.

Ben leans against her, swinging the wheel.

BEN

Steer! Goddammit, steer!

Amelia gropes for the wheel and finds it.

EXT. AUGUSTA - AMELIA'S CAR - AFTERNOON

Amelia's car drives through the gap between the two cruisers. One cruiser starts to chase them. Amelia's car drives over a rise.

INT. AMELIA'S CAR - AUGUSTA - AFTERNOON

Ben looks backwards -- No cruisers.

Amelia is in PANIC. Ben looks at her.

BEN

Pull over.

AMELIA

They shot at us.

BEN

Pull over!

EXT. AUGUSTA - AMELIA'S CAR - AFTERNOON

The car pulls over. Ben gets out. Ben hops back the way they came, his gun out.

The first cruiser comes over the rise. A COP fires with an automatic gun. The second cruiser follows the first one real close.

Ben kneels and fires.

The windshield of the car crashes and the car lurches aside. The second cruiser runs into the first one, full speed.

The second cruiser rolls three times... And EXPLODES.

The first cruiser stops twisting... And EXPLODES.

Shrapnel spews all around Ben. Ben gets up. HIS SHIRT darkens red at the side. He probably took another hit. Ben hops back to Amelia's car. He gets in.

INT. AMELIA'S CAR - AUGUSTA - AFTERNOON

Amelia stares at the burning cruisers. She freaks out.

AMELIA

You killed them.

BEN

Yes... and they tried to kill me... and you. Now drive. Fast.

Amelia's face turns into a mask with twitching lips and rolling eyes. The car jerks forward.

EXT. ROCKLAND - AMELIA'S CAR - AFTERNOON

Amelia's car drives down the highway. A ROADSIDE STORE AND GAS STATION. Another city lies in distance.

INT. AMELIA'S CAR - ROCKLAND - GAS STATION - AFTERNOON

Ben looks outside and points at the gas station.

BEN

Pull in.

EXT. ROCKLAND - GAS STATION - TELEPHONE BOOTH - AFTERNOON

The car pulls in.

Amelia stands outside the telephone booth. Ben stands in it.

FEMALE PHONE OPERATOR 2 (O.S.)

Hello.

BEN

What exchange is this, operator?

FEMALE PHONE OPERATOR 2 (O.S.)

Rockland, sir.

BEN

Put me through to the local news service hookup, please.

FEMALE PHONE OPERATOR 2 (O.S.)

Yes sir.

ROBERTS (O.S.)

Rockland News Service TV Tabloid 6943,  
I am Peter Roberts.

BEN

This is Ben Richards.

ROBERTS (O.S.)

Look, maggot, I like a joke as --

BEN

Shut up. You get confirmation in ten minutes, or now if you've got a police band radio.

ROBERTS (O.S.)

Where are you, fella?

Ben cranes his neck at the sign over the store.

BEN  
 A place called Gilly's Gas station.  
 I've got a hostage. Her name is  
 Amelia Williams, from...

Ben indicates his head at Amelia.

AMELIA  
 Little Falls.

BEN  
 Little Falls. Get this on air. Red  
 Newsbreak Top. I want the pigs to  
 understand everyone knows I'm not  
 alone. Four of them already tried.

ROBERTS (O.S.)  
 What happened to them?

BEN  
 I killed them.

ROBERTS (O.S.)  
 (To someone else)  
 Dicky, open the National cable.

BEN  
 I'm gonna kill her too if they shoot.  
 If they want to save the girl, they  
 better let me through.

ROBERTS (O.S.)  
 When --

Ben disconnects.

BEN  
 Let's go.

They walk away.

EXT. ROCKLAND - AMELIA'S CAR - AFTERNOON

They travel along the sea.

A sign:

ROCKLAND

At many summer homes, people stand out on their lawns to  
 watch Ben and Amelia pass. People peer at them from behind  
 trees.

INT. AMELIA'S CAR - ROCKLAND - AFTERNOON

Ben points out to the spectators.

BEN

Those people only wanna see someone bleed. They don't give a shit if we both die. Can you imagine?

AMELIA

No.

BEN

Then I salute you, Mrs. Williams.

EXT. U.S.A. - AFTERNOON

On a highway, cruisers follow Amelia's car.

EXT. DERRY - AMELIA'S CAR - AFTERNOON

A sign:

DERRY

The street is black with people. People hang over roof ledges. People sit on balconies.

INT. AMELIA'S CAR - DERRY - AFTERNOON

Ben gazes outside.

BEN

Follow the signs to the airport.

AMELIA

Is she really your wife? The woman in the pictures?

BEN

(Surprised)  
Yes.

AMELIA

She looks like a tramp. She'd better take care of herself.

BEN

The picture was doctored.

AMELIA

They would do that?

BEN

They would do that!

AMELIA

The airport. We're here.

EXT. VOIGT FIELD - AMELIA'S CAR - AFTERNOON

The car crawls between parked cruisers. Behind the cruisers cops aim their guns at them. Behind that, is a huge crowd. Straight ahead is Main gate, blocked by a tank. COP 14 stands in front of the tank. He carries a bullhorn. Amelia pulls over at twenty meters before him.

INT. AMELIA'S CAR - VOIGT FIELD - AFTERNOON

Amelia looks regretful.

AMELIA

You're done. Do I've to die, too?

BEN

Do your thing, Mrs. Williams.

Ben slides down in his seat. Amelia is nervous.

AMELIA

I'm scared... Please!

BEN

They won't shoot at you. They're not allowed. Go on, the eyes of the world are upon you.

EXT. VOIGT FIELD - AMELIA'S CAR - AFTERNOON

Amelia leans out.

AMELIA

My name is Amelia Williams. Ben Richards says he'll kill me if you don't give him safe conduct.

INTERCUT AS NEEDED

COP 14 (IN BULLHORN)

Miss, you're not allowed inside. We want to talk to Ben Richards.

Ben nods 'NO'.

AMELIA

He says, he won't.

COP 14 (IN BULLHORN)

Step out of the car, Madam.

AMELIA

He'll kill me. Don't you listen? He says you don't care who you kill. My God, is he right?

COP 14 (IN BULLHORN)  
Step out of the car or we'll shoot.

EXT. VOIGT FIELD - AMELIA'S CAR - AFTERNOON

A TALL MAN (40's) in THE CROWD raises his arm.

TALL MAN  
Let her through!

The crowd takes up a CHANT like eager fans at a match 'LET HER THROUGH! LET HER THROUGH!'

Cop 14 turns to the crowd.

COP 14 (IN BULLHORN)  
All civilians leave the area. The penalty for obstruction and unlawful assembly is ten years in The Network Penitentiary. Clear the area now!

The crowd stays. A GRUBBY WOMAN (40's) steps forward.

GRUBBY WOMAN  
So no one'll see you shoot the girl.

TALL MAN  
Screw all pigs!

Cops club a number of people. SAVAGE FIST FIGHTS.

INT. AMELIA'S CAR - VOIGT FIELD - AFTERNOON

Ben does not stick his head up. Amelia looks stunned.

BEN  
What's happening?

AMELIA  
Fights. Police hitting people.

COP 14 (O.S.) (IN BULLHORN)  
Give up, Richards. Come out.

Ben WHISPERS something in Amelia's ear.

Amelia leans out.

AMELIA  
Ben Richards wants to give himself up to the Airport Police. He's shot in two places. He's been out of his mind and God, I'm so frightened. Please... Please!

EXT. VOIGT FIELD - AMELIA'S CAR - AFTERNOON

A few people in the crowd are taken away by cops. The rest of crowd is stunned into speechlessness.

INT. AMELIA'S CAR - VOIGT FIELD - AFTERNOON

Amelia leans back inside.

BEN

Very good.

AMELIA

We're not in this together, if you might think so. I only want to go home.

A sudden grinding roar of the tank. Amelia SCREAMS, then:

COP 14 (IN BULLHORN)

Richards, proceed to parking lot 16. The Airport Police will take you into custody.

EXT. VOIGT FIELD - AFTERNOON

The tank backs up, creating a gap.

INT. AMELIA'S CAR - VOIGT FIELD - AFTERNOON

The car hums forward. Ben crouches going through the gate.

BEN

Go up to the entrance of lot 16 and then stop.

AMELIA

You're going to get me killed. All I need to do is use the bathroom and you're going to get me killed.

Ben smiles at her. It looks like he is apologizing.

EXT. VOIGT FIELD - AMELIA'S CAR - AFTERNOON

People are crowded at parking lot 16. Cruisers flank the entrance. Cops have their guns ready to fire. Amelia's car stops thirty meters before the entrance.

COP 15 stands in front of a cruiser. He carries a bullhorn.

COP 15 (IN BULLHORN)

Richards. Move on. The Airport Police are inside. As specified.

INT. AMELIA'S CAR - VOIGT FIELD - AFTERNOON

Ben WHISPERS something in Amelia's ear.

Amelia leans out.

AMELIA

Ben Richards says he wants a bullhorn.  
Leave one in the road ten meters up.

EXT. VOIGT FIELD - AMELIA'S CAR - AFTERNOON

A COP drops a bullhorn down in front of Amelia's car. Amelia drives to the bullhorn. She stops, opens the door, and pulls the bullhorn inside.

INT. AMELIA'S CAR - VOIGT FIELD - AFTERNOON

Amelia hands over the bullhorn.

COP 15 (O.S.) (IN BULLHORN)

Richards, move on.

Ben talks through the partly broken windshield.

BEN (IN BULLHORN)

Ten minutes. I have to think.

AMELIA

Don't you realize you're pushing them  
to do it?

BEN

They know I'm getting set to screw  
them. They don't know what.

INT. GAMES BUILDING - EIGHT FLOOR - ONSTAGE - EVENING

Bobby walks onstage. He looks excited. In his b.g. ON SCREEN, cops at Voigt Field has encircled Amelia's car.

BOBBY

Welcome back people. We've got some  
breaking news for you. We just heard  
that The Network Police stopped  
Benjamin Richards at Derry Airport.  
We don't have a reporter right on the  
spot. But that'll change within a few  
minutes. So, stay with us.

Bobby walks offstage.

INT. AMELIA'S CAR - VOIGT FIELD - EVENING

Amelia looks at Ben.

AMELIA

Why don't you give yourself up to the Airport Police?

BEN

The Airport Police isn't part of The Network enforcement. They're an International organization. You give up to them, you'd get amnesty, they say. But that's bull. They turn you over to the Hunters, and the Hunters drag you in back of the barn.

AMELIA

Whatever you do, it won't work. Don't you see that?

BEN

Look, Mrs. Williams, this game is a setup. But maybe I stacked the deck a bit. I don't have the ace, so I'm going to run a bluff.

Ben grabs Amelia's handbag. He stuffs it in his left pocket.

Amelia stares at Ben.

AMELIA

What can you do with my bag? Shoot them with my lipstick?

COP 15 (O.S.) (IN BULLHORN)

Richards! Ten minutes are up.

Ben grins.

BEN (IN BULLHORN)

Listen! I am carrying a Hi-impact Massive Ordnance Air Burst Bomb in my coat pocket, enough to explode the fuel storage tanks, and blow you all to hell... I've it pulled out to half cock. One jiggle and you all can kiss your ass goodbye.

EXT. VOIGT FIELD - AMELIA'S CAR - EVENING

PEOPLE in the crowd move tide like, their faces blank and avid with PANIC. They STREAM AWAY from parking lot 16. Cops behind the cruisers shuffle uneasy. Cop 15 looks insecure.

COP 15 (IN BULLHORN)

Richards? That's a lie. Come out.

BEN (IN BULLHORN)  
 I will, but first I give you your  
 marching order. I want a General  
 Atomic 800 Airplane fully fueled and  
 ready to fly... within ninety minutes.

INT. AMELIA'S CAR - VOIGT FIELD - EVENING

Ben put the car's timer at ninety minutes, counting down.

EXT. VOIGT FIELD - AMELIA'S CAR - EVENING

Reporters look uneasy. Cameras reel away.

McCone strolls out from behind a cruiser, wearing dark  
 slacks, a white shirt rolled up to the elbows. He carries a  
 huge bullhorn. Cop 15 walks back to the cruisers.

McCone stands at fifteen meters from Amelia's car.

MCCONE (IN BULLHORN)  
 Richards? I'm Evan McCone. You lie  
 and I know it. There isn't a place in  
 the world for you to lay your hands on  
 MOAB explosives.

INT. AMELIA'S CAR - VOIGT FIELD - EVENING

Ben looks up -- Evan McCone is the personification of evil.

BEN (IN BULLHORN)  
 In my streets you can buy MOAB every  
 two blocks if you have the cash on the  
 line, and I did.

MCCONE (IN BULLHORN)  
 Let the woman go.

BEN (IN BULLHORN)  
 I will. She's seen the explosive.

Amelia's face is an unbelieving rictus.

AMELIA  
 No, I'm not gonna lie for you.

BEN  
 If you don't, I'm dead.  
 (Soothing)  
 MOAB is white and solid, slightly cold  
 and greasy to touch.

Amelia CLAPS her hands over her ears.

AMELIA  
 No, no, no... No... No way.

BEN (IN BULLHORN)  
 You'd better get it in gear, McCone.  
 You have eighty-nine minutes.

Amelia WEEPS.

AMELIA  
 I can't.

EXT. VOIGT FIELD - AMELIA'S CAR - EVENING

McCone looks a little restless.

MCCONE (IN BULLHORN)  
 Richards! Send the woman out.

INT. AMELIA'S CAR - VOIGT FIELD - EVENING

Amelia rocks back and forth. She MOANS a little.

BEN  
 The ignition ring is gold. I was  
 holding it for the last half hour.  
 The ring is attached to the detonator  
 on top. It looks like the eraser of a  
 pencil. If they ask anything else,  
 you don't know Jack Shit... Got it?

No answer. The flesh of Amelia's looks like dough.

BEN (CONT'D)  
 Sure you do. You're a bright girl,  
 aren't you?

AMELIA  
 I'm not going to lie.

BEN  
 Go on... Get out!

Amelia gazes at Ben convulsively. Ben reaches for the door  
 handle at Amelia's side. He tugs it and the door opens.

BEN (CONT'D)  
 Go... Go!

AMELIA  
 I... I... Oh, my God.

Amelia half falls out.

EXT. VOIGT FIELD - AMELIA'S CAR - EVENING

Amelia gets on her feet. She runs away from her car. She  
 runs into the lukewarm stardust of million flashbulbs.  
 McCone walks to Amelia. The crowd looks expectantly.

INT. AMELIA'S CAR - VOIGT FIELD - EVENING

Ben slouches down. Cop 15 reappears.

COP 15 (IN BULLHORN)  
Richards!

Ben looks up -- is it the end?

COP 15 (O.S.) (CONT'D) (IN BULLHORN)  
We need more time. At least three  
hours.

The timer shows 79:02.

BEN (IN BULLHORN)  
You have seventy-nine minutes. Then  
it all goes up.

INT. VOIGT FIELD - HANGAR - EVENING

Amelia sits at a table with a cup of coffee. The female and male Hunter stand nearby.

McCone sits near to Amelia.

MCCONE  
Of course you're upset, Mrs. Williams,  
but would you mind going through this  
once more.

AMELIA  
Why?

MCCONE  
How did you know it was an explosive?

AMELIA  
From what I saw, it looked like a huge  
hand grenade.

MCCONE  
What else can you tell me?

AMELIA  
I saw it had a detonator on top.

MCCONE  
Oh, how did it look like?

INT. AMELIA'S CAR - VOIGT FIELD - EVENING

Ben looks at the timer, first 57:11, then 48:55, and 41:01.

EXT. VOIGT FIELD - AMELIA'S CAR - AFTERNOON

Spectators creep back to parking lot 16. Spotlights focus on Amelia's car.

INT. VOIGT FIELD - HANGAR - EVENING

Amelia sits down. McCone flocks around her.

MCCONE

What can you tell me about the ignition?

AMELIA

It was a golden ring.

MCCONE

How do you know?

AMELIA

Well, I saw it when I glanced in his pocket. He was holding it.

McCone eyes tightens. He looks straight into Amelia's eyes.

INT. AMELIA'S CAR - VOIGT FIELD - EVENING

Ben slouches further down. He looks at the timer. First 35:15, then 26:59, 14:14, and 7:32.

COP 15 (O.S.) (IN BULLHORN)

Richards?

EXT. VOIGT FIELD - EVENING

Cop 15 is back in his position.

COP 15 (IN BULLHORN)

We just gotta have more time. The bird's flaps are frozen solid.

INT. AMELIA'S CAR - VOIGT FIELD - EVENING

Ben peeps outside, but is afraid to stretch out his head.

BEN (IN BULLHORN)

You have seven minutes. Open the gate to the runway. And remember, one hand is at the ignition ring.

COP 15 (IN BULLHORN)

You don't seem to realize that --

BEN (IN BULLHORN)  
I'm through talking, six minutes.

EXT. VOIGT FIELD - AMELIA'S CAR - EVENING

The crowd looks anxious.

INT. AMELIA'S CAR - VOIGT FIELD - EVENING

Ben looks at the timer. First 6:00, then 3:11, and 0:00.  
Ben moves over to the driver's seat.

COP 15 (IN BULLHORN)  
Richards! If you move the car, we'll  
shoot. The girl talked. We know it  
all.

Ben drops the car into gear. He drives off.

EXT. VOIGT FIELD - AMELIA'S CAR - EVENING

COPS in hideouts aim their guns. Nothing happens.

Ben passes a high-octane truck. He drives slowly through the  
gate to the runway. Small planes stand aside.

An enormous General Atomic 'GA' 800 AIRPLANE from American  
Pride is parked on the runway. The engines grumble. McCone  
steps out of the shadow beneath the plane.

INT. AMELIA'S CAR - VOIGT FIELD - EVENING

Ben pulls over near McCone.

EXT. VOIGT FIELD - RUNWAY - GA 800 - EVENING

Ben gets out. From this moment on his left-hand stays in his  
left pocket.

Ben and McCone meet at the scaffold like roll-up stairs.

MCCONE  
Benjamin Stuart Richards?

BEN  
Yes.

MCCONE  
I have a sworn bill from The Network  
Games Authority for your comprehension  
and execution. Will you honor it?

BEN  
Does a hen need a flag?

MCCONE

The formalities are taken care of. You've been an extraordinary contestant. I understand the rating on the program jumped twelve points.

BEN

Wonderful.

MCCONE

Of course, we almost had you during that Portland interlude. But this last play has been simply brilliant.

BEN

Thank you.

MCCONE

I salute you. In a way, I'm almost sorry the game has to end. I shall never run up against a more inventive opponent.

BEN

Too bad.

MCCONE

It's over, you know. The woman broke. We used Pentothal on her.

McCone pulls a small automatic gun.

MCCONE (CONT'D)

I will pay you the ultimate compliment. I kill you right here, where no one can film it.

BEN

Get ready, then

Ben fiddles in his pocket. McCone looks at it. They stand in a deadlock.

McCone laughs.

MCCONE

Oh, you're so good, Mr. Richards. Par excellence. The woman has not broken. But I wonder what had happened to her purse if it isn't in your pocket.

BEN

Shoot me if you wanna find out.

MCCONE

How well I'd love to. But I don't take chances with human life, even not when the odds are ninety-nine out of hundred in my favor.

McCone's eyes blink.

MCCONE (CONT'D)

So you see --

BEN

Listen to me, little man. Even when you inject her with everything you got, she's going to sing the same tune. Dig it?

Ben climbs the stairs. McCone stares at him.

MCCONE

Richards?

Ben looks back from the stairs. McCone looks up at him.

MCCONE (CONT'D)

When you get in the air, we're going to shoot you down with a ground-to-air missile.

BEN

You won't, though.

MCCONE

No?

BEN

We're going to be very low and over heavily populated areas. Add twelve fuel pods to MOAB Explosives, and you get a very big bang potential... Since you're so bright... Did you anticipate me on a parachute?

McCone put away the gun.

MCCONE

Yes, I did... and it's clean.

BEN

Goodbye, little man.

Ben walks up the stairs. McCone looks up to him.

MCCONE

Au revoir, Mr. Richards.

BEN

(Whispering)  
Soon.

INT. GA 800 - FIRST CLASS - VOIGT FIELD - EVENING

Ben walks through the first-class compartment. In a seat sits the bulky parachute. Ben pats on it briefly. He passes a kitchenette.

INT. GA 800 - COCKPIT - VOIGT FIELD - EVENING

Ben ends up in the Navigator's place.

ROBERT S. DONAHUE, 30, care-lined face, good looking, gazes coolly at Ben. Donahue wears a fancy headset and mike.

DONAHUE

(In throat mike)

The fellow who's going to have us all killed is coming up, fellas.

Ben shrugs his shoulders. He drags himself through a small corridor, and into the nose of the plane.

Pilot CAPTAIN DON HOLLOWAY, 50, baldly, thickset, looks back.

Co-pilot WAYNE DUNINGER (30's), and liaison officer KIPPY FRIEDMAN (20's), glances at Ben.

HOLLOWAY

Hello, Mr. Richards. Pardon me if I don't shake hands. I am Flight Captain Don Holloway.

(Nodding at Duninger)

My copilot Wayne Duninger.

DUNINGER

Under the circumstances, not very pleased to meet you.

BEN

Captain Holloway, are you patched into communication with McCone?

HOLLOWAY

We sure are.

Holloway points at Friedman.

HOLLOWAY (CONT'D)

Through Kippy Friedman, he is our liaison officer.

BEN

(To Friedman)

Give me something to talk into.

Friedman hands Ben a microphone with infinite carefulness.

FRIEDMAN

Here you are sir.

BEN

Get going on your preflight, Captain Holloway.

Holloway and Duninger are going through PREFLIGHT.

Ben sits down, a microphone in his right hand.

BEN (CONT'D)

McCone?

MCCONE (O.S.)

McCone here.

BEN

Come on, maggot. You and the girl are going for a ride. Show up in three minutes or I pull the ring.

INT. VOIGT FIELD - HANGAR - EVENING

McCone rises from behind a desk in the hangar. Staff members look at McCone.

McCone looks disturbed.

MCCONE

You're nuts, Richards. I'm not --

BEN (O.S.)

You listen. The woman's coming because I told her where I was going and you're coming because you're a piece of shit. That's it. Three minutes. Signing off.

MCCONE

Richards, wait a min --

The line is dead. McCone looks desperate. Amelia glances at him. Staff members look anxiously at McCone.

INT. GA 800 - FIRST CLASS - VOIGT FIELD - EVENING

McCone and Amelia climb up the stairs. Amelia is panting and frightened. Ben welcomes them on top.

McCone's eyes are dark with hate. He almost looks psychotic.

MCCONE

You haven't won a thing, maggot.

BEN  
It's so nice to see you again, Mrs.  
Williams.

Amelia WEEPS. She staggers into the plane. She holds at a row of seats.

HOLLOWAY (O.S.)  
Mr. Richards, are we green? Just  
talk, I can hear you.

Ben looks surprised.

BEN  
Yes we are, Captain Holloway.

HOLLOWAY (O.S.)  
Then I'm giving the order to remove  
the stairs.

BEN  
All right, Captain. Thank you.

McCone looks paranoid.

MCCONE  
You gave yourself away when you asked  
for the woman.

BEN  
Ah, really. Why don't you give it  
your best shot then?

McCone SNARLS. He makes no move. We hear the ENGINES get ready for take off. The outer door closes automatically.

Ben smiles at McCone.

BEN (CONT'D)  
You go wherever you please little man.  
Just don't bother the crew.  
(To Amelia)  
Come forward. We're taking off.

McCone pushes through the curtained divider. He heads for the second class.

Ben slides in a seat. Amelia sit next to him. Amelia buckles Ben's belt.

INT. GA 800 - SECOND CLASS - VOIGT FIELD - EVENING

McCone puts in an earphone.

INT. GA 800 - FIRST CLASS - VOIGT FIELD - EVENING

The plane maneuvers for take off. Amelia and Ben sit back.

AMELIA  
 You're like a bad dream... One that  
 never ends.

BEN  
 I'm sorry.

AMELIA  
 I didn't --

Ben clamps his hand over Amelia's mouth and shakes his head  
 'NO'. The plane jumps by the BURST OF ACCELERATION. Ben and  
 Amelia are driven back in their seats. Amelia's face twists  
 into a grimace of fear.

EXT. VOIGT FIELD - GA 800 - EVENING

PARKING LOT 16 POV

The GA 800 DEPARTS.

INT. GA 800 - FIRST CLASS - EVENING

THROUGH THE WINDOW

The earth drops away.

HOLLOWAY (O.S.)  
 Mr. Richards, what are your  
 instructions?

Ben thinks, then:

BEN  
 I have to put myself in your hands,  
 Captain. So, if you lie to me about  
 anything and I find out.

HOLLOWAY (O.S.)  
 Nobody up here is going to do any  
 lying. We're only interested in  
 getting this thing back down they way  
 it went up.

BEN  
 Okay. Fly west. At six hundred  
 meters.

EXT. GA 800 - EVENING

The GA 800 flies to the red glow of the dawning sun.

INT. GA 800 - FIRST CLASS - EVENING

Ben takes a pad of the airline stationery from the seat in front of him. He takes a stylus and writes something down. Amelia looks wondered.

THE NOTE:

I THINK YOU'RE BUGGED. IN TEN MINUTES YOU HAVE A HYSTERICAL  
OUTBURST, BEG ME NOT TO PULL THE RING. YOU GAME?

Amelia nods 'YES'. Ben hesitates, he writes again.

THE NOTE:

WHY DID YOU LIE ABOUT ME?

Amelia plucks the stylus out of his hand. She replies.

THE NOTE:

DON'T KNOW, YOU SEEMED SO PITIFUL.

Ben raises the eyebrows and grins. He takes the sheet from the note and puts it away. He dozes off.

EXT. GA 800 - EVENING

The GA 800 flies towards the darkened sunset.

INT. GAMES BUILDING - EIGHT FLOOR - ONSTAGE - EVENING

Bobby looks excited.

BOBBY

I did promise you a hell of a show tonight, didn't I? Well, right now, as we speak, Ben Richards skyjacked an airplane. He is airborne and he's not alone... Our Chief Hunter is with him.

The audience CHEERS.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

That means another promise. I promise you a hell of a firework this show, when the game finally comes to an end. So, don't go anywhere. We'll be back, after the break.

Bobby walks offstage.

INT. GA 800 - FIRST CLASS - EVENING

Ben is half-asleep.

Amelia MOANS and SCREAMS.

AMELIA

Please, don't make that man. I never did anything to you. I want to go home to my daughter.

Ben startles.

BEN

McCone is a blazing ass.

AMELIA

Why don't you show it to him? Then he'd have to believe you. He can call off the people on the ground. They're tracking us with missiles. I heard them say so!

INT. GA 800 - SECOND CLASS - EVENING

McCone follows the conversation with great interest.

BEN (O.S.)

Can't show it to him. Take it out of my pocket means to put it on safe or risks of blowing us up accidentally.

AMELIA (O.S.)

I can't stand it any longer.

INT. GA 800 - FIRST CLASS - EVENING

Ben looks at Amelia.

BEN

I wouldn't show it to him, even if I could. McCone is an asshole.

AMELIA

I almost think I'd rather joggle you and have it over.

BEN

You haven't --

The curtain snaps open and McCone stumbles in. He hurries to Ben and Amelia.

His face looks calm, but his eyes show sheen of fear.

MCCONE

Mrs. Williams, coffee, if you please. For seven. You'll have to play our flight attendant on this flight, I'm afraid.

Amelia gets up. She looks at neither of them. She makes her way to the kitchenette.

McCone stares at Ben.

MCCONE (CONT'D)

Would you give this up if I could promise you amnesty, pal?

BEN

Pal... Sounds real greasy.

MCCONE

Amnesty. How does THAT sound?

BEN

Like a fucking lie, McCone. Don't you think I know that you're nothing but the hired help?

McCone flushes, hard, red, and brickable.

MCCONE

It's going to be good to have you on my home court. We've got slugs that will make your head look like a pumpkin dropped from the top floor of a skyscraper.

Ben rises. He looks insane.

BEN

Here it goes. I'm pulling the ring.

McCone SCREECHES. He staggers back. He overbalances. McCone falls into it like a man into a sling, his arms flying in the air.

McCone lies on the floor. His eyes stares through the hands froze about his head. Ben is LAUGHING at McCone.

HOLLOWAY (O.S.)

Mr. Richards!

Ben stops LAUGHING.

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

We crossed the border with Canada. What do you want me to do?

McCone raises.

Ben sits down in his chair.

BEN

Could you supply me with a map of North America, Captain Holloway?

HOLLOWAY (O.S.)

Yes.

DONAHUE (O.S.)

Are you going to send the woman up for them?

BEN

What's your name, pal?

DONAHUE (O.S.)

Donahue.

BEN

You've got legs, Donahue. Suppose you trot back here yourself.

McCone walks to a seat in the first class compartment, far away from Ben.

Donahue appears with the maps.

He hands them to Ben.

DONAHUE

I didn't mean to mouth you off, sir.

Ben stares at him. Donahue glances at McCone.

Donahue shifts uneasily under Ben's gaze.

DONAHUE (CONT'D)

Anything else?

BEN

No, go back.

Donahue rushes away.

Ben looks at the map.

BEN (CONT'D)

Captain Holloway?

HOLLOWAY (O.S.)

Yes.

BEN

Fly south, and remember.

HOLLOWAY (O.S.)

I'm remembering. Don't worry.

The plane changes direction. Amelia sits on a chair in front of the kitchenette. She glances from Ben to McCone. McCone stares at Ben with wanting eyes.

INT. GAMES BUILDING - EIGHT FLOOR - CONTROL ROOM - EVENING

Dan and a SOLDIER leer at a radar screen. A COLONEL, 45, a real combat soldier, tabs Dan on the shoulder.

Dan turns.

COLONEL

Mr. Killian, we've a clear track on the plane. What'll we do?

DAN

We wait, Colonel!

COLONEL

We can take him out!

DAN

We wait. We have people up there.

COLONEL

I hope you know what you're doing?

The Colonel moves on.

Dan looks sad.

DAN

(Whispering)  
So do I... So do I.

INT. GA 800 - FIRST CLASS - EVENING

Ben looks outside the window. The map lies on his knees.

HOLLOWAY (O.S.)

Mr. Richards? We're above Newark, New Jersey.

BEN

Holloway? They've got a bead drawn on us all the way, don't they?

HOLLOWAY (O.S.)

Yes.

Ben looks at McCone.

BEN

I imagine they're trying to decide if they can afford to do away their professional bloodhound here. All they have to do is train a new one.

McCone snarls at Ben.

INT. GA 800 - COCKPIT - EVENING

Holloway, Duninger, and Friedman are having their coffee, while flying the plane.

BEN (O.S.)  
Captain Holloway?

HOLLOWAY  
Yes.

BEN (O.S.)  
Fly west.

They jump. They look at each other.

HOLLOWAY  
West? You're asking for it, going that way. It takes us over pretty open country.

INT. GA 800 - FIRST CLASS - EVENING

McCone jumps.

MCCONE  
You're crazy, Richards! They'll blow us apart.

BEN  
With you and five other innocent people on board?

MCCONE  
They'll make a mistake.

BEN  
We don't make mistakes anymore...  
Captain Holloway? Fly west.

EXT. GA 800 - EVENING

The plane changes direction.

INT. GA 800 - FIRST CLASS - EVENING

Amelia hands McCone a cup of coffee. He WHISPERS in her ear. Amelia walks to Ben.

Amelia hands Ben a cup of coffee.

BEN  
Thank you, Mrs. Williams.

Amelia walks back to the kitchenette.

HOLLOWAY (O.S.)

Richards!

Ben looks up.

BEN

Yes.

INT. GA 800 - COCKPIT - EVENING

Holloway looks excited.

HOLLOWAY

We've been informed that the Games Authority beams up a high-intensity broadcast at us. I was told you would find it worth to turn on the TV.

INT. GA 800 - FIRST CLASS - EVENING

Ben looks back at McCone.

Then he looks at the TV in front of him.

BEN

Thank you, Captain Holloway.

Ben leans forward to turn on the TV. He withdraws his hand as if it was hot.

McCone looks anxious.

MCCONE

Turn it on. Maybe they're going to offer us... you... a deal.

With a GRUNT, Ben leans forward and turns on the TV.

BEN

Shut up.

ON TV

Dan sits at a mahogany desk with Games Symbol on it.

Ben sits back and looks at the TV.

BEN (CONT'D)

Hello there!

INT. GAMES BUILDING - TOP FLOOR - MAIN OFFICE - EVENING

Bobby and Arthur sit opposite of Dan.

DAN

Hello there yourself, Mr. Richards. I can't see you, I can only hear you, but people told me you're injured.

INTERCUT AS NEEDED

BEN

I got scratched up in the woods.

DAN

Oh yes, the famous Run Through the Woods. Bobby canonized it on the air just tonight, along with your current exploit, of course.

BEN

Excellent.

DAN

Ben, you've been the greatest contestant we've ever had. Great enough for us to offer you a deal. For the first time, you haven't got a place to hide. There's no one up there but us. You're a dead duck, finally.

BEN

Says who?

DAN

You asked me once who you could kill if you could go all the way to the top... One of them would have been me. Does that surprise you?

BEN

I suppose so. I had pegged you for the house nigger.

DAN

Here's the deal, Ben. Fly your plane to Harding. A fake execution will be performed. Then you join our team.

MCCONE

(Furiously)

What?... You black bastard.

BEN

I knew you were good, but this is really great.

DAN

Ben, you've done your song with the explosives. We know you're bluffing.  
(MORE)

DAN (CONT'D)

You couldn't get in a GA 800 with explosives, not without ringing the alarms. This makes your position worse, but --

INT. GA 800 - FIRST CLASS - EVENING

McCone approaches Ben. He points his gun at Ben's temple.

MCCONE

Here it goes. Here's where I blow your fucking head off, donkey.

DAN (O.S.)

You're dead if you do so, McCone.

McCone hesitates. He falls back a step. His face crumples.

MCCONE

I can take him. Right now, right here... We'll all be save. We --

INT. GAMES BUILDING - TOP FLOOR - MAIN OFFICE - EVENING

Dan looks mad.

DAN

You're safe, you Goddamn fool.

INTERCUT AS NEEDED

MCCONE

This man is a criminal. He killed police officers. He's publicly humiliated me and my department.

DAN

Sit down. It's time you remember who pays your salary, Mr. Chief Hunter.

MCCONE

I'm going to the Council President with this. You're going to be chopping cotton when this is over, nig! You son of a bitch.

INT. GA 800 - FIRST CLASS - EVENING

Donahue passes Amelia. He looks cold and deadlier than ever.

He trains his machine gun on McCone.

DONAHUE

Put away the gun, old man.

McCone looks astonished. He lowers his gun.

MCCONE

You --

DONAHUE

Robert S. Donahue, Games Council  
Control. Get back to second class and  
sit down like a good boy.

McCone SNARLS futility. He puts away his gun. McCone walks  
to the curtain. He disappears into second class.

INT. GAMES BUILDING - TOP FLOOR - MAIN OFFICE - EVENING

Dan sits in his chair.

DAN

The problem has been handled, Mr.  
Richards?

INTERCUT AS NEEDED

BEN

Yes.

DAN

Good! I was saying I know that you  
bluff. You'd better believe it.

BEN

But I don't.

DAN

Oh Ben, you're such a peach. If you  
really had it, you would have pulled  
the string when McCone put the gun to  
your head... Mr. Donahue?

DONAHUE

Yes sir.

DAN

Please remove Mrs. Williams's purse  
from Mr. Richards's pocket.

DONAHUE

Yes sir.

INT. GA 800 - FIRST CLASS - EVENING

Donahue walks to Ben. Donahue's face is empty. Ben rises.

BEN

Stand right there, pretty boy. Your  
boss is safe on the ground. You're  
the one that's going to the moon.

Donahue comes on. Ben takes a step back.

BEN (CONT'D)

I see you... I see you in hell.

Ben makes a pulling move in his pocket. Donahue holds for a second -- nothing happens -- and he moves on. Ben takes the purse out of his pocket and throws it away. It strikes Donahue in the breast. The purse plops at Donahue's feet like a dead bird.

Ben looks sad.

BEN (CONT'D)

Boom.

Donahue grabs the purse. He walks to Amelia. Donahue gives Amelia her purse. He walks to the cockpit.

Ben sits down. He looks at the TV.

BEN (CONT'D)

What's next, Killian? Set up the camera at the airport so everyone can watch the desperado gets it?

INT. GAMES BUILDING - TOP FLOOR - MAIN OFFICE - EVENING

Dan sits in his chair.

DAN

Now the deal, Ben. McCone's played out. You cracked him like a soft-shelled egg. We want you to take his place.

INTERCUT AS NEEDED

BEN

You're nuts, Killian.

DAN

No, I'm not. You're the best runner we've ever had. The best runner knows the best places to look.

BEN

There's never been a Chief Hunter with a family. You ought to know why. The possibilities for extortion --

DAN

Ben... your wife... and daughter... are dead.

INT. GA 800 - FIRST CLASS - EVENING

Ben looks shocked and full of disbelief.

DAN (O.S.)  
They've been dead for more than a week.

The photo of Sheila and Cathy, the one we have seen before, shrivels outside in by fire, while we move back from it. We hear DAN'S VOICE, but we only hear him in distance.

Ben looks totally deadbeat.

BEN  
What?

INT. GAMES BUILDING - TOP FLOOR - MAIN OFFICE - EVENING

Dan sits in his chair.

DAN  
I said, they were assaulted by prowlers. Your wife was stabbed over thirty times.

INTERCUT AS NEEDED

BEN  
Cathy.

DAN  
Ben, would you like some time to think about all this?

BEN  
Yes... Yes, I would.

DAN  
I'm so sorry, Ben. I swear we had nothing to do with it.

BEN  
I need time to think.

DAN  
As Chief Hunter you can nail those bastards. Put them down a deep hole.

BEN  
I want to think... Goodbye.

DAN  
I --

INT. GA 800 - FIRST CLASS - EVENING

Ben thumbs down the TV. He sits stone like. His hands dangle between his knees. He closes his eyes.

INT. BEN'S APARTMENT - HALL/CATHY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

We hear the GA 800 motors THROBBING. We reluctantly move forward from the front door into the hall. Sheila lies down. She is covered with blood. Blood spatters and smears are all over the place. We move into Cathy's bedroom, and to her bedstead. It is covered with blood spatters and smears.

INT. GA 800 - FIRST CLASS - EVENING

Ben dozes. Amelia sits down next to Ben. Ben snaps full awake. He thumbs on the TV.

Ben sits back.

DAN (O.S.)  
Richards.

BEN  
Killian. I've decided to accept your offer.

INT. GAMES BUILDING - TOP FLOOR - MAIN OFFICE - EVENING

Dan leans back, only his eyes smile.

DAN  
I'm very glad to hear that, Ben.  
Holloway will fly you to Harding right away.

INT. GA 800 - COCKPIT - EVENING

The twin control consoles swerve, tips, and turns as if in response to ghost hands. The three pilots sit, looking at their instruments.

Ben stands in the doorway.

BEN  
Jesus.

Holloway turns to Ben.

HOLLOWAY  
Hello.

BEN  
Who's driving the bus?

HOLLOWAY  
Otto... The automatic pilot!

DUNINGER  
Glad to have you on the team, fella.

BEN  
Yeah.  
(To Holloway)  
Does Otto actually steer the plane?

HOLLOWAY  
Yes, he makes us pilots superfluous,  
but people still want to see pilots.

BEN  
What happens if Otto goes off his  
chump?

Duninger looks wondered.

Holloway touches the Otto button.

HOLLOWAY  
Never happened before, but if it did,  
you'd just override him.

Ben looks fascinated at the turning wheels. The three pilots  
are doing their business -- and that is flying the plane.

Holloway looks back at Ben.

HOLLOWAY (CONT'D)  
You'll see Harding coming up there  
soon.

BEN  
How long?

HOLLOWAY  
You'll be able to see the horizon glow  
in five or six minutes.

BEN  
Thank you.

Ben exits.

Holloway looks at Duninger.

HOLLOWAY  
I'll be glad when we sat that guy  
down. He's a spook.

DUNINGER  
He didn't like Otto. You know that?

HOLLOWAY  
I know.

INT. GA 800 - FIRST CLASS - EVENING

Amelia sits in her chair, looking unhappy.

INT. GA 800 - SECOND CLASS - EVENING

McCone sits in a chair, listening in on his earphone.

INT. GA 800 - KITCHENETTE - EVENING

Ben sits on a chair, sipping his coffee. He holds the photo of SHEILA AND CATHY. Ben WEEPS. He gets up and puts his cup away. He takes the heavy, empty coffeepot. Ben wipes his eyes and exits.

INT. GA 800 - COCKPIT - EVENING

Ben steps into Donahue's compartment. Donahue does not look up.

Ben holds the coffeepot.

BEN  
Donahue. You want some coffee?

DONAHUE  
(Not looking up)  
No.

BEN  
Sure you do.

Ben swings the coffeepot on Donahue's bent head. We hear a CRASHING THUMP. Donahue falls silently on his table.

Ben drops the coffeepot.

AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER (O.S.)  
Roger five-by, Charlie-one-niner-eight-four.

Ben takes Donahue's gun from his flight jacket.

AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER (O.S.)  
(CONT'D)  
Acknowledge Estimated Time of Arrival.

Ben walks to the nose.

Friedman looks through the opening.

FRIEDMAN  
Hey, Donahue. That's you!  
(To Ben)  
Will you tell Donahue to get --

Ben shoots Friedman in the head. Friedman drops dead over his equipment.

Holloway rises. He tries to close the door. Ben shoots. Holloway is hit in the stomach. He MOANS, but remains standing. Duninger rises. Ben shoots Holloway again. Holloway's feet flip. He drops next to Friedman.

Duninger's face is a slack moon.

DUNINGER  
Don't shoot me, huh?

BEN  
Here you are!

Ben pulls the trigger twice. Duninger is hit in the chest. He drops dead.

Ben looks at the twin control consoles.

AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER (O.S.)  
Acknowledge E.T.A., Charlie-one-niner-eight-four.

Ben takes the microphone, reaching over Friedman's dead body.

BEN  
Acknowledge.

AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER (O.S.)  
You got the TV on up there? We've been getting some troubled transmission. Everything okay?

BEN  
Five-by.

AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER (O.S.)  
Roger, out.

INT. GA 800 - KITCHENETTE - EVENING

On the floor lies the DEAD BODIES of Duninger and Friedman. Ben drags Holloway's dead body out of the cockpit. He drops it next to the other two dead bodies. Ben breaths heavily.

INT. GA 800 - FIRST CLASS - EVENING

Ben walks to Amelia. His right side is sparkling red.

Amelia looks shocked.

AMELIA  
Oh dear god.

BEN

Who would have thought the old man had  
so much blood in him?

McCone dashes from the second class into the first class compartment. His gun is out. He fires. Ben fires at the same time. McCone falls between two rows of seats. Amelia SCREAMS endlessly, her hands over her head.

Ben looks down to his belly. He took another hit.

BEN (CONT'D)

Oh shit.

McCone staggers back into the path. Half his face is gone, but he grins. He fires.

A bullet strikes Ben in the shoulder. Ben fires twice.

McCone is hit in the chest. He staggers around. The gun falls from his fingers. McCone falls dead.

Amelia SCREAMS continuous. Ben looks badly hurt. He grabs the parachute.

Ben staggers to Amelia.

AMELIA

Guh... God. Oh God. Oh dear God.

BEN

Put this on, like a packsack.

AMELIA

I can't... I'm so afraid.

BEN

All right. I shoot you then.

Amelia stares at Ben. She pops out of her seat. She pulls the parachute on.

She struggles with the straps.

BEN (CONT'D)

No. That one goes under.

Amelia rearranges the strap. She MOANS of powerlessness.

BEN (CONT'D)

Fasten the clip in the ringbolt,  
Around... your... belly.

Amelia does so with trembling fingers, then:

BEN (CONT'D)

Come on.

They pass McCone's body. They walk to the closed outer door.

Ben points at a door-handle.

BEN (CONT'D)  
Okay... Pull that handle.

Amelia holds the ring cord nervously.

AMELIA  
What about you?

BEN  
What about me?

Ben pulls the door handle. Suddenly the door blows away.

The wind sucks Amelia with it. She SCREAMS.

Ben holds the back of a seat.

OUTSIDE

Amelia opens the parachute.

Ben, hag-like, makes his way from the blown door. He steps over McCone's sprawled body. Ben passes the kitchenette.

INT. GA 800 - COCKPIT - EVENING

Ben lurches up to the nose. He trips and falls. He MOANS. Ben lies down. He looks sleepy. He lifts his head.

The twin control consoles dance on.

Ben drags himself up and into Holloway's seat.

AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER (O.S.)  
Come in, Charlie-one-niner-eight-four.  
You're to low. Acknowledge.

Ben switches Otto off. Till the plane crashes we hear the VOICE WARNING AND ALARM SIGNAL:

TO LOW, TERRAIN

Ben tweaks the wheel a little. The plane falls away to the left. Ben almost falls out Holloway's chair. He MOANS. Ben tweaks the wheel back and pulls the plane straight.

AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER (O.S.)  
(CONT'D)  
Shall we assume guidance control?

The Network Games Building looks like a black tombstone with a strip of light at the top. The horizon tilts. Till the plane crashes we hear the VOICE WARNING AND ALARM SIGNAL:

OBSTACLE

Ben pulls the wheel.

AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER (O.S.)  
(CONT'D)

(Very alarmed)  
Charlie-one-niner-eight-four. What's  
wrong. Acknowledge.

BEN

Speak, boy. Rowf! Rowf!

INT. GAMES BUILDING - TOP FLOOR - MAIN OFFICE - EVENING

Bobby and Arthur rise with horror and disbelieve. They stare at the window.

OUTSIDE

The ON-COMING GA 800 fills the entire window.

Dan looks up and turns. He looks astonished. Dan rises.

OUTSIDE

The ON-RUSHING GA 800.

Dan staggers to the window. He looks at it with horror and disbelief in his eyes. We hear the plane ROARING.

INT. GA 800 - COCKPIT - EVENING

BEN'S POV

Dan looks at Ben. Dan looks completely horrified.

INT. GAMES BUILDING - TOP FLOOR - MAIN OFFICE - EVENING

Bobby and Arthur fight to get out of the room first.

Dan freezes in front of the window.

BEN (O.S.)

You knew it, Killian. You knew my  
wife and daughter were dead... even  
before I started to run.

Bobby and Arthur turn around. They are scared to death. They stare at the on-rushing GA 800. They SCREAM like hell.

OUTSIDE

The GA 800 heels over.

Dan raises his arms for protection.

DAN

Oh Jesus.

INT. GA 800 - COCKPIT - EVENING

Ben's face is smeared with blood. His eyes look like the black eyes of a demon.

EXT. GAMES BUILDING - EVENING

The GA 800 strikes the Games Building death on.

INT. GA 800 - COCKPIT - EVENING

Ben sits on Holloway's chair... The cockpit EXPLODES.

EXT. GAMES BUILDING - EVENING

A tremendous EXPLOSION lights up when the GA 800 disappears into the Games building at the top.

DOWN ON THE STREET

It rains fire and plane fragments. The street is abandoned.

INT. AMELIA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Amelia lies in her bed. She snaps awake. Her mouth is propped in a blabbering scream. She looks at the window.

AMELIA'S POV

Ben's reflection -- or face? -- is in THE WINDOW. It looks tortured, but meek.

BEN'S FACE

FADE TO BLACK:

THE END