WHEN WE FALL BEHIND

by

Dan Hutchinson

Contact:

Dan Hutchinson
9 Crookston Road
London
SE9 1YH
+447834603927
Thehutch180@googlemail.com

U.S. Copyright, 2017
FADE IN:

EXT. RED'S BAR - BOSTON - NIGHT

It is a rain-filled night. A high quality cover of the Django Reinhardt song 'Nuages' can be heard from inside the bar, which stands on the corner of a nondescript street. A sodden poster near the front door advertises that 'Frankie Feldman' is playing tonight.

INT. RED'S BAR - NIGHT

The place is about half-full. Around thirty people are seated near the small stage listening while others sit at the bar talking. A few guys play pool at the back. The solo performer is FRANKIE FELDMAN (31), with flowing locks and a handsome baby face. He wears worn jeans and a 70's style brown leather jacket. He looks the part as he brings his set to a climax. A respectable round of applause follows.

FRANKIE
Thanks guys.

EXT. RED'S BAR - NIGHT

It is still raining. Frankie leaves the bar with his guitar case in hand. He walks a few steps before a car drives up alongside him. He pays little notice to it at first.

The car window then opens and a smoky Brooklyn accent seeps through the noisy rain.

RAY
Hey Frank.

Frankie is stopped dead in his tracks. He winces before slowly turning to face RAY CANNAVARO (55), a white male with receding hair and a face of a thousand stories.

FRANKIE
Ray. What the hell do you want?

RAY
Nice to see you too kid.

FRANKIE
I told you to stay away from me. Get the hell out of here.

RAY
So you’re still pissed then?

FRANKIE
You left me for dead you asshole! Go or I call the cops!
Frankie picks up the pace. Ray follows him in the car. He then pulls over, gets out and jogs after Frankie.

RAY
Stop! You got no choice kid.

Frankie turns around and Ray is POINTING a gun at him.

EXT. DILAPIDATED WAREHOUSE – INDUSTRIAL ESTATE – NIGHT

Frankie sits forlornly in the driver’s seat of a white van. He clearly can’t wait for this ordeal to be over. He looks at his watch then spots a guy at the door gesturing. It’s LUCA CASTILLO (mid 40's), bald, with a prominent SNAKE TATTOO on his muscular neck. Frankie winds the window down.

LUCA
Bring me my case.

FRANKIE
You get it!

LUCA
(shouting)
Bring me the fucking case now!

Luca then heads back into the warehouse.

INT. DILAPIDATED WAREHOUSE – NIGHT

The warehouse is sparse apart from some old broken machinery. A badly beaten man is sitting tied to a chair. He is wearing a ruffled designer suit. It is CARL SULLIVAN (mid 30's) and sun kissed. Carl sports a BLOODIED right eye and chin.

The hulking DANIEL CONTE (late 30's), stands nearby. He’s deaf and wears a shabby ponytail.

A RAT suddenly walks over Daniel's foot startling him much to Carl's amusement. Daniel chases after the rat stomping frantically into the floor. Seeing this as an opportunity, Carl manages to reach his phone from his jacket pocket. He fiddles with the handset desperately trying to hold onto it.

Carl manages to press the "number two" on his keypad. The name 'Dad' appears on the screen. He presses the call button. The phone then slips from his hand back into his pocket.

Over by the door Luca pulls out a gun. He is saying something to Frankie. It looks heated.

Daniel stops chasing the rat and angrily stares at Carl.
INT. OFFICE - TOMMY SULLIVAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

In a mid sized office laden with war memorabilia a heavily scared burns victim sits in a wheelchair at the end of the phone. It is Bostonian TOMMY SULLIVAN (62).

TOMMY
(into phone)
Carl? Answer me. Carl!

Tommy can only hear HEAVY PANTING. He is disgusted.

INT. DILAPIDATED WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

A pissed-off Frankie reaches Carl and is shocked at the state he is in but he tries to pay him little attention. Carl is the opposite and stares at Frankie who collects some of Luca’s things such as some rope, a belt and a bag.

Frankie and Carl catch each others eye as Frankie starts to walk away. Carl takes another look at Frankie as Luca heads over.

CARL
Hey. Don’t I know you?

Frankie ignores Carl’s question and continues to walk.

CARL (CONT’D)
Yeah I do. Holy shit! You’re Frankie Feldman. Yeah, we did time together.

Frankie slowly turns around. He glares at Luca.

INT. TOMMY’S HOUSE - NIGHT

Tommy, brow perspiring, writes down Frankie’s name.

INT. DILAPIDATED WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Frankie shakes his head in disagreement.

FRANKIE
I don’t know you man.

CARL
Oh, I remember you. We had a few fights. You hit like a pussy.

Luca is confused. He pulls Frankie by the arm and they face away from Carl.

LUCA
Do you know this guy?
CARL (O.C.)
Come on Frank. Put the past behind us. Talk some sense into your animals.

Frankie bites his bottom lip in frustration.

FRANKIE
Yeah, I do. We did some time together in Colorado.

CARL
Come on Frank, it was dog eat dog inside, you know that.

Luca POINTS ANGRILY at Carl.

LUCA
Quit your talking!

Luca looks at Daniel. He directs him to use the belt on Carl. Daniel happily obliges and Carl WAILS in pain. Luca then faces Frankie.

FRANKIE
I'm not getting involved in this, Luca.

LUCA
You kind of are.

FRANKIE
Bullshit! You deal with this, Luca!

Frankie backs away from Luca for a second. Carl leans towards his phone.

CARL
Luca! Don’t listen to Frankie.

Luca looks at Carl with disdain.

LUCA
Quiet!

Carl tries hard to listen in. Frankie gets closer to Luca again.

FRANKIE
Do what you gotta do. I'm out of here.

He looks at Carl one more time before walking off.

CARL
Frank, come back. I gotta kid. Come back you sonofabitch!
Luca shakes his head dismissively, then turns his attention back to Carl.

    LUCA  
    Time to die, boy.

He loads some bullets into the gun; which has a silencer attached.

    CARL  
    Fuck you Luca. You think that dumb snake on your neck makes you tough? You're just a bald lump of shit doing someone else's dirty work.

    LUCA  
    This won't hurt. Much.

Frankie exits the barn.

    CARL  
    Feldman! Feldman!

EXT - DILAPIDATED WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Frankie runs to the van and throws the items in the back. He SLAMS the back door.

He forlornly watches as the silent bullets LIGHT up the darkness that surrounds him.

INT. TOMMY SULLIVAN'S HOME - NIGHT

Tommy is aghast.

CU: On his paper the names Luca and Frankie Feldman are CIRCLED.

He brings the phone from his ear and ends the call. His scarred plastic looks contorted and soon shock turns to anger. He picks up his glass and throws it aggressively against the wall.

EXT. VAN - UNKNOWN ROAD - NIGHT

The van speeds along a desolate road. Through the front window we can see that Frankie is close to tears as he drives. Suddenly the back door flings open and the body of Carl Sullivan is flung out, crashing to the roadside.

EXT. JERSEY CITY - NEW JERSEY - DAY

The Jersey City skyline overlooks the sunlit Hudson River. Lower Manhattan is glimpsed across the water.
SUPER: 18 MONTHS LATER

EXT. DOWNTOWN JERSEY CITY - DAY

Downtown is bustling and vibrant with all walks of life. An speeding ambulance makes its way through the morning traffic.

EXT. THE COFFEE BEAN - DOWNTOWN JERSEY CITY - DAY

A busy coffee shop sits in between a book store and an ice cream parlour. The outdoor seating proves popular.

INT. THE COFFEE BEAN - DOWNTOWN JERSEY CITY - DAY

Next to the front window sits MIKE FELDMAN (44), a dishevelled portly man. His sleepless eyes and full beard hide his above average looks. He is sitting opposite ANGELA ROBERTS (40), larger than life, wearing a garish bouffant. She is reading some notes; pausing to sip on her coffee. Mike looks around the coffee shop somewhat detached from the moment before biting into his pretzel.

He spots a young couple enjoying a tender kiss. A bittersweet look glazes over Mike's face as he swallows his food.

Angela is clearly concerned by what she has just read.

ANGELA
No. I've read it again. It's still a disaster. Incoherent, rambling. Bears no resemblance to your first book. No, I can't present this.

MIKE
Okay, well just postpone.

ANGELA
Mike we can't postpone now. The first August is 'go' day. Look, why don't you get out of town for a few days, go to the coast, find a shack, clear your mind. It's worked before.

Mike is now restless and folds his napkin into various shapes.

MIKE
Doesn't appeal at all. Why don't I speak to the old man? He loves me.

ANGELA
His son controls things now and he's a professional asshole.
MIKE
If they have any sense they will do right by me.

Angela puffs her cheeks and CHECKS her watch.

MIKE (CONT’D)
You gotta be somewhere?

ANGELA
I have other meetings 'yes'.

MIKE
Guess I’m not your golden boy anymore, right?

ANGELA
I never said that.

She puts her things into her bag and gets up.

MIKE
That’s it run away to your wunderkinds. Don’t want your reputation to suffer, do we!

She laughs before composing herself and briefly pointing a finger fiercely in Mike’s direction.

ANGELA
Hold on there Mister. We have known each other for twelve years and whether you believe it or not I care about you Mike; way more than I care about my reputation, okay? One bad deal doesn’t hurt me but it can kill your career. So have an urgent rethink please.

Angela starts to walk off but stops after a couple of steps.

ANGELA (CONT’D)
Look Mike, I hope you can finish this book. But more than that, I hope the old Mike Feldman returns real soon. For both our sakes.

Mike is clearly wounded by her words. Angela leaves some money on the table.

ANGELA (CONT’D)
I’ll call you.

Angela leaves. Mike looks lost as a few customers glance over at him. He picks up his paperwork, glares at it for a second before tossing it down.
INT. MIKE'S LOUNGE - APARTMENT - JERSEY CITY - LATE EVENING

The open plan lounge/kitchen is cluttered, a mishmash of styles and furnishings. Mike is seated at his window desk staring aimlessly at his blank laptop screen. To his right bookshelves full to the brim are prominent. A black and white photograph of a slimmer younger Mike and Angela celebrating with an award in a restaurant can also be seen on the wall.

On the table next to him sits a pile of unopened letters. The word ‘REMINDER’ is prominent on some.

On the right corner of the desk a telephone cable hangs disconnected from the telephone wall socket.

Mike rubs his hands over his face before glancing at a photograph of his daughter Lisa (then 7), and him. Lisa, a cute blonde, sits on his knee in a picturesque garden. Regret engulfs his face as he touches the photo for a moment.

He then gets up from his desk and walks to the window. At seventeen stories up the view is majestic. The bright lights of lower Manhattan SHINE across the river. They ILLUMINATE the tranquil Hudson. Mike, hands in pockets, is anything but illuminated.

INT. MIKE'S BATHROOM - LATE NIGHT

The modern bathroom is spacious with a huge walk-in shower. Mike is in his dressing gown brushing his teeth.

Suddenly, the door bell rings. He's startled. Mike walks out of the bathroom with toothpaste around his mouth.

INT. MIKE'S LOUNGE - LATE NIGHT

Mike checks the clock on the wall. It’s 12:55 a.m. The door bell RINGS again followed by a LOUD BANG.

MIKE
Okay. Okay. I’m coming!

He opens the door and gets the surprise of his life. A physically drained short-haired redhead stands before him. It’s his sister KARA FELDMAN (late 30's). Her floral dress and neck beads indicate a sense of hippiedom.

She looks pissed-off and speaks in a mild Irish accent.

KARA
Finally!

She storms past Mike with one bag of luggage and a tightly wrapped box.
MIKE
Kara. Come right on in siss.

Mike glances down the corridor to check if anyone else is there. He then closes the door.

Mike turns to see Kara toss her bag on the sofa and carefully place the box on the coffee table. She then stands there with her hands on her hips.

KARA
Where the hell have you been Mike!

MIKE
What? I have been here. What are...

KARA
No you idiot. Why have you not answered the phone or replied to my emails? I have been trying to get hold of you for two weeks!

MIKE
Oh uh, I guess I have been busy.

Kara spots that the phone line is disconnected. She walks over to it and picks it up.

KARA
Busy. Really?

Kara then spots the pile of bills. She looks at Mike and casually sifts through them.

KARA (CONT’D)
Yeah, really busy.

Mike walks over to Kara and grabs the bills from her. He notices the toothpaste on his face in the wall mirror and wipes it away.

MIKE
Um, sorry Kara but what the hell are you doing here?

Kara takes her coat off and sits down. She takes a moment.

KARA
Mom’s dead, Mike. She died two weeks ago.

His face drops.

MIKE
She’s dead?

He holds onto the top of his desk chair to steady himself.
EXT. BALCONY - TOMMY SULLIVAN'S HOUSE - UNKNOWN LOCATION - NIGHT

The house is huge and old. Tommy is sitting out on his balcony which overlooks a secluded woodland. He’s smoking a cigarette. A burly black man with short dreads sits opposite. It’s DWIGHT COLLINS (mid 30’s).

TOMMY
What guy?

DWIGHT
Randall McIntyre. A bounty hunter. Damn good, apparently.

TOMMY
Oh really. If he is so damn good how come I haven’t heard of him?

DWIGHT
He stays in the shadows.

TOMMY
What like some sort of ghoul?

DWIGHT
I kinda meant he won't have heat on him. He gets fast results.

Tommy SIGHS DEEPLY.

TOMMY
Fine. Arrange a meeting.

DWIGHT
He don't do meetings, Boss.

TOMMY
What?

DWIGHT
Only after the job is done.

TOMMY
Are you fucking kidding me?

DWIGHT
No. My contact says it’s how he has always worked. He uses phone contact only until he gets his man. Likes to cover his back until the job is finished.

Tommy is unimpressed. He looks out into the middle distance for a moment.
TOMMY
Randall McIntyre. Fuck it, I'm running out of time. Get me his number.

DWIGHT
Okay Boss.

Dwight gets up and starts to leave.

TOMMY
You and the others better keep on looking too. No slacking off.

Dwight nods in agreement.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
Oh, and Dwight, if this McIntyre fucks me over then it's on you.

Dwight nods again with some apprehension. He turns, ROLLS his eyes and walks inside.

INT. MIKE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Kara is on the sofa sipping a glass of water. She looks tired and tear stained. Mike enters the room and grabs his coat.

KARA
Where are you going?

MIKE
To tell my daughter about Mom.

KARA
Is that wise in your mood? Perhaps you should wait.

MIKE
If I wanted your advice on parenting then I would have asked!

KARA
Just remember she's a child, Mike.

MIKE
(sarcastically)
Really? I didn't realize. I'll be extra careful not to mention this stupid idea of Mom's.

Kara stands up.

KARA
It’s not stupid Mike!
MIKE
Anything that involves me driving to Oregon with that murdering scum sure sounds pretty stupid to me!

KARA
Mom is just trying to make things better. Can't you see that?

MIKE
Better! She is forcing my hand.

KARA
You just don't care do you?

MIKE
I care. But I just can't understand why she wants her ashes buried in Glendale. She hadn't been there for seven years. I mean, Ireland was her home.

KARA
Are you being serious? She wanted to be reunited with Dad. Yes, she loved being with me in Ireland but Dad was her first love above anything. Surely that was obvious?

MIKE
I don't recall her ever saying anything is all.

Kara momentarily puts her head in her hands.

KARA
That's because you never listen!

MIKE
Yeah, yeah. Where's my damn wallet?

Mike LIFTS UP a cushion then a couple of magazines. He continues to search the room while Kara hangs on his tail.

KARA
He's your brother for God's sake. What happened between you two was thirteen years ago. He's paid the price for that. Stop living in the past, for Mom's sake at least.

MIKE
In case you have forgotten, he killed my best friend.

KARA
Yes, I know, it was an accident.
MIKE
Try telling Steve that.

KARA
Oh Mike, we have been through all this a thousand times. If you can’t move on and be civil, then it will be nothing short of a disaster. Why can’t you see that!

MIKE
Ah there it is.

Mike picks up his wallet from inside a pair of dirty jeans.

MIKE (CONT’D)
Look, I don't care if it was two hundred years ago. Bottom line is our sweet little brother killed someone dear to me.

KARA
I really can't go into this again. Mom's who you should be thinking about here. You should be doing all you can to honor her memory. Frank will here tomorrow so please just hug each other and move forward.

Mike grabs his phone off the coffee table.

MIKE
Get real, Kara. It’s way too late for hugs and kisses.

KARA
Sure! Who gives a damn, right?

MIKE
Exactly! Get your head out of the damn clouds, will you?

KARA
You bastard.

MIKE
Abuse me all you want.

KARA
You disgust me, Mike.

MIKE
Too bad little Siss.

Mike gets to the front door and opens it. Kara fights back the tears.
KARA
I haven’t finished!

MIKE
Well I sure as hell have.

KARA
Mike, this task was Mom's dying wish. Almost her last words.

MIKE
Oh spare me the dramatics.

KARA
Listen! It broke her heart not being able to see you two together. So if you fail her Mike, then you will have to live with that forever. Can you be that much of a disappointment?

Mike pauses for a moment and glances over at the urn which has remained on the coffee table. He then leaves the apartment SLAMMING the door behind him. Kara breaks into TEARS.

EXT. SUSAN & PAUL MACQUARIE'S HOUSE - NEWARK, NEW JERSEY - DAY

Mike is stood on the doorstep of a plush suburban house. PAUL MACQUARIE (early 40's), a handsome well groomed man stands before him. They are in the midst of a heated exchange.

MIKE
You are loving this, aren’t you?

PAUL
Excuse me?

MIKE
Having all this control. Making me out to be a terrible father.

PAUL
You don't need my help for that.

MIKE
Paul, I am asking for five minutes. I have followed the goddamn rules.

PAUL
The drunken phone calls and school ban say otherwise.

Mike ROLLS his eyes. He rubs the back of his neck.
MIKE
You're a douche bag Paul. I stand by that, always have, always will. Susan must have lost her mind marrying you.

PAUL
Really? Because I thought she was a genius for divorcing you.

Paul goes to close the door.

MIKE
You will never be her father. Just remember that.

PAUL
The way you are going Mike, neither will you!

Paul SLAMS the door in Mike's face.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT
A six-foot-five, long-haired cowboy sits on the edge of the bed mid call. He is topless and has muscles to die for. His face is grizzled and mean and comes complete with a thick beard and a Charlie Manson stare. It is RANDALL McINTYRE (mid-forties). A Stripper (19), comes out of the bathroom. She looks badly beaten. Randall glances at her with contempt. She awkwardly leaves the room.

RANDALL
(into phone)
Look Sullivan. My price is two hundred. Take it or leave it.

TOMMY (V.O.)
You got a big mouth. Fine, two hundred.

RANDALL
Now you have my attention.

TOMMY (V.O.)
You better be as good as you think you are, boy.

RANDALL
Trust me, I am that good.

TOMMY (V.O.)
Well, you got two weeks. Or the deals off.

RANDALL
Why the rush?
TOMMY (V.O.)
Coz I'll be dead. And I want my son avenged before I leave this shitty world.

RANDALL
Best give me the details then, old man.

Randall smiles to himself.

EXT. BUS STATION - SOMEWHERE IN TEXAS - DAY
Frankie, now wearing short hair, is standing with JULIA MARTINEZ (28), twenty weeks pregnant with natural good looks and flowing black hair. Frankie looks at the greyhound bus behind him, then back at Julia.

COACH DRIVER (O.S.)
Last call!
They kiss, then reluctantly release each other's grips.

JULIA
We will be waiting for you.
Frankie beams with delight and rubs her tummy.

JULIA (CONT'D)
Now go do your Mom proud.

FRANKIE
I hope so Julia. You take care, darling. We'll speak real soon.
They smile then Frankie turns and runs on to the coach.
The bus door then closes. Frankie WAVES for a moment through the window. Julia BLOWS a KISS at him.

INT. LIBERTY STATE PARK - JERSEY CITY - DAY
Mike and Kara walk along the riverside. They reach a bench next to some trees.

MIKE
This is my spot.
They sit in silence for a moment and look out onto the river.

KARA
Maybe I can talk to Jim when I get back and see if we can help out with some money.
MIKE
No, no way. This is my mess. I will work something out. Maybe I can come up with a new idea out on the road.

KARA
I hope so. I don’t like seeing you this way.

Mike looks to the ground for a moment.

MIKE
I'm glad we have cleared the air. I was pretty terrible to you.

KARA
It's okay, I get it. But it's important we stick together now Mom has gone.

MIKE
Yeah.

Kara holds Mike's hand.

KARA
Please try to make the trip work. For Mom's sake.

Mike pauses for a moment and looks out to the Hudson before turning back to Kara.

MIKE
I can't promise anything. Every time I think of Frankie I see Steve lying on that road dying.

She looks at him, his head now BOWED.

KARA
You will do the right thing. I know you will.

Kara sits back on the bench as Mike looks out to the river once more.

INT. RANDALL'S TRUCK - ROAD - DAY
Randall is smoking a cigarette while he drives, mid-call.

INT. BASEMENT - UNKNOWN LOCATION - DAY
The BADLY LIT basement is full of computer technology and radio transmissions fill the airwaves. A geeky obese man sits in front of four computers while on his phone.
It's KEVIN WALKER (late 20's). Empty cans of energy drinks, half-eaten packs of potato chips and cigarette butts surround his work area. He is hyper.

WALKER
(into phone)
Quite the felon we have here. Theft, drugs. And murder!

RANDALL (V.O.)
Murder?

WALKER
Yeah, road traffic. Did ten years.

RANDALL (V.O.)
Current location?

WALKER
Unknown. I'm afraid.

RANDALL (V.O.)
Unknown?

WALKER
Yeah. Some hacker has been causing me shit recently. It's messing up my search facility a little.

RANDALL (V.O.)
What is this bullshit?

WALKER
Hazards of the job I'm afraid. I can tell you Feldman was born in Oregon, if that helps.

INT. RANDALL'S TRUCK - DAY
Randall is not happy. He pulls over to the roadside.

WALKER (V.O.)
I guess tracing people ain’t as easy as killing them, huh?

RANDALL
(into phone)
Just remember Walker, as soon as you stop being useful, Igor Kraspavic will be getting a call. And he ain't nice like me.

A moment of silence.

WALKER (V.O.)
Uh. Oh yeah, he has a brother. Some author.
RANDALL

Name?

WALKER (V.O.)
Mike. He's based in New Jersey. Or at least was.

Randall CIRCLES the name Mike on his bit of paper.

WALKER (V.O.)
Feldman was also friendly with a guy in prison. A dude called Ray Cannavaro.

RANDALL
Where can I find him?

WALKER (V.O.)
Queens. He has a pizza joint named Ray Ray’s.

RANDALL
It's a start. Send me over any recent photos of the Feldman's. And keep searching, shithead.

WALKER
As long as this hacker stays off my back, then you can count on me.

RANDALL
He better. Or you're a dead man.

Randall hangs up the phone. He underscores Mike’s name and thinks for a moment, then begins to write further concealed notes.

EXT. STREET (RIVERSIDE) - JERSEY CITY - DAY

Frankie is walking alongside Kara. They exude contentment.

KARA
Is Julia coping with the pregnancy?

FRANKIE
Yeah. She's doing great.

KARA
Can't wait to meet her. She sounds lovely.

FRANKIE
She is. Speaking of lovely, I see Mike is raring to go.

He GESTURES with his head up the street. Kara looks and she can see Mike is packing the Cadillac.
KARA
I tried to soften him up for you.
But he's not in a good place.
Hopefully, he will find some peace
on this trip.

FRANKIE
Still calling me a murderer, I
guess?

Kara stops and grabs Frankie's hands.

KARA
I know it was an accident, okay?

FRANKIE
I know you do. Mom didn’t though,
did she, and nor does he.

KARA
Come here. It's gonna be alright.

Kara HUGS Frankie tightly in her arms.

EXT. MIKE'S CAR - STREET (RIVERSIDE) - DAY

Mike watches his siblings hug for a moment via the rear
mirror. He soon turns away, unmoved by the embrace.

EXT. QUEENS BOULEVARD - QUEENS - EVENING

Randall’s truck drives around a corner into a busy
neighborhood. On the left of the street Ray Ray’s Pizzeria
can be seen in-between a 99 dollar store and a video store.

INT. RAY RAYS PIZZERIA - EVENING

In a run of the mill pizzeria, Ray, now greyer on top, is
writing up a stock list outback.

Randall walks in. Ray HEARS the door open but doesn’t turn
around.

RAY
Give me a minute. I’ll be right
out.

Ray put's his paper down and walks out front.

RAY (CONT’D)
What can I (beat)

He is taken aback by Randall's appearance.
RAY (CONT’D)
Get you.

RANDALL
I don’t want pizza.

Ray laughs to himself.

RAY
Well, you’ve come to the wrong place then, pal.

He grabs a cloth and wipes the counter surface.

RANDALL
I’m looking for Frankie Feldman.

Ray momentarily stops the cleaning.

RAY
Frankie Feldman?

RANDALL
Yeah, I’m told you two were pretty tight.

RAY
Years ago maybe.

RANDALL
Where is he now?

RAY
How the hell should I know? Who’s asking anyway?

RANDALL
An old friend of his.

RAY
An old friend, huh?

RANDALL
We go way back.

RAY
I didn’t know he was friends with cowboys.

RANDALL
Yeah and Indians too.

Ray shrugs his shoulders and turns around. He discreetly slides a knife into his apron.
RAY
Look, last time I heard he was in Miami, working on a boat or something.

RANDALL
Miami? On a boat.

RAY
Yeah. Last I heard.

RANDALL
Long way from Oregon, huh?

RAY
Hey look here pal, I said he was in Miami. That’s all I know. So why don’t you jump back on your horse and go check it out.

RANDALL
If I find out you lied I won’t be happy. It’s very important I see him.

RAY
I got no reason to lie.

Randall smiles. He then looks at Ray for a few moments.

RANDALL

Randall opens the door, TIPS his hat then leaves. Ray is concerned by what just happened. He watches Randall walk out of sight. He then picks up his cellphone and starts to dial a number.

EXT. 1-276 W - EVENING

There is a two mile long traffic jam due to road works. Mike's car can be seen amongst the waiting pack.

INT. MIKE'S CAR - EVENING

Mike is drinking some water. The radio is on. Mozart's symphony 'Serenade No. 13' is playing. You can cut the atmosphere with a knife.

FRANKIE
Kara told me you're writing a new book.

Mike steadfastly ignores him.
FRANKIE (CONT'D)
A sequel to Carmel's Honour, right?

Still nothing from Mike.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)
I always liked that book. The film, not so much.

Mike continues to blank him and instead turns up the radio. Frankie looks disappointedly at Mike for a moment.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)
I play guitar. Gypsy Jazz mainly.

Mike is nonplussed and instead reaches for a piece of candy to eat.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)
I got a tape in my bag.

Mike laughs sarcastically.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)
It works just fine. Can I put it on? I’ve got an adaptor with me.

Frankie leans towards his bag. He then goes to put the adaptor in the connection but Mike SNATCHES it from him and throws it into the back seat as the traffic starts to move.

MIKE
You don't just turn off, Mozart.

Frankie is a little taken aback.

FRANKIE
Fine. Forget it.

Frankie THROWS the tape into the back of the car. He looks out of his window in dismay.

Mike glances at him guilt-free.

INT. BACK ROOM - RAY RAYS PIZZERIA - NIGHT

Ray is on his cell phone in the back room. He receives a voice-mail message.

PHONE VOICEMAIL
The voicemail box is full. Please try again later.

Ray hangs up, then sighs. He spots DOUG MORELLO (20), his assistant, standing by the back room door looking at him suspiciously.
RAY
What’s up with you?

DOUG
Nothing. I’ve finished cleaning.

RAY
Right. Well you may as well go home. It’s dead tonight.

DOUG
Okay. Um, can I have tomorrow off? My Mom’s sick again so I gotta help her out.

RAY
Uh, no not really kid. I am going to be out most of the day. I’ll need you here.

DOUG
But she is sick.

RAY
I understand. But this is your job. Close up a little early maybe. She will be fine.

Doug puts his coat on, a little-pissed off. He looks over at Ray who is clearly troubled.

DOUG
Night then.

Ray doesn’t look at Doug and just half-heartedly WAVES him off.

INT. MOTEL - NIGHT

In a modest motel lobby Mike and Frankie stand at the reception desk. They are faced by a twenty-stone male MOTEL CLERK (mid 30's), serves them.

MOTEL CLERK
Sorry guys, we only have the one room left. Single bed.

MIKE
Oh right.

MOTEL CLERK
Big soccer game in town tonight. Do you want it?

Mike looks at his watch.
Sure.

Motel Clerk
Driving license please.

Mike hands over the license as Frankie looks on concerned. The Motel Clerk heads out back.

Frankie
Mike, it's a single bed. Let's go somewhere else.

Mike
This is fine for me.

Frankie
Well, I'll take the floor then.

Mike
The hell you will. Sleep in the car.

Frankie
I'm not sleeping in the car. It's freezing out there.

Mike
Car or the gutter. Your choice.

Frankie
Don't be an idiot Mike.

Mike dangles the keys at Frankie.

Mike
Take it or leave it.

Frankie
I can't believe you.

Frankie grabs the car keys as the Clerk returns.

Mike
Don't you dare lose those keys!

Frankie storms off. Mike smiles awkwardly at the Clerk.

INT. MIKE'S CAR - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Frankie is lying back in the front seat with his jacket draped over his chest. He looks out to the highway in front of him. He then closes his eyes.

Flashback:
INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

BOB HARRISON (early 50's), stocky with a handlebar moustache, sits at the kitchen table in a modest neat kitchen smoking a cigarette. He looks up at the clock on the wall. It's almost 2.30 a.m.

From the kitchen a motorbike can be HEARD arriving. Bob places the cigarette down in his ashtray.

A few moments pass and Frankie (now 18), walks in carrying his helmet. He's surprised to see Bob.

BOB
Where have you been?

FRANKIE
With my girl.

Frankie starts to walk out of the kitchen.

BOB
I ain't done talking. Sit down.

FRANKIE
I'm good standing.

BOB
Suit yourself. You been on drugs tonight, son?

FRANKIE
No Sir.

BOB
Liquor?

FRANKIE
One beer.

BOB
You know it's against the law to drink and drive, boy.

FRANKIE
I had food and anyway you ain't the sheriff anymore Bob, so you can't book me.

BOB
No. But I warned you that you had to stop seeing Carly didn't I? Her folks don't trust you.

FRANKIE
It ain't your business who I see Bob.
FRANKIE (CONT’D)
Just like it ain't my business who my Mom sees, unfortunately. Good night.

BOB
Okay okay. I'm busting your balls. Say listen Frank, I have your Mom's present in the barn. It needs a few tweaks before the party tomorrow. I could do with a hand.

FRANKIE
Now?

BOB
I know it's late but your Mom's asleep. You know what she's like busying around and all.

FRANKIE
I'm pretty tired.

BOB
It will be twenty minutes tops. We get it finished and then we can sit back and see her happy face.

FRANKIE
What is it?

BOB
I'll show you. Come on.

FRANKIE
Okay. Fine.

INT. BARN - NIGHT
Bob opens the barn door and walks in. Frankie follows suit.

BOB
Shut the door. Keep in the noise.

Frankie pulls the door shut as the barn LIGHT comes on. He turns around and Bob is standing there next to a rocking chair.

BOB (CONT’D)
What do you think?

FRANKIE
A rocking chair?

BOB
Yeah. Hand made. It's just part of the gift. Test it out. I'll go and get the other part.
Frankie sits down in the chair. He ROCKS in it a little but isn’t particularly impressed. The barn lights then GO OUT.

**FRANKIE**
Bob. The lights.

A moment passes and they come BACK ON. Bob is standing in front of Frankie and is now flanked by Two Guys (late 40's), with varying builds. Bob smiles sadistically.

**BOB**
This is your mother's main gift, Frankie. The best gift of all.

Bob holds up a whip and the other guys head MENACINGLY towards Frankie.

**END OF FLASHBACK**

Frankie is woken by a passing truck HONKING at other vehicles.

**EXT – I-276 W – DAY**

The landscape is LIT by the early morning sun. A few cars make their way up and down the highway. Mike's car comes into view. A sign for Pennsylvania state is just ahead.

**INT. MIKE'S APARTMENT – DAY**

Randall is pacing around the lounge. A HISPANIC CLEANING LADY (middle-aged), cleans around him.

**RANDALL**
Oregon. Really? I’m sure he said Miami to me.

**HISPANIC CLEANING LADY**
No, Oregon. He is going to bury his Mother.

**RANDALL**
What! She's dead. But I spoke to him two weeks ago and he never mentioned anything.

She then gets a different cloth and wipes down the stainless steel chairs.

**HISPANIC CLEANING LADY**
He only found out a few days ago.

Randall sits down on the couch.

**RANDALL**
Heck. Did he go with Frankie?
HISPANIC CLEANING LADY
Yes.

RANDALL
Taking her back to Portland then?

HISPANIC CLEANING LADY
I'm not sure.

RANDALL
Did the boys fly?

She then moves to the book cabinet with her duster.

HISPANIC CLEANING LADY
He hates flying. No, they drove.

RANDALL
Of course.

On a nearby cabinet Randall spots a PHOTO of Mike stood next to his RED Cadillac. It looks fairly recent but Mike is without a beard.

RANDALL (CONT’D)
The red Cadillac.

HISPANIC CLEANING LADY
Yes, you know that, at least.

Randall takes a sneaky photo of the photo with his cellphone when the cleaner is looking elsewhere.

RANDALL
Say you don't have his cell number do you? I lost my phone yesterday.

HISPANIC CLEANING LADY
No. Sorry.

RANDALL
Ah, that's too bad. Well, I better get going.

Randall gets up, TIPS his hat in her direction and starts to walk to the door.

HISPANIC CLEANING LADY
Hope you catch up with them.

RANDALL
Oh. I’m sure I will.

Randall leaves with a contented smile on his face.
EXT. I-70W - EVENING

The sun is SETTING as Mike’s car overtakes a large truck.

INT. MIKE’S CAR - EVENING - SAME TIME

Frankie is picking up some crumbs off the floor.

MIKE
Get them all up. It costs a fortune to keep the interiors clean.

FRANKIE
You could just clean them yourself.

He rolls the window down and THROWS the crumbs outside.

FRANKIE (CONT’D)
Satisfied?

Mike TURNS UP the radio. Frankie TURNS IT DOWN. Mike TURNS IT BACK ON but Frankie TURNS IT OFF.

MIKE
Get your dirty hands off the radio.

Mike defiantly puts the radio back on.

FRANKIE
I just want us to talk.

MIKE
No thanks. I have nothing to say.

FRANKIE
Mike, it's been thirteen years. Aren't you even a little bit interested in me?

MIKE
No.

FRANKIE
So we're just going to sit in silence the whole time, are we? You calling the shots.

MIKE
Absolutely.

FRANKIE
Come on Mike. I'm trying here.

MIKE
You are trying to annoy me is what.
FRANKIE
Look, I know we have a difficult past but can't we try to be friends?

MIKE
Steve was my friend.

FRANKIE
I wondered when that was coming.

MIKE
Just be quiet. It's better that way.

Frankie reluctantly puts his headphones on and shuts his eyes. Mike is miserable as sin.

INT. RANDALL'S TRUCK - I-70 W - DAY

Randall is driving along at a fair rate of speed. He has a cigarette half-in-his-mouth while he holds his phone to his ear.

TOMMY (V.O.)
Oregon?

RANDALL
(into phone)
Their old girl died. They are taking her ashes home.

TOMMY (V.O.)
His brother. Is he dangerous?

RANDALL
No. Just some hack writer.

TOMMY (V.O.)
Good. Bring them both. Alive.

RANDALL
Both means extra. Another hundred grand.

There is silence for a moment.

TOMMY (V.O.)
Fine. Three hundred grand for both.

RANDALL
That works for me, Sullivan. I'll be in touch.

Randall hangs up.
RANDALL (CONT’D)

Prick.

He then PUFFS his cigarette some more.

INT. BACK ROOM - RAY RAY’S PIZZERIA - NIGHT

The pizza joint is closed. Ray is out back, sitting down at a table with CHARLIE KINDLEMAN (60). Charlie has a long drag on a cigarette.

Ray is anxiously biting his nails. He takes a moment, stands up and leans on a pallet of boxes with both hands for a moment.

RAY
Luca and Daniel were killed over a year ago. Safe to assume that it was a hit by Tommy then?

Charlie nods in agreement and Ray PACES the room.

RAY (CONT’D)
How the fuck could Sullivan think Frankie killed his son? If Luca had snitched then I would be a deadman by now.

CHARLIE
Sullivan was always a relentless sonofabitch Ray. He’s got something pinning Frankie. I guess he has always been chasing him and that’s why the cowboy is suddenly on the scene. The kid’s probably got a price on his head.

RAY
Jesus Christ.

CHARLIE
Why the concern for Frankie anyhow?

RAY
We did time together. Became close. Watched each others backs. The kid saved my life on more than one occasion.

CHARLIE
You owe him, I get that.

RAY
I do. Not just for prison though. I fucked him over a couple of times when we got out.
Left him for dead one time and then got him caught up in this mess. I owe him big time.

CHARLIE
I hear you.

RAY
I gotta do the right thing. Then I'm done with all this shit. No more Tommy, no more dumb scores. I need to make this place work and try and get my old lady back.

CHARLIE
Look, I will ask around about Frankie and the cowboy, see what I can dig up. I'll also try and put some muscle together.

RAY
Thanks buddy. Christ, I can't believe it. Sullivan walks away from a burning warehouse, holes up in Canada and lives happily ever after.

CHARLIE
Yeah. Only he ain't so happy.

Ray is at a loss. He rubs his forehead and sits back down.

RAY
I shoulda known that Luca couldn't be trusted. Trigger-happy asshole.

Ray sips his coffee.

CHARLIE
What's done is done, Ray.

Charlie then gets up.

CHARLIE (CONT’D)
Stay calm. I’ll call you soon.

Charlie pats Ray on the back then leaves the room. Ray looks at his cellphone.

RAY
Why won’t you answer your damn phone Frankie!
EXT - I-70W - DAY

It's RAINING and we see Mike’s car meander along the sodden highway. Construction signs adorn the roadside. However glimpses of appealing scenery can be seen through the rain.

INT. MIKE'S CAR - DAY

Mike YAWNS in between smiling to himself.

Frankie looks across at him while holding on protectively to his mothers urn.

MIKE
You know something? I realized the more I write and the more I think about writing the less I have to see of you and listen to your crap. So I had a very productive night last night. Thank you; you haven’t been completely pointless after all.

FRANKIE
You don't have to be so nasty, Mike.

Mike laughs to himself.

MIKE
You can only dream of being as successful as me. What are you? A farm hand, cleaning up horse shit. Wow, Mom, I bet you are really proud of him, right?

FRANKIE
Uh no. I live on a farm and I teach guitar. Plus I get regular shows. I did try to play you my tape, remember?

MIKE
I'll tell you what you really are?

FRANKIE
What?

MIKE
You're a cockroach and I just want to stamp on you. Stamp you right out of my life. You are nothing Frankie, you know it, I know it and Mom sure as hell knew it too so why don’t you just do us all a favor and disappear. Again.
FRANKIE
You really are a hateful piece of work.

MIKE
With good cause. Murderer.

FRANKIE
You can't let it go can you?

MIKE
Never. It should have been you that died that night. Not Steve. He had a wonderful life ahead of him. You were just bad news from the day you were born.

FRANKIE
You don't mean that. We had plenty of good times.

MIKE
I'm pretty sure if Mom were alive right now she would say that her and Dad should have stopped at two.

Frankie's eyes widen. He has reached breaking point.

FRANKIE
Right that's it. Pull over!

MIKE
No.

FRANKIE
I said pull over, you idiot.

Frankie GRABS part of the wheel. He places one hand on the urn box.

MIKE
Get your hands off the wheel. Watch what you are doing with Mom.

FRANKIE
I have her just fine. Now pull over. Let's sort this out like real men.

MIKE
You want to fight me?

FRANKIE
Damn right I do. I am gonna knock some sense into that dumb head of yours.
Mike ROARS with laughter. Frankie pushes him and grabs the wheel again. They TUSSLE.

MIKE
Let go you fool.

FRANKIE
Pull over!

The urn lid falls off into the box.

MIKE
The urn! Look what you have done! You almost spilt Mom all over the place.

FRANKIE
She's fine! Pull over!

MIKE
Shut up!

Mike takes his eye off the road and they ALMOST HIT a motorbike. He SWERVES.

MIKE (CONT’D)
Jesus!

FRANKIE
Pull over!

MIKE
Right, I’ve had enough of your crap.

Mike pulls over onto the side of the road.

He gets out of the car and so does Frankie. They face off with their fists.

MIKE (CONT’D)
What have you got tough guy? Come on!

Frankie CHARGES at Mike and takes him down. They grapple on the floor, getting covered in MUD.

FRANKIE
No wonder Susan left you. You horrible bastard.

Frankie THROWS a punch but misses Mike's face. Mike, in turn, KNEES Frankie in order to get him off.

After a few moments it's clear that both are terrible fighters only able to throw a few light punches.

They even resort to RUBBING MUD in each others faces.
MIKE
I hate you. You are nothing to me!
You hear me, nothing!

A few cars TOOT their horns as they past by. Suddenly the sound of a police SIREN can be heard although the warring brothers are oblivious to it.

A police patrol car pulls up behind them.

INT. POLICE STATION - FRONT DESK - DAY

A dishevelled Mike SIGNS some paperwork as a POLICE OFFICER (45), watches. Frankie stands glum near the front door.

POLICE OFFICER
Now you two, make sure you stay out of trouble, okay.

Mike nods 'yes' and walks away embarrassed. He ignores Frankie.

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Mike walks a few steps and turns around to Frankie.

MIKE
I want you to find your own way to Oregon.

FRANKIE
What?

MIKE
This is clearly never going to work so I want to carry on alone.

FRANKIE
Wait a minute. I haven’t got a car or my passport. How do you suppose I travel?

MIKE
Get the train or a bus. That’s not my problem.

FRANKIE
No, no way. You got no right to order me around. You heard what Kara said Mom wanted us to do this together and that’s what I intend to do.
MIKE
Are you stupid or something? I am not letting you back in the car. It’s a waste of time.

FRANKIE
Whatever Mike.

Frankie opens the car door and Mike SLAMS it shut. Frankie attempts to open it again but Mike blocks him.

FRANKIE (CONT’D)
Do you want to have another fight. Is that it?

MIKE
Outside here? I don’t think so. I just want you out of my hair.

FRANKIE
Fine, but Mom's coming with me.

MIKE
What!

Frankie reaches into the boot of the car and pulls out the urn box along with his bag.

MIKE (CONT’D)
Put her back.

FRANKIE
No. See you in Oregon, Mike.

Frankie begins to walk off. Mike is taken aback for a moment. He shakes his head.

MIKE
Okay! Get the hell in the car. Just don’t talk to me. In fact don’t even look at me.

Frankie turns back and THROWS his bag in the trunk.

He then ignores Mike and gets into the car, carefully holding the urn box as he does.

Mike KICKS the wheel of the car as he walks around to the driver side.

INT. MOTEL - NIGHT

An ELDERLY MOTEL CLERK (75), is standing behind the reception desk. Randall stands before him FLASHING a fake badge.

Randall
Feldman. Mike Feldman.
ELDERLY MOTEL CLERK
Let me check the book.

The Clerk checks a few pages.

ELDERLY MOTEL CLERK (CONT’D)
Yes. I had a Mike Feldman. Stayed here Tuesday. Could be the same fella.

RANDALL
Tuesday. Thanks partner.

Randall TIPS his hat at the Clerk. He then leaves the motel.

EXT. COMFORT MOTEL - OFF I-70 W - NIGHT

It’s RAINING outside the mid-size motel. There are a few LIGHTS ON in the motel rooms.

INT. MIKE’S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Mike is sitting at the desk typing away on his laptop.

INT. FRANKIE’S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Frankie is sitting on his bed. The TV is ON but he isn’t paying any attention to it. He instead flicks through recent romantic photos on his cellphone showing him and his girl Julia.

INT. INTERNET CAFE - DAY

Mike seems pretty happy with himself. He’s typing an email. He then removes his USB stick from the PC he’s using before pressing 'send'. The subject matter is unknown.

MIKE
Eat your heart out Angela!

He then sits back in his chair as proud as punch.

INT. LIBRARY STAFF ROOM - DAY

Julia is sitting down sipping on a glass of water.

Her cellphone RINGS. She picks it up and is delighted to see Frankie’s name appear on the screen. She answers the call.

JULIA
(into phone)
Frankie!
EXT. GAS STATION - SAME TIME

Frankie is sat on a wall just off the forecourt. He smiles to himself.

    FRANKIE
    (into phone)
    Hey there beautiful! How you doing?

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION - JULIA & FRANKIE

    JULIA
    I’m okay. How has today been?

    FRANKIE
    Awful. Same as every day. He just won't give an inch.

    JULIA
    Oh no, still.

    FRANKIE
    Yeah, we had a proper fight too. Cops broke it up. I just can't wait for this to be over.

END INTERCUT

Mike is in the b.g. refuelling. He notices Frankie's on the phone. We see Mike look down at his watch and walk towards Frankie.

    JULIA (V.O.)
    I’m sorry Frank. But there's still time for things to change, right?

    FRANKIE
    (into phone)
    I wouldn’t bet on it.

Mike gets closer.

    FRANKIE (CONT’D)
    Ah screw him. When this is done we never have to see each other again so that's a positive.

    JULIA (V.O.)
    You don't mean that, Frank?

    FRANKIE
    I do. It was a nice idea by Mom but some thing's just can't be fixed.

Mike arrives.

    MIKE
    The cars ready. Let’s go.
Frankie turns to see Mike walk away. He wonders if Mike heard any of that.

FRANKIE
Julia, listen I...

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION - JULIA & FRANKIE

JULIA
It's okay I heard him. You'd better go.

FRANKIE
Yeah, I don’t want to give him any more ammo.

JULIA
Listen, Frankie. It will be okay.

FRANKIE
Maybe. I will call you later. Find out how you are doing.

JULIA

FRANKIE
Bye babe.

END INTERCUT

Frankie hangs up and looks a bit more positive. He turns his head towards the car. Mike is already waiting with the ENGINE RUNNING.

INT. MOTEL - NIGHT

Frankie's walking through the motel corridor. He KNOCKS on Room 12. Mike OPENS the door. He's dressed in his boxer shorts and a T-shirt.

MIKE
What do you want?

FRANKIE
Look, this trip has been hell so far, for both of us.

MIKE
Agreed.

FRANKIE
So lets clear the air. Have a beer. What do you say Mike? For Mom's sake.
MIKE
I would rather chew my own feet.

FRANKIE
Jesus, Mike.

Mike then SHUTS the door abruptly.

FRANKIE (CONT’D)
Mike, wait! Don’t do this! Please

There's no answer. Frankie's shoulders SLUMP and he walks away dejected.

INT. RAY'S VAN - QUEENS - NIGHT

Ray is seated in his parked van. He's smoking and continues to remain perplexed as he dials a number on his cellphone.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Frankie's sitting alone at the bar. He has a bottle of beer in front of him. His cellphone RINGS. He doesn't recognize the number.

FRANKIE
(into phone)
Who the hell is this?

INT. RAY'S VAN - NIGHT

Ray is a little surprised to get an answer.

RAY
(into phone)
Frankie! Don’t hang up, it’s Ray.

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION - FRANKIE and RAY

FRANKIE
Ray! I told you to never call me again.

RAY
I know but there’s a problem.

FRANKIE
Oh give me a break, will you?

RAY
No, just hear me out Frank it’s...
FRANKIE
Shut up Ray! We are done you lying piece of shit! Delete my number or I'll call the cops.

RAY
Frankie for...

END INTERCUT

Frankie hangs up. He's furious and swigs aggressively on his beer.

INT. RAY'S VAN - QUEENS - NIGHT

Ray BASHES his steering wheel with his fist then stares at his phone for a second. He then starts to type a text message.

EXT. BAR - NIGHT

Frankie is walking out of the bar. His phone beeps twice. He checks the screen and it's Rays number again. Without viewing the message he presses 'delete', then continues to walk out of the bar.

INT. DINER - OFF I-74 W - DAY

Mike sits alone in a busy diner. He's drinking coffee and reading a newspaper.

Frankie walks over. He looks tired.

FRANKIE
Can I sit here, Mike? There are no spare tables.

MIKE
If you must.

Frankie sits down and grabs a menu.

FRANKIE
There must be something big going on in town.

MIKE
The waitress said it's a sports memorabilia event.

FRANKIE
Cool.
MIKE
Don’t order coffee. There’s some left in the pot.

FRANKIE
Oh, thanks.

Frankie’s confused by Mike’s spurt of generosity. He pours a cup of coffee for himself.

Mike then gets up. He throws some bills on the table.

MIKE
I’ve got to make a few calls. Can you take care of the bill?

FRANKIE
Sure.

Mike leaves the table and Frankie tries to make sense of Mike’s minor gesture of hospitality.

EXT. DINER - DAY - SAME TIME

Mike’s on his cellphone in front of the diner. He’s smiling to himself.

MIKE
(into phone)
Angela! It’s Mike.

INT. ANGELA’S OFFICE - DOWNTOWN NEW YORK - DAY

Angela is seated in a plush modern office. Brooklyn Bridge is prominent from her high vantage point.

ANGELA
(into phone)
Mike, where the hell are you?

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION - MIKE & ANGELA

MIKE
Uh, somewhere near Wyoming.

ANGELA
What? Why?

MIKE
I’m heading to Oregon to bury my Mom.

ANGELA
Excuse me!
MIKE
She died a few weeks back.

ANGELA
What! Why didn’t you say something?

MIKE
I didn’t know at the time. Look it doesn’t matter now. I’m doing what I have to do.

ANGELA
I’m shocked and I am very sorry for your loss. Joan was a lovely lady.

MIKE
Yes. So did you like it?

ANGELA
What, the draft?

MIKE
It’s good right. I think it’s my best work.

Silence.

MIKE (CONT’D)
Are you still there?

ANGELA
Mike, what are you talking about, it's awful.

MIKE
You are kidding me.

ANGELA
No, it's terrible and to top it off I can’t believe you sent it to the publisher without letting me proof-read it first. We have always worked that way.

MIKE
I wanted to prove a point to them that...

ANGELA
Oh, you sure proved a point Mike.

MIKE
So what did they say?

ANGELA
Mike, they hated it too. They said they read like eight pages, then deleted your email.
MIKE
(stunned)
I don’t believe that.

Angela walks to the office window.

ANGELA
Look Mike, I’m sorry to have to say this, especially at this difficult time but they have gone ahead and pulled the plug. The deal is off. They have hired Toby Sinclair to write it instead.

MIKE
The deal is off!

ANGELA
Yes and they have requested that you also give them back the advance. They feel extremely let down by your lack of craft.

MIKE
I will speak to them myself. Smooth things over.

ANGELA
No Mike, it’s too late for that. Bottom line is you shouldn’t have been writing. Your Mom has just died. It’s crazy!

MIKE
So what the hell happens now?

ANGELA
There’s nothing left to say, Mike. You have no deal.

MIKE
I think you need to speak to my lawyer. Or I will.

ANGELA
I had her check the contract already. They covered all angles. Maybe you need a break from the business. Get yourself sorted before you try and write again. Grieve, for God’s sake.

MIKE
Angela. You have got to do something. I really need this job.

Angela checks the clock on the wall.
ANGELA
Mike, I have to go. I’ll send you a
copy of their email.

END INTERCUT

Mike hangs up. He's dumbstruck. He continues to hold the
phone to his ear for a few seconds, seemingly trying to grasp
the difficult situation he now finds himself in.

EXT. US-36 W - DAY

It's POURING RAIN and Mike's car is one of the few vehicles
trying to make headway.

INT. MIKE'S CAR - SAME TIME

Mike is very subdued. Frankie is reading a music magazine.
Mike WIPES the inside of the windshield. It's getting harder
to see.

FRANKIE
Are you sure you are okay? You have
barely said anything for hours. Is
it me?

MIKE
I'm just tired.

FRANKIE
Maybe you should pull over. It's
getting dangerous out there.

MIKE
It's fine.

FRANKIE
Don't be stupid. You're not putting
my life at risk with your mood.

Mike GLARES at Frankie and looks like he's about to shout at
him. He CRASHES through a huge puddle and is distracted.

The brothers are momentarily shaken.

FRANKIE (CONT’D)
Pull over. There's a rest area up
ahead.

Mike flicks his indicator on.
INT. ROADSIDE BAR/SHACK - OFF US-36 W - DAY

Mike can’t get a signal on his cellphone. The pay-phone on the wall doesn’t work either.

Frankie arrives with two glasses of Coke.

FRANKIE
Who are you trying to call?

MIKE
Susan.

FRANKIE
Susan, why?

MIKE
None of your damn business.

Mike turns to the BARTENDER (Mid-40's).

MIKE (CONT’D)
Hey pal, is there a phone that works around here?

BARTENDER
Sure, outside. Watch out for the leaking roof.

Mike turns and looks out of the window. It’s still POURING outside.

FRANKIE
Mike, just calm down first, will you?

MIKE
Drink your drink!

Mike leaves the bar. Frankie looks across at the bartender and ROLLS his eyes.

INT. PHONE-BOOTH - DAY

Mike's getting wet as he waits for an answer.

INT. SUSAN'S HOUSE - DAY

Susan reaches for the phone in the hallway. She wears an apron that’s covered in flour.

SUSAN
(into phone)
Hello.
MIKE (V.O.)
Susan. It’s Mike.

INTERCUT – PHONE CONVERSATION – SUSAN & MIKE

SUSAN
Oh, what do you want?

MIKE
(into phone)
I need to speak to Lisa.

SUSAN
So you have remembered her then?

MIKE
Of course. I tried to talk to her the other day but Paul...

SUSAN
Yes, I heard about how you abused him.

MIKE
What? Hardly.

SUSAN
She doesn’t want to talk to you, Mike.

MIKE
Oh, don’t you start, Susan. This is the same shit I had from Paul. She’s my daughter and I want to talk to her.

SUSAN
No, Mike. She said, as you conveniently forgot again, she doesn’t want to talk to you.

MIKE
What are you talking about? Forgot what?

SUSAN
You’re pathetic, Mike. It was her birthday.

MIKE
Oh shit.

SUSAN
You promised her you wouldn’t forget after last year’s mess.
MIKE
I’m sorry. The last few days have been pretty crazy and...

SUSAN
That’s it, blame it on the writing again.

MIKE
No.

SUSAN
Sure Mike. It's your best excuse and I would know.

MIKE
Susan, will you just hear me out? It wasn’t the writing, okay!

SUSAN
Go on then and humor me.

MIKE
The thing is my Mom died a few weeks back and I only found out a couple of days ago

SILENCE.

SUSAN
Died. What happened?

MIKE
It was a long term heart issue.

SUSAN
I'm sorry Mike. I was very fond of her.

MIKE
Yeah, she liked you too.

SUSAN
I will arrange some flowers to be sent to Kara. How come you found out so late?

MIKE
Various communication problems.

SUSAN
Mike, it’s not very useful to be living like you are or professional as a matter of fact. You need to sort out your bills.

MIKE
Okay, okay. Quit with the lecture.
SUSAN
Look, I have to go. I have a busy day.

MIKE
Wait a minute! Let me tell Lisa about her Grandma.

SUSAN
No, I will tell her. She has her friends over so now is not a good time.

MIKE
Jesus, Susan. He has really turned you against me, hasn’t he?

SUSAN
Mike, please don’t start.

Paul then walks into the hallway.

PAUL
(whispering)
Who is it?

Susan mouths ‘Mike’ and Paul ROLLS his eyes.

PAUL (CONT’D)
(shouting)
What the hell does he want?! Just hang up on him, Susan!

END INTERCUT

INT. PHONE BOOTH - DAY

Mike's EYES WIDEN in anger.

MIKE
(into phone - shouting)
Don’t you hang up on me you bitch! Tell that asshole to stay out of this!

INT. SUSAN'S HOUSE - DAY

SUSAN
(into phone)
Mike. Don’t you dare speak like that to me!

Paul is standing with his hands on his hips. He shakes his head in disgust.
PAUL
Give me the damn phone. It's time
he was put in his place!

Paul grabs the phone and Susan flustered, sits down on the
stairs.

PAUL (CONT’D)
(into phone)
Right, you listen to me and you
listen good!

INT. ROADSIDE BAR/SHACK - OFF US-36 W - DAY

Mike walks back into the bar. He is sodden. Frankie puts down
his drink and walks over to him.

FRANKIE
Mike are…

MIKE
Don’t say anything.

He BATS Frankie away with his arm and heads to the bar.

MIKE (CONT’D)
Whisky. Make it a triple.

BARTENDER
Are you sure?

MIKE
Just give me the damn drink will
you.

FRANKIE
Mike, what are you doing?

MIKE
I told you to shut up.

FRANKIE
What the hell happened out there?

Mike downs the drink and grimaces.

FRANKIE (CONT’D)
Jesus, Mike.

MIKE
Same again.

FRANKIE
No, don’t listen to him. Just get
him a glass of water instead.
MIKE
Get out of my face!

Mike PUSHES Frankie to the ground.

MIKE (CONT’D)
Same again.

BARTENDER
Maybe your buddy’s right.

MIKE
He ain’t no buddy of mine. Now get me what I ordered. I’m a paying customer, aren’t I?

FRANKIE
Don’t give him any more, he’s driving.

Frankie’s phone then RINGS.

FRANKIE (CONT’D)
Just a water.

MIKE
Look, ignore him. He’s nobody.

Frankie answers.

FRANKIE
(Into phone)
Oh hey Kara.

Frankie walks away for more privacy while trying to keep an eye on Mike, who remains at the bar.

MIKE
Look here’s forty bucks. Let me have the drink.

BARTENDER
Fine. Just don’t do anything stupid, pal.

The Bartender pours the whisky and Mike downs the drink with aplomb. It burns his mouth something rotten. Mike then gets off his seat and walks past Frankie, whose back is turned.

Mike exits the bar. Frankie hears the door bang and turns to the Bartender.

FRANKIE
Where’s he gone?

BARTENDER
Hey man, I ain’t his mother.
Frankie rolls his eyes.

    FRANKIE
    (Into phone)
    Kara. I’ll have to call you later!

Frankie hangs up and RUNS to the exit.

EXT. ROADSIDE BAR/SHACK - OFF US-36 W - DAY

Mike opens the car door and gets in. Frankie DASHES across the parking lot as Mike starts the engine.

    FRANKIE
    Mike! Wait!

Mike ignores his plea but Frankie just about manages to get into the car as Mike speeds-off on to the US-36 W.

INT. MIKE’S CAR - DAY

Frankie puts his seat belt on.

    MIKE
    You really don’t want to be in this car!

Mike SPEEDS up. He SWERVES around a couple of cars as the windshield wipers move feverishly.

    FRANKIE
    Jesus, are you trying to kill us Mike? Just stop the car and let’s talk.

    MIKE
    Words are worthless.

Frankie spots a truck heading their way.

    FRANKIE
    Look out for that truck!

They NARROWLY MISS a 18-wheeler truck after intervention from Frankie and get a BLARE of its horn for their troubles.

    FRANKIE (CONT’D)
    Mike. Stop the car. This is really dangerous.

Mike spots a sign for a river. He begins to pull over.

    FRANKIE (CONT’D)
    Good.
Mike is distracted by a bird flying low near the windshield. He SWERVES and loses control of the car in the slick muddy grass. The car CRASHES into a tree. The brothers are jerked around in their seats. They sit in shock for a moment. Mike starts to LAUGH. Frankie rubs his neck a little. His nose is BLOODIED.

FRANKIE (CONT’D)
Why is this funny? Look what you have done.

Mike just continues to LAUGH. He then gets out of the car.

Frankie opens his door and steps straight into a PUDDLE of mud.

FRANKIE (CONT’D)
Shit.

EXT. ROADSIDE - US-36 W - DAY

Mike looks at the BADLY DAMAGED front of the car. The bumper has fallen off, the headlights are SMASHED and the right tire is DANGLING. SMOKE filters from underneath the hood. He LAUGHS once again.

Frankie is pissed off about the whole situation.

FRANKIE
Right, you better tell me what the hell is going on or I am gonna knock you the hell out.

MIKE
I will save you the trouble.

FRANKIE
What?

MIKE
Look after Mom. See this thing through.

Mike then turns and RUNS into the woods.

FRANKIE
Mike. Wait!

Frankie slips slightly as he starts to run. He then stops; turns back to remove the urn from the seat into the boot. He then sets off again after Mike.

FRANKIE (CONT’D)
Mike! Come back!
EXT – WOODS – DAY

Mike runs hard and fast through the many entangled branches. He is oblivious to Frankie.

EXT – WOODS – DAY (SAME TIME – FURTHER BACK)

Frankie is in hot pursuit of his erratic brother although his footwear is hardly ideal.

EXT – RIVERBANK – DAY (SAME TIME)

Mike reaches the banks of the raging Republican river.

He looks at the water for a second or two before LEAPING in. The rapids ENGULF him but he doesn’t put up any fight.

Frankie arrives on the scene. He spots Mike's head BOBBING UP for a second.

FRANKIE
Oh no!

Frankie THROWS the car keys down. He DIVES in and SWIMS with utter determination, soon reaching Mike, who has been swallowing a lot of water.

He GRABS Mike's arm but Mike is resistant.

MIKE
Let me go! Get off me!

FRANKIE
No Mike. This is not gonna happen.

Mike is now weak and the stronger Frankie manages to overpower him after a minor grapple.

FRANKIE (CONT’D)
Stop it Mike! You don’t want to do this.

MIKE
Just let me die. It's all over.

FRANKIE
No way.

They soon reach the riverbank and are breathless. Frankie summons up the strength to haul them both back onto land.

They GASP for breath as they LIE on their backs. Then Mike DIVES on top of Frankie and attempts to STRANGLE him. Frankie tries to hold him off.
MIKE
Why didn’t you let me die? You bastard!

FRANKIE
Get off me Mike!

Frankie turns the tables and quickly PINS Mike down.

Mike then breaks down and starts to CRY.

MIKE
I’m ruined. The book deal is off. And now they are taking my baby girl away from me. I have lost everything.

Mike cries some more.

Frankie gets off Mike and pulls him closer to comfort him as tears flow. Frankie doesn’t say anything as the rain continues to POUR down on them.

EXT - RED CLOUD/MAIN STREET - NEBRASKA - DAY

Red Cloud is a small town in rural America. Population just over one thousand. The street is well kept and lined with a diner, grocery store, hardware store and mechanics shop.

We see a peaceful, easy going way of life here.

INT. MARIE’S DINER - RED CLOUD - DAY

In a traditional hub of the community diner MARIE FULLERTON (mid-40’s), is serving. She’s attractive and wears minimal makeup. Marie smiles at her female customer. A CREAKY pickup truck slowly meanders by outside and catches her attention. Mike’s car rests all damaged on it’s back making Marie even more curious.

EXT. GREEN ACRES MOTEL - RED CLOUD - NIGHT

A mid-sized motel sits about fifteen minutes walk away from the town centre. Some cars are parked out front along with the odd RV. There are 27 rooms. A few of the rooms have LIGHTS ON.

INT. MIKE’S ROOM - GREEN ACRES MOTEL - NIGHT

Mike is seated on the bed in fresh clothes and drinking a cup of coffee. There’s a KNOCK at the door.

FRANKIE (O.S.)
Mike, it’s me.
Mike gets to his feet and answers the door.

    FRANKIE (CONT’D)
    Hey, you okay.

    MIKE
    Been better.

    FRANKIE
    I have asked around and there’s a good diner on Main Street. We can eat there.

    MIKE
    You go. I’m not hungry.

    FRANKIE
    Come on Mike, you gotta eat.

    MIKE
    No, I will just stay here.

    FRANKIE
    Well, so will I then.

Frankie walks into the room and pulls up a chair much to Mike’s surprise.

    MIKE
    Honestly I just want to be alone.

    FRANKIE
    That’s too bad cuz I’m staying put.

Mike crosses his arms.

    FRANKIE (CONT’D)
    Talk to me, Mike.

Mike RAISES his eyebrows.

    FRANKIE (CONT’D)
    Look, just forget about all the shit we have to deal with and talk to me.

Mike looks at him and then nods O.K.

    FRANKIE (CONT’D)
    So what is Lisa like?

Mike sits down on the bed. A proud smile breaks out.

    MIKE
    She’s a great kid. Smart, cute as a button. Anything is possible with her.
FRANKIE
Sounds like a little star.

MIKE
The brightest.

FRANKIE
Well, don't let her fade away, Mike.

MIKE
I wish it were that easy.

FRANKIE
You haven't lost her for good, Mike. Show her that you love her and she'll love you right back.

MIKE
But she will be in San Francisco. Miles away by car. I will see her maybe once or twice a year, if I'm lucky. I'll be even more of a stranger than I am now.

FRANKIE
You are her Dad, Mike. You have your rights.

MIKE
I lost those rights at the roulette tables.

FRANKIE
Kara did tell me that you gambled hard.

MIKE
Yeah. The more successful I became, the worse I got.

FRANKIE
And Susan remarried then?

MIKE
Yeah. He's a good guy. Makes her happier than I ever did.

FRANKIE
Hey come on. I remember you and Susan. Hell, you made Lisa together, don't forget.

MIKE
Yeah, but I put my career ahead of my family.
And I honestly don't think I ever really tried that hard to make it up to them. I just let them disappear.

FRANKIE

Look Mike, you can't change the past. Everyone has regrets. Call Lisa in a couple of days. Don't be the writer guy; just be her Dad.

MIKE

I'm just a loser to her.

FRANKIE

Bullshit. Screw the money and the books. Flesh and bone Mike, heart and soul. Give her that and she will always need you.

MIKE

How do you know that?

FRANKIE

Well, I was rock bottom, close to ending it but Julia took a chance on me. She didn't care about my past. None of that mattered. She just wanted to be with me for who I could become. She made me see the light. People can change Mike. Your past doesn't always have to be a noose around your neck. Loosen that fucker a little and breathe.

Mike thinks about what has been said. He nods in agreement.

MIKE

Maybe you're right.

Frankie pats him on the arm.

FRANKIE

Come on, let's get out of here.

MIKE

I don't know.

FRANKIE

Mike. Let's just go. Just two regular guys; not brothers or enemies. We can deal with our shit some other time. Just come out with me.

Mike looks around the room for a moment before turning back to face Frankie.
MIKE
Okay.

Frankie stands up as does Mike.

MIKE (CONT’D)
Hey. Thanks for saving me today.

FRANKIE
What else was I gonna do?

Mike smiles at him, then puts on his jacket and they head to the door.

INT. 808 BAR - OFF US-36 W - NIGHT

Randall's in a corner of a NOISY bar. He is on his cell phone.

A voice message soon says "The number you have dialed is no longer in service."

RANDALL
What the fuck, Walker? Fucking dead man.

He then STABS his pen into the table.

A DRUNKEN JOCK (22), STUMBLES into the table and spills his drink all over Randall. He LAUGHS and Randall is not amused.

Randall gets up and squeezes the guy’s nuts really hard. The Jock WINCES in pain.

DRUNKEN JOCK
Holy shit! I’m sorry, man.

Randall then THROWS the guy to the floor.

RANDALL
Get out of my face you fucking idiot!

A few customers look over at the scene. Randall swats them away with a piercing glare.

INT. MARIE'S DINER - RED CLOUD - NIGHT

Marie is pouring coffee for a male customer. She soon arrives at Frankie and Mikes table.

MARIE
Hi guys. What can I get you?
FRANKIE
I think it's gotta be one of those burgers. They look great.

Mike glances at the appetizing burger on the nearby table.

MIKE
Me too but hold the mayo. Thanks.

Frankie gives Mike a knowing look.

MIKE (CONT’D)
And a couple of beers, please.

MARIE
Sure thing.

Marie glances back at Mike just as she is about to leave.

MARIE (CONT’D)
Hey, have you been here before?

MIKE
No, not me.

MARIE
I could have sworn I’ve seen you somewhere. You aren’t off the TV?

MIKE
No, I’m nobody.

FRANKIE
Wait a sec. This is the author Mike Feldman, creator of the greatest crime fiction of the last twenty years.

MARIE
Mike Feldman. Of course. You wrote Carmel’s Honor. Oh Wow!

FRANKIE
That’s right.

Mike is getting embarrassed.

MARIE
I thought it was you.

MIKE
I’ve put on a few pounds since then.

MARIE
(raising eyebrow)
Have you seen some of these guys?
Mike LAUGHS.

MARIE (CONT’D)
So what’s with the Mr. Shy act.

FRANKIE
He likes to be mysterious.

Mike kicks Frankie under the table.

MIKE
It was a long time ago.

MARIE
Well, it's in my top five books of all-time so for me it's an ... honor, shall we say.

FRANKIE
He'll sign your copy for you if you want.

MIKE
Yeah, okay Frankie. I think the lady can make up her own mind.

MARIE
No, I’d like that.

MIKE
Oh, okay.

They STARE at each other for a moment. Lost a little in each others eyes.

MARIE
Well, I better go put your order through. See you later.

Marie leaves and Frankie looks at Mike.

MIKE
Nice one, asshole.

FRANKIE
What? I was helping you out. Could you not feel the vibe between you two? And she is hot.

MIKE
She was just being friendly about the book.

FRANKIE
Whatever Mike. I saw the way you looked at each other.
MIKE
Okay, will you quit it now?

FRANKIE
Have a little fun, why don’t ya?

MIKE
That’s enough, okay. Can we change the subject?

FRANKIE
You need to get back in the game
Mike and I need to take a leak.

Frankie leaves the table. Marie then looks across at Mike from the counter. Mike looks back and Marie smiles at him. Mike half smiles and turns away. His eyes are smiling though.

EXT. 808 BAR - OFF US-36 W NIGHT

Randall is walking towards his truck. He's spotted by the Drunken Jock from earlier and his crew of five who are outside smoking.

DRUNKEN JOCK
Hey, there's the son of a bitch.

They ambush him. In the melee one of them STABS Randall in the right calf with a shard of glass. Although very painful, this only makes Randall more angry and in no time he overwhelms the gang, leaving them all face down. He pulls his knife out and partially lies over the Drunken Jock, looks down at the guy's nuts and POINTS the tip of the knife against the scrotum. The guy passes out in fear. Randall gets up and FLEES the scene just as some of the barflies arrive to survey the damage.

INT. MIKE'S ROOM - GREEN ACRES MOTEL - NIGHT

Frankie is SPRAWLED across a chair and Mike is sitting up on the bed. They are both drunk. Frankie is dressed in a T-shirt and boxers and Mike wears a pair of shorts.

Mike gulps at a miniature vodka while trying to restrain his laughter.

FRANKIE
Then just as she is about to take her underwear off the fucking dog comes bounding into the room, smacks against the wardrobe door, flinging the damn thing open.

Mike laughs hard.
FRANKIE (CONT’D)
She went nuts and said she would tell Mom and Dad. I was trying so hard not to laugh.

MIKE
Did she tell them?

FRANKIE
No. Secretly I think she enjoyed it.

MIKE
That Roseanne was a major flirt.

FRANKIE
Great body though.

MIKE
True. Mom hated her so much. She used to say that whore next door, is taking poor Jim Maker for a ride.

FRANKIE
She was right about that! When old Jim died she ended up with half a mill and was remarried within a year.

Frankie takes a swig, then looks into the middle distance for a moment.

FRANKIE (CONT’D)
You know, that weekend was the last time we had a big family party. Dad died five months later.

MIKE
He sure knew how to throw a party.

They pause to reflect.

FRANKIE
He was a good man, wasn’t he?

MIKE
The best of men.

FRANKIE
Do you think about him much?

MIKE
Not a day passes by.

FRANKIE
Same here.
Frankie BOWS his head. The alcohol and regret weighs him down.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)
Hey I think I’m gonna hit the sack.
It’s been one crazy ass day.

MIKE
Are you okay?

FRANKIE
Sure, I just miss him, Mike.

Mike nods in agreement as Frankie gets up off the bed.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)
I’m glad we did this. It felt good
even if it doesn’t last.

MIKE
Yeah, it did.

FRANKIE
I’ll see you tomorrow, Mike.

MIKE
Yeah night.

Frankie leaves the room and his words seem to have touched Mike.

INT. TRUCK STOP REST-ROOM - NIGHT

Randall has blocked the door to the Rest-Room with a mop handle. He has given himself a DIY haircut and is now practically a skinhead.

He's patching up his cut leg with some bandages. He sporadically swigs on whisky to ease the pain.

INT. LOCAL PARK - QUEENS - DAY

In a secluded spot Ray is sat on a bench listening intently to a phone call.

CHARLIE (V.O.)
So he says to me that a Mike Feldman came into his garage in Jersey City on Saturday. Had a service on a 1972 red Caddy. Feldman told him he was heading to Oregon with his brother. Family stuff.
RAY
(into phone)
Frankie was from Oregon.

CHARLIE (V.O.)
And I found out his brother lives in Jersey City. Gotta be our guy, right?

RAY
Yeah. But Frank fell out with his brother years ago.

CHARLIE (V.O.)
People make up, Ray. Plus how many Mike Feldman's can there be in that city?

RAY
Okay, I reckon you're right, buddy. And this was Saturday?

CHARLIE (V.O.)
Correct.

RAY
Jersey to Oregon. They could have covered some miles in that time.

CHARLIE (V.O.)
I say just get on the road. Stay to the main highways. Ask around.

RAY
Yeah, and keep trying his damn phone.

CHARLIE (V.O.)
Exactly. I’ll keep fishing. And Ray, remember to watch your back out there. There are plenty of problems to still solve.

RAY
I know. But what’s new, huh!

INT. MARIE'S DINER - RED CLOUD - DAY

Mike and Frankie are in the diner. They have been eating lunch. They are worse for wear and Frankie is frustrated.

MIKE
Look, it's not like that. I just want to write for a couple of hours. We can play golf tomorrow.
FRANKIE
Okay. But when do we talk about us, Mike? It's not going to just go away, is it?

MIKE
I don’t know. Let’s just do this for Mom. See how things turn out.

FRANKIE
Okay. Fine.

Mike turns around to see Marie has just arrived. She looks FLUSTERED and doesn’t see Mike. Frankie grabs a newspaper from the table nearby and casually flicks through it. Mike follows her moves and discreetly listens in as she reaches the counter.

Marie approaches KATHY (50's), her smiling assistant. A Young Waitress (late teens) hovers near-by prepping some salad. The Grill Man is in the b.g.

MARIE
Sorry, Kathy. I got stuck with the Nurse. Dad was having a moment.

KATHY
We coped fine. What happened?

MARIE
He was throwing stuff at her again. And refusing to put his pants on.

KATHY
Poor guy. He can’t help it.

MARIE
I know. But I'm not so sure it's going to work for much longer.

KATHY
What do you mean? A 'home'.

MARIE
Yeah. Anyway, let me get to work. We can talk later.

Frankie has been watching Mike.

FRANKIE
Hey Romeo. You had a good enough look?

MIKE
Huh, what?

Marie then notices Mike and smiles at him. He smiles back.
FRANKIE

MIKE
Yeah, yeah. Pipe down, will you?

Frankie continues with the newspaper as Mike sneaks a glance at Marie.

EXT. WILLA CATHER MEMORIAL PRAIRIE - RED CLOUD - DAY

Mike and Frankie are lying down in amongst the tall prairie grass, which seems to go on for miles and miles. The sky is OCEAN BLUE and the grass looks almost GOLDEN in the sun’s mystical GLOW.

MIKE
What do you have in mind? Squirrel’s on safari.

FRANKIE
Two squirrels, two monkeys, eight dogs, whatever man. Kids love that sort of stuff, don’t they?

MIKE
Do they? I thought it’s all wizards and vampires.

FRANKIE
I’m talking like the under fives. Easy payday I reckon.

MIKE
No, I don’t think so. War stories sell.

FRANKIE
It’s an awful lot of research plus aren’t you still a pacifist?

MIKE
True. Scrap that.

They both think. Frankie looks up at the blue sky and Mike SCRATCHES the back of his head.

MIKE (CONT’D)
You know what, screw this. Let’s go play some golf.

FRANKIE
Yeah?
MIKE
Yeah, maybe smashing a few balls into the woods will loosen up my mind a little.

FRANKIE
Cool. Dinner on the loser?

MIKE
That's kind of you.

They both get to their feet smiling.

INT. RANDALL'S TRUCK - US-36 W - DAY

Randall is smoking as he drives along the empty road. As he turns the bend, he's greeted by a police barrier. A FEMALE POLICE OFFICER (late 30's), WAVES him over.

FEMALE POLICE OFFICER
Sorry sir there's no through traffic allowed. We got a bad accident ahead.

RANDALL
You're shitting me. How long you gonna be?

FEMALE POLICE OFFICER
There's quite a pile up. Only happened an hour ago.

RANDALL
Jesus.

Randall is unimpressed. He checks his map briefly, then turns right onto the US-81 N.

EXT. CLUBHOUSE - GOLF CLUB - DAY

The brothers are walking towards the picturesque clubhouse. They are in good spirits as Mike tallies up the scores.

MIKE
Okay, right. I make it a sixteen-shot win for me.

Frankie shakes his head in disappointment.

FRANKIE
Man, I sucked out there.

MIKE
Why don't you hit the range while I go and relax in the sun?
FRANKIE
No thanks. I don’t intend picking up a golf club for a while.

MIKE
You weren’t so bad.

FRANKIE
No, I was dreadful. Hey look who’s here?

Mike looks to his right and spots Marie in the parking lot getting her clubs out of the trunk of her car.

MIKE
Oh yeah.

FRANKIE
Hell, she loves your book, plays golf. She’s kinda perfect for you, Mike.

MIKE
Okay, enough with that talk.

FRANKIE
Just go talk to her.

MIKE
I don’t think so. She's busy.

They walk a few steps further.

FRANKIE
(shouting)
Hey Marie! How you doing?

Marie turns around and spots the guys. She smiles and WAVES.

MIKE
Nice one.

FRANKIE
You better go and talk to her, Mike.

He pats Mike on the back and smiles.

MIKE
You need to stop trying to hook me up.

FRANKIE
I’ll meet you in the bar. Have fun.

Frankie WINKS at him and walks off. Mike looks at Marie and smiles. He heads on over. Marie meets him half-way with her golf bag.
MARIE
Hey Mike. How are you?

MIKE
I’m good. Just won out there. You okay?

MARIE
Rough morning. Need to relieve some stress.

MIKE
Oh. Do you want to talk about it?

MARIE
No, not right now. But I could use some help with my swing.

MIKE
Oh, um.

MARIE
Unless your brother's waiting.

MIKE
No, sure. I’m no player, mind you. The clubs are expensive; like my hook shot.

Marie LAUGHS.

MARIE
I'll take a chance on you.

Mike smiles and they walk off.

EXT. DRIVING RANGE - GOLF CLUB - DAY

In a private bay, Mike is standing behind Marie with his hands on her waste. Marie smiles to herself.

MIKE
Just arch that back a touch more and then take those knees down a little.

Marie follows his orders.

MIKE (CONT’D)
Keep going. Stop.

MARIE
Have you coached before?
MIKE
No. Twist your right hand a tiny bit. Okay, that’s it, I think. Try and hit one now.

Mike steps back and Marie lines one up. She takes a practice swing then hits a pretty decent seven iron off the tee. It travels well and practically stays straight.

MIKE (CONT’D)
Nice shot.

MARIE
Thank you. It was all down to you.

They smile at each other. She lines up another and the result is the same.

MIKE
You have got it.

He watches her pick up another ball and is clearly smitten.

EXT. PARKING LOT - GOLF CLUB - DAY

Marie is putting her clubs in the trunk of her car. Frankie and Mike are standing alongside her.

MARIE
So, one of my friends is having a birthday party tonight. I'd like you both to come along.

MIKE
Um, well...

FRANKIE
Of course we'll be there.

Mike GLARES at Frankie but then nods in agreement.

MIKE
Yeah, sounds fun. Thanks.

MARIE
Great. Let me write down the address for you.

Marie walks around to the drivers side of her car.

MIKE
(whispering)
I told you to quit playing matchmaker.
FRANKIE
(whispering)
Enjoy yourself Mike or you might regret it.

She returns and hands Mike a piece of paper.

MARIE
It’s a short walk from the town's center. Starts around seven thirty. My cell is on there just in case.

MIKE
Thanks.

FRANKIE
We look forward to it.

MARIE
See you later then, guys.

She affectionately STROKES Mike’s arm and smiles before getting into her car.

MIKE
Bye Marie.

Frankie looks at Mike as Marie starts the car.

FRANKIE
Don’t screw this up, Mike.

INT. DEMPSEY’S BAR - JERSEY CITY - NIGHT

Dwight is sitting opposite a nervous Doug in the booth of a busy bar. An envelope is on the table.

DWIGHT
You did the right thing, kid. That boss of yours is no good.

Doug nods halfheartedly.

DWIGHT (CONT’D)
My number’s in the envelope. Now I gotta catch a flight. You screw me over and I'll cut your head off, you understand?

DOUG
Yeah. Sure I do.

Dwight gets up and walks off into the crowd. Doug looks at the envelope with an air of uncertainty.
EXT. GREEN ACRES MOTEL - RED CLOUD - NIGHT

Randall gets out of his truck and walks gingerly towards the motel reception.

EXT. SHAWNA LAMBERT'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The garden party is in full swing. There are around forty people there, a mix of men and women of various ages.

Frankie is jamming with an old timer on a makeshift stage. Mike and Marie sit on a couple of chairs towards the back of the garden.

    MARIE
    He's good isn't he?
    MIKE
    Amazing. First time I've heard him.
    MARIE
    Really?
    MIKE
    We have a complicated past.
    MARIE
    Oh. Anything you care to share?
    MIKE
    Maybe some other time.
    MARIE
    So, you are having fun?
    MIKE
    Sure I am. This was a great idea.
    MARIE
    Do I make you nervous, Mike?
    MIKE
    Um, no. I just haven't had much attention from women lately.
    MARIE
    I can tell that.
    MIKE
    Sorry if I was slow out of the blocks.
    MARIE
    It's okay. But you being in town has brought a much needed smile to my face. You're a nice guy.
MIKE
I’m glad I’m here.

A kiss seemingly hangs in the air. Suddenly the mood is broken as a sassy, lamb-mutton dressed comes bounding over. It’s SHAWNA LAMBERT (50), the birthday girl.

SHAWNA LAMBERT
Well. What do we have here?

MARIE
Hey Shawna.

SHAWNA LAMBERT
So who’s the hunk, Marie. Aren’t you gonna introduce me?

MARIE
This is Mike. You met already.

SHAWNA LAMBERT
Are you sure?

MARIE
One too many cocktails, darling.

SHAWNA LAMBERT
I’m fifty, I’m allowed.

Shawna STROKES Mike’s face.

MIKE
I’m Mike. I brought you flowers.

SHAWNA LAMBERT
I bet you did, honey. You keep this one on a leash, Marie.

Shawna GROWLS at Mike and gives Marie a big HUG.

SHAWNA LAMBERT (CONT’D)
Love you, Marie. You’re the best.

Marie smiles as Shawna bounds off into the crowd WHOOPING with delight.

MARIE
I should have warned you about her.

MIKE
It’s fine, she’s just having fun.

They smile knowingly at each other as the live MUSIC STOPS.

FRANKIE
This ones for all the romantics out there. I’m looking at you big bro.
Frankie smiles to himself and then begins playing 'Wonderful Tonight' by Eric Clapton. Some guests SWAY with their partners. Mike and Marie remain seated.

Mike and Marie gaze at each other. Sexual energy rises. Then, suddenly out of nowhere, a LIGHTNING BOLT is followed by a swift DOWNPOUR. Frankie stops PLAYING.

FRANKIE (CONT’D)
Maybe later guys!

Everyone bar Mike and Marie makes a DASH into the house. There is a growing passion in Mike's eyes. Marie waits with anticipation.

The mood is reluctantly broken as a further LIGHTNING BOLT STRIKES the patio. They both head hastily inside.

EXT. STREET - RED CLOUD - NIGHT

Mike and Marie are walking along the sidewalk of a suburban street. Mike has an umbrella half-sheltering them.

MARIE
But don't you ever get bored of the city? Everyone in their little bubbles.

MIKE
Sometimes I do. I can sure see the benefits of living in a town like this.

MARIE
Are you just referring to me?

MIKE
Maybe. But no, it's nice here. A proper little community. I guess you would never leave?

MARIE
Actually, I hope I do. Perhaps teach again. Travel a little further than Canada.

MIKE
Canada. Went there loads as a kid. Where did you go?

MARIE
All over really. My husband was very ill and wanted to see the Rockies before he passed so we finished up there.
MIKE
Hey, I shouldn’t have pried.

MARIE
Don't be silly. It feels like a lifetime ago now. I think I need to make some new memories.

Marie smiles at Mike as they arrive at Marie's house.

MARIE (CONT’D)
This is me.

The security LIGHT is on and it showcases a front garden full of COLORFUL FLOWERS.

MIKE
Oh wow, what a beautiful garden.

MARIE
Thank you. I try my best.

MIKE
Well, it's been a lovely night.

MARIE
Yes, it has. Thank you for walking me home.

MIKE
Pleasure.

MARIE
Would you like to come over for dinner tomorrow?

MIKE
Yeah, that would be great.

MARIE
Perfect. Maybe you can sign my book for me?

MIKE
Absolutely.

MARIE
Shall we say seven?

MIKE
Seven it is. I’ll bring some wine.

MARIE
Great.

MIKE
Excellent. Okay then, good night, Marie.
He KISSES her on the cheek and walks down the garden path. He puts up the umbrella.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Oh, I'll return this tomorrow

MARIE
No problem.

Mike executes a 'Singing in The Rain' style jig much to Marie's delight.

EXT. GREEN ACRES MOTEL - RED CLOUD - NIGHT

Mike is at the outdoor vending machine ordering a coke. He reaches down to pick it up, then turns and is shocked to see Randall stood behind him.

MIKE
Jesus, you almost gave me a heart attack.

RANDALL
Sweet tooth, huh?

Mike remembers he is holding a coke can.

MIKE
Oh this, yeah. The water in the room tastes a little funny.

RANDALL
I prefer something a little stronger.

He holds up his hip flask. Mike grins awkwardly, then notices that blood is coming out over Randall's boot.

MIKE
Hey, you are bleeding there, buddy. You alright?

RANDALL
Sure.

MIKE
Okay. Coz I've some band-aid in my room if you need it.

RANDALL
I'll live. Just need a few snacks from that machine there.

MIKE
Oh, right. Be my guest.

Mike steps out of the way.
RANDALL
See you around.

MIKE

Randall tips his hat and Mike leaves, a little bewildered.

EXT. MARIE'S DINER - DAY

Randall is stood out front smoking a cigarette while taking a call. He sits down on a bench.

RANDALL
(into phone)
The pizza guy was clean, Sullivan.

TOMMY (V.O.)
Wrong. He's helping the kid. I have some guys on the road already but you bring him in, then it's another fifty grand.

RANDALL
Two hundred, then we can talk.

TOMMY (V.O.)
What! Are you fucking kidding me?

RANDALL
The deal was for the Feldman boys. You want Ray too, then he ain't cheap.

TOMMY (V.O.)
Forget it. My guys will find him.

RANDALL
Whatever. Suit yourself.

TOMMY (V.O.)
You're pushing my buttons, cowboy.

RANDALL
Keep calm, old man.

Randall hangs up. He looks across the street and spots a drug store. He rises and LIMPS across the road.

Half way over Mike crosses his path.

MIKE
Morning.

RANDALL
Hey, sweet tooth.
Frankie is a few steps behind Mike. He is texting so isn't looking up. Randall walks straight past him.

INT. LOUNGE - MARIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Mike is standing and looking at books on the lounge bookshelves. The lounge and dining room form one space. The kitchen links but is separated by a partition wall. The room is reasonably modern. Some landscape photographs adorn the wall along with some oil paintings.

Marie returns with a fruit tart and a jug of cream along with two small plates.

MIKE
Shall I help?

MARIE
Can you just grab the two plates, please?

Mike does just that and they sit down at the dining table.

MIKE
This looks great.

MARIE
Thanks.

She starts to cut a slice.

MARIE (CONT’D)
Oh, more music. Any preference?

Marie gets back up and walks over to the record player.

MIKE
Surprise me.

Marie shuffles through a large collection of vinyl.

MARIE
You really can't beat vinyl.

MIKE
Best format. Wish I still had mine.

MARIE
How about this?

'Thunder Road' by Bruce Springsteen comes on.

MIKE
Perfect.

She then continues to serve the dessert.
MIKE (CONT’D)

Thank you.

Mike helps himself to some cream.

MARIE

My pleasure.

Mike has a spoonful of dessert. Unbeknownst to him, he now has cream on his face.

MIKE

Oh Wow. It’s really good.

MARIE

You have some cream on your face.

MIKE

Where here?

He SMEARS it into his right cheek. Marie LAUGHS.

MARIE

Sort out. Shall I get it.

MIKE

How embarrassing.

MARIE

Don’t be silly.

Marie gets a napkin and wipes it gently off his face. They look into each other’s eyes before both return to their dessert.

INT. JULIA’S BEDROOM - NIGHT

In her cozy music-memorabilia filled bedroom, Julia is lying on her bed in a T-shirt and knickers. She’s on Skype talking to Frankie, who’s stretched out on his motel bed.

JULIA

I’m too shy for this Frank.

FRANKIE (ON SCREEN)

Now we both know you aren’t shy?

Julia LAUGHS.

FRANKIE (CONT’D)

Come on, babe. It’s lonely out here.

JULIA

Fine. But give it a few months and you won’t want to see me naked.
FRANKIE (ON SCREEN)
Shut up. You are gonna be one hot mama. Trust me.

Julia smiles then after a moment or two puts her finger SEDUCTIVELY between her lips.

JULIA
So officer, what was it you wanted to do to me?

Frankie's EYES WIDEN with delight on the screen.

INT – LOUNGE – MARIE'S HOUSE – NIGHT
Mike and Marie are on the couch laughing at something. There's half-a-bottle of wine in front of them and 'I'm On Fire' by Bruce Springsteen plays SOFTLY in the b.g.

MIKE
Top up?

MARIE
You are a bad man, Mike Feldman.

She holds out her glass.

MIKE
Moi?

They LAUGH some more. Mike takes a sip of wine.

MARIE
You know what, I've been thinking?

MIKE
Yes, you can have me.

MARIE
Mike!

Marie playfully HITS Mike with a cushion.

MARIE (CONT’D)
What I was going to say was, I think you should forgive your brother for what happened.

She takes a sip of wine. Mike looks at her slightly confused.

MIKE
I'm surprised you think that way.

MARIE
Hear me out.

Mike sits up.
Okay.

You recall the trip to the Rockies I took with my husband?

Yes.

Well, he actually died on that trip.

Oh my God.

It wasn't his illness though. That was being managed. No, we were robbed at gunpoint one night, he tried to resist and the guy shot him. He died in the street.

Jesus, that's awful.

It was but I soon forgave the guy who did it.

Forgave. How?

He was twenty-one-years-old. The foster system had failed him and he'd fallen into drugs and petty crime. Along the way he'd become a father and desperation lead him to us.

Okay, sure, he had problems, but he didn't need to kill anyone.

No, but I genuinely believe he didn't intend to kill. He was scared for his child. The gun went off when he panicked.

Mike struggles to find any compassion.

But he did kill. He killed the love of your life.
There's a reason for every action. I mean, you must know deep down that Frankie didn't go out that night to do harm. Circumstances put him in that place.

MIKE (CONT’D)
I don't know Marie, he didn't listen to good people.

MARIE
Look, Mike. I think hate just makes things worse. For a while I hated everything and felt so alone and angry but then I kind of realized that when you hate so deeply it takes away some of the good inside of you and makes you someone that you don't want to be. I was alive and I had another chance to live again. To love again. So I found my peace with the situation. Maybe you need to do the same now, Mike?

Mike nods in agreement. Then RUBS his face in his hands.

MIKE
He was a good kid, Marie.

MARIE
He still might be. If you give him a chance.

She puts her hand on his knee and affectionately strokes it. He glances down for a second, then back at Marie.

MARIE (CONT’D)
There's too much sadness in those eyes, Mike. It's time it left.

Marie appears to be breaking through.

MIKE
You're an amazing woman, Marie. I'll definitely take this onboard.

Marie looks at Mike and smiles. A few moments pass and the sexual tension is unbearable.

MARIE
Why don't you just kiss me then, God-damn it!

He leans in and they KISS PASSIONATELY.

Mike struggles to put his wine glass down. Marie grabs and downs it; they both GIGGLE before kissing some more.
Soon their animalistic desires take over and Marie straddles Mike. Mike then rips Marie's blouse buttons open. She loves his passion and within seconds she is hastily leading him out of the room by his arm.

INT. RANDALL’S TRUCK - I-80 W - DAY

Randall is puffing on a cigarette. He passes a road sign that reads "Thank you for visiting Red Cloud. Drive safely."

INT. MIKE'S ROOM - GREEN ACRES MOTEL - DAY

Mike is seated at the desk. He's on the phone.

MIKE
(into phone)
Thanks, Susan. That's really good.

SUSAN (V.O.)
She's your daughter too Mike.

MIKE
You know, it's funny, in a sad way, but seeing Frankie again has made me finally realize what I had with you and what I lost.

SUSAN (V.O.)
Yeah. You did lose me Mike, and you quit trying to find me.

MIKE
I know. And I'm sorry for everything, okay?

SUSAN (V.O.)
Look, it's all in the past now. I hope you find someone again and hold onto them this time. I mean that.

MIKE
That's kind of you.

SUSAN (V.O.)
I'll get Lisa. Take care and say 'hi' to Frankie for me.

MIKE
Will do. Bye, Susan.

Mike lets out a sigh of relief.
EXT. MECHANICS - RED CLOUD - DAY

Mike and Frankie are standing next to the Cadillac with an OLD TIMER-MECHANIC (late 60’s).

OLD TIMER-MECHANIC
It will be ready tomorrow morning.
Good as new.

MIKE
Oh right.

FRANKIE
Great!

MIKE
Can I have a quick word, Frank?

FRANKIE
Yeah, what's up?

They move away from the Old Timer-Mechanic.

MIKE
I was kind of hoping to stay here for a couple more days.

FRANKIE
Coz of Marie?

MIKE
Yeah. Things are going well.

FRANKIE
But Mike, we still have some way to go before Glendale. And I want to see Julia too. She's pregnant don't forget.

MIKE
I understand but I think this could be something big for me, I'd really appreciate it.

Frankie puffs out his cheeks while deciding.

FRANKIE
Alright, fine. I understand. But you owe me.

MIKE
Of course. Cheers, Frank.

Mike pats him on the back. Frankie turns to the Old Timer-Mechanic as Mike looks up and down the Main Street, smiling to himself.
FRANKIE (O.S.)
It's fine. We will still collect tomorrow.

EXT. MARIE'S HOUSE - LATE EVENING

Marie spots Mike walking up the garden path with some FLOWERS. She has her coat on.

MARIE
Oh hey, Mike.

MIKE
Hey. Are you going out?

MARIE
Yeah. I forgot it was Book Club tonight. I did text you.

MIKE
Oh right. I didn't see it. Shall I meet you after then? These are for you by the way.

He hands her the flowers.

MARIE
They are beautiful. Thank you.

MIKE
Pleasure. Say, how about I come along instead?

MARIE
Really. Will you read Carmel's Honor for us?

MIKE
Sure, why not.

MARIE
You're a star.

Marie HUGS him and gives him a KISS on the lips.

EXT - GAS STATION - OFF I-80 W - LATE EVENING

The sun is setting as Randall fills up his truck.

A BLONDE WOMAN (MID 50'S), and a ASIAN LADY (60), hurry past him towards their car.

BLONDE WOMAN
Can't believe Mike Feldman is there. You definitely have your book, right?
Randall's ears prick up.

ASIAN LADY
Yes, of course. We will make it on time, won't we?

BLONDE WOMAN
Should be fine.

Randall quickly finishes up.

RANDALL
Excuse me, ladies.

He hobbles over to them as the Asian Lady opens the car door.

BLONDE WOMAN
Can we help you, Sir?

RANDALL
I couldn't help overhearing you talking about Mike Feldman. Is he in town or something?

ASIAN LADY
Yes, in Red Cloud. A little way down the road.

RANDALL
Red Cloud? Really.

BLONDE WOMAN
Yes, he is doing an impromptu book signing. Are you a fan too?

RANDALL
Oh, yeah. Huge.

The Asian Lady looks at her watch.

ASIAN LADY
We need to leave. Time's ticking.

RANDALL
Sorry to hold you up. Maybe I'll see you there later.

The ladies smile and jump into their car. Randall LAUGHS to himself as they drive off.

INT. LOUNGE - MARIES HOUSE - NIGHT

Mike and Marie are sitting on the couch sharing a laugh. Two empty bottles of wine are on the coffee table in front of them. 'After the Goldrush' by Neil Young is PLAYING on the record player.
MIKE
Lets dance.

Mike puts his glass down and stands up. He holds out his hand.

MARIE
How can I refuse?

Marie joins him and they slow dance to the song. Soon they begin to kiss. Marie then stops and looks adoringly at Mike.

MARIE (CONT’D)
I really like you, Mike.

MIKE
Good, because you have made my heart sing again, Marie.

Marie rests her head on his shoulder and they both feel at total ease with each other.

INT. RANDALL’S TRUCK - GREEN ACRES MOTEL - RED CLOUD - NIGHT

Randall is sitting in his truck looking out at the motel rooms. A car pulls up nearby and out gets Frankie. Randall gets a good look at him when the cars headlights shine on Frankie’s face. He checks the PHOTO he has of Frankie on his phone.

CU: A police station mug-shot of Frankie (mid-20's). Frankie wears longer hair but the face is distinguishable.

Randall is satisfied this is his man.

EXT. ROOM 8 - GREEN ACRES MOTEL - NIGHT

Randall KNOCKS on Frankie’s door.

FRANKIE (O.S.)
Who is it?

RANDALL
Pizza delivery.

FRANKIE (O.S.)
Sorry, you got the wrong room.

RANDALL
Order for Feldman. Room eight.

Frankie opens the door.

FRANKIE
Look, man.
Before he can say anything else Randall has CHARGED him. The door SLAMS shut.

INT. ROOM 8 - GREEN ACRES MOTEL - NIGHT

Randall is astride Frankie and PUNCHES him hard in the face. Frankie tries to talk but isn’t given a chance as a couple more punches follow.

Randall then THROWS him against the chest of drawers and KICKS him in the guts with his good leg. As Frankie lies winded, Randall turns on the TV and finds a LOUD ROCK MUSIC channel.

Frankie tries to get up but instead Randall picks him up by the throat and SLAMS him against the desk. Frankie YELLS in pain. Randall grabs his bag and gets some rope out. In the same moment, the urn topples off the desk but Frankie manages to grab it. The lid falls off. Frankie somehow rests the urn down and then Randall grabs him around the throat in a choke position as he lies on the floor.

Randall
I'm taking you to Tommy Sullivan. He's gonna kill you.

Frankie
Tommy who?

Randall
Don't play dumb with me, kid.

Frankie
Why are you doing this! Who are you?

Randall
It doesn’t matter who I am.

Randall starts to tie Frankie’s hands up.

Frankie
You've got the wrong guy. I swear.

Randall
Shut up. Where is your brother?!

Frankie
He ain't here. He's overseas.

Randall LAUGHS out loud. He reaches for some tape in his bag.

Randall
It's real simple, boy. Both of you are coming with me.
RANDALL (CONT'D)
So we will just wait here for your
bro to come back before we all go
on a little road trip.

FRANKIE
Fuck you.

Frankie KNEES Randall in the nuts. He then manages to get to
his feet and KICK Randall in the head as he winces. Frankie
RUNS into the bathroom.

Randall gets up, shakes himself down and STORMS OVER to the
bathroom. He BANGS LOUDLY on the bathroom door. And then
SHOULDER BARGES it. It partly opens.

RANDALL
You really don’t want to do this,
son.

FRANKIE (O.S.)
Get out of here. I'm calling the
cops.

Randall KICKS the door but his bad leg flares up again.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)
It's ringing. You better leave.

Randall then sees a torch light shining from outside. He
hobbles over to the window and notices Two Male Security
Guards (40's) doing their rounds. His leg is now bleeding
again. He is pissed off but the urn then catches his eye.

RANDALL
Who's dead?

Frankie slowly opens the bathroom door a touch.

RANDALL (CONT'D)
Oh, it's your Mom, isn't it? How
could I forget.

Randall threatens to empty the urn.

FRANKIE
No! Leave her alone.

Randall LAUGHS. Frankie RUNS at Randall who HITS him with a
flying right hand. Frankie tumbles onto the bed. Randall
leans over him.

RANDALL
Okay, listen up. This urn is my
collateral. It's gonna get me my
money. Now tell me where you're
heading so we can sort a meeting
with Sullivan?
And if you play nice I'll even let you bury her before you die.

EXT. PORCH - MARIE'S HOUSE - DAY

As the rain continues Marie and Mike are sitting on the porch having a cup of coffee. They smile at each other. Mike takes another sip.

MARIE
You are going to have to leave soon, aren't you?

MIKE
No, I can stay here a little while longer.

MARIE
I meant leave Red Cloud.

MIKE
Yeah. But I will come back once we are done.

MARIE
I hope so, Mike. Please don't hurt me, will you? Last night was a big deal for me.

MIKE
Hey, I won't. I'm not like some other guys, Marie.

The house phone RINGS.

MARIE
Good. Let me get that.

Marie heads inside. Mike watches her, then sips his coffee contentedly.

INT. ROOM 8 - GREEN ACRES MOTEL - DAY

Frankie is on the bed looking awful. Mike enters.

MIKE
Hey Frank.

He notices that Frankie is all beaten up.

MIKE (CONT’D)
Jesus. What happened to you?

Frankie shakes his head forlornly and looks at Mike.
FRANKIE
It’s all gone wrong, Mike. They have got Mom.

Mike's EYES WIDEN in shock.

EXT. ROADSIDE - I-80W - DAY

Randall is on the phone near a field.

RANDALL
(into phone)
Calm down, will ya Sullivan. (Beat)
As I said, it’s their damn Momma.
(Beat) Look, I know what I’m doing. They will be there and my money better be too! (Beat) Noon at the Glendale sawmill.

INT. ROOM 8 - GREEN ACRES MOTEL - DAY

Frankie’s on the edge of his bed and Mike is standing at the window. He looks disgusted.

MIKE
You get some sort of sick kick out of screwing everything up, don’t you?

FRANKIE
Look, instead of ripping me apart we should be thinking of how to get Mom back from that maniac.

MIKE
We! This is your mess.

FRANKIE
You wanted to stick around this stupid town.

MIKE
Don’t you dare blame me! Your dirty past has caught up with you.

FRANKIE
You've got it wrong, Mike.

MIKE
Bullshit! Just as my life is turning around, you fuck me over. You're no damn good!

FRANKIE
I'll get her back. I promise.
MIKE
Don’t you dare promise me anything.

FRANKIE
Oh fuck you then!

Mike CHARGES him and PUSHES Frankie onto the bed. Frankie grimaces. He manages to PUSH Mike off.

FRANKIE (CONT’D)
Get off me you fucking idiot!

Mike grabs Frankie's shirt and PUNCHES him in the gut. Frankie CRUMBLES to the floor and Mike grabs hold of his belt that's resting on the chair.

MIKE
You need some Goddamn discipline.

He walks over to Frankie and LASHES him on the back with the belt. Frankie SCREAMS in pain.

MIKE (CONT’D)
You've ruined everything you piece of shit!

Mike has lost it and goes to do it again. Frankie is COWERING in the corner and holds out his hand to push away but Mike LASHES his hand instead.

FRANKIE
Please. Please stop! Please Bob stop it. I am sorry. I am sorry!

Mike hesitates.

MIKE
Bob. Why are you saying Bob?

Mike backs off a little and Frankie takes off his T-shirt. He gets to his feet and turns around to show Mike some horrific scarring on his back. Mike is SHOCKED.

INT. OFFICE - NURSING HOME - RED CLOUD - DAY

Marie is sitting opposite the NURSING HOME MANAGER (late 50's). Marie wipes her tear-stained face with a tissue.

MARIE
But he was fine last night.

NURSING HOME MANAGER
I know. But your father was a very frail man. Both in body and mind.

Marie puts her head in her hands for a moment.
NURSING HOME MANAGER (CONT’D)
Can I get you some tea or water?

MARIE
Um, tea would be nice.

The Nursing Home Manager gets up.

NURSING HOME MANAGER
He is at peace now, Marie.

MARIE
I hope so.

Marie bows her head dejectedly as the Nursing Home Manager walks off.

INT. ROOM 8 - GREEN ACRES MOTEL - DAY

Mike looks FLABBERGASTED as he stands in front of Frankie who’s on the bed.

FRANKIE
You left us with a vicious bully. Bob manipulated everyone, especially Mom.

MIKE
You're so out of line. I ought to beat your ass again.

FRANKIE
Do it then! He was so glad when you left. Me and Mom were easy to control. But then he realized that I was getting old enough to fight back, so he took things up a notch.

Frankie SLAPS his own back before getting up. He starts to gather his things.

MIKE
No. It was prison that did that to you. You messed with the wrong guy, I bet.

FRANKIE
Believe what you want, Mike.

MIKE
Running off home, are we?

FRANKIE
No, I'm gonna get Mom back and I'm gonna bury her.

MIKE
What a hero.
FRANKIE
Whatever. You sit here and do nothing, like usual.

Frankie gets to the door. He turns to Mike and smiles.

MIKE
How can you smile?

FRANKIE
Because I know when I shut this door I will never ever have to see you again.

Frankie leaves.

EXT. GREYHOUND BUS - I-80 W - DAY

The bus slowly meanders through the afternoon traffic, passing a road sign for Sutherland, Nebraska.

INT. GREYHOUND BUS - I-80W - DAY

Frankie is tear-stained as he plays with his phone, pausing at Julia’s number. He then looks out of the window, deep in thought. He sighs before dialling a number, then putting the phone to his ear.

FRANKIE
(into phone)
Hey Ray. It’s Frankie.

INT. ROOM 8 - GREEN ACRES MOTEL - DAY

Mike is standing in front of the window of his motel room. He is mid-call and animated.

MIKE
(into phone)
I told you that little shit couldn't be trusted, didn't I?

KARA (V.O)
Mike! I don't want to hear it. I just want Mom back!

MIKE
As do I. Right, I gotta go.
Remember no cops.

He hangs up and throws his suitcase on the bed.
INT. MIKE'S CAR - RED CLOUD - DAY

Driving with one hand, Mike has his cellphone to his ear. An engaged tone can be heard.

MIKE
(into phone)
Damn it, Frankie.

Mike THROWS his phone onto the passenger seat as he turns the corner. He passes a sign post that reads "Thank you for visiting Red Cloud. Drive safely."

INT. DINING ROOM - MARIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Marie, teary-eyed, is sitting opposite her assistant Kathy at the dining table. A coffee pot and two cups are positioned between them.

MARIE
I feel so stupid for falling for him. He got what he wanted I guess. I'm such a fool, Kath.

Kathy rests a soothing hand on her hand.

KATHY
Some men are just assholes.

Marie puts her head in her hand.

MARIE
Think I need something stronger.

Marie gets up and walks to the kitchen.

EXT. ROADSIDE/NEAR MODOC NATIONAL FOREST - CALIFORNIA - NIGHT

It's RAINING HARD. Randall's truck is parked up under some trees.

INT. RANDALL'S TRUCK - NIGHT

Randall is sleeping. A van pulls up in front of his truck and SHINES its BEAMS directly into Randall's windshield. He awakens.

RANDALL
What the fuck.

He looks into the light expecting the beams to dim but they remain fixed on him. He HONKS his horn. Nothing.

Pissed-off he opens the door and gets out, grabbing his knife as he exits.
EXT. RANDALL'S TRUCK - ROADSIDE - NIGHT

Randall walks towards the lights of the van.

RAY (O.S.)
Howdy partner.

Randall turns and he's FLOORED by a baseball bat.

INT. DISUSED WAREHOUSE - SOMEWHERE IN CALIFORNIA - NIGHT

Randall is tied up. He has been badly beaten. Ray has the urn in his hand.

RANDALL
Why don't you take the money from that son of a bitch Sullivan?

RAY
What are you saying?

RANDALL
He doesn't know me. I was just a voice on the phone. Be me. Take that fucker's money and we go our separate ways.

RAY
I don't need that scumbags money.

RANDALL
Suit yourself, Ray Ray.

Randall LAUGHS. Ray turns to his two Muscle-Bound Bears.

RAY
Finish this animal. Leave nothing behind.

He walks away, taking a breath as his men start LAYING INTO Randall in the b.g.

EXT. COACH DEPOT - PORTLAND - OREGON - DAY

Frankie is sitting on a bench with Ray. The urn is boxed and between them.

RAY
So does your brother know you’re here?

FRANKIE
I don’t think I will be seeing him anytime soon.
RAY
That’s too bad.

FRANKIE
It is. So you're sure you can handle Sullivan?

RAY
Yeah, a good old fashioned ambush. Don't worry, I got it all figured out.

Frankie shakes his head in disbelief.

FRANKIE
Man, I still can't believe that Sullivan and the Cowboy never met. Hardly the work of a criminal mastermind, is it?

RAY
He's just desperate. And desperate men make mistakes.

FRANKIE
I guess they do.

RAY
Right, I better make tracks.

Ray gets up. Frankie follows suit.

RAY (CONT’D)
Once Sullivan is gone you'll have nothing to worry about, Frank. We are done. I promise.

Frankie pauses to reflect before nodding in agreement.

FRANKIE
Can I shake your hand?

RAY
Been long overdue.

They shake.

FRANKIE
You take it easy, Ray.

RAY
You too kid.

Ray then leaves. Frankie sits back down and puts his hand gently on the box.
INT. RAY RAY'S PIZZERIA - QUEENS - NIGHT

Doug's sitting behind the counter, unsure of himself. It's
dead in there so he opens the cash register. Disgusted by the
lack of money its holding he SLAMS it shut.

DOUG
Dumb ass joint.

He then slings his apron to the floor before making a call.

DOUG (CONT'D)
(into phone)
Yeah, it's me, Doug. Ray is staying
at the Luna Range Motel.

INT. RAY'S VAN - I-5 S - DAY

Ray is driving slowly through some traffic in his WHITE work
van. He makes a hands-free call, to Doug. The phone RINGS. It
goes to 'answer-phone'.

Ray then spots a BLACK van behind him FLASHING its
headlights.

RAY
(to himself)
Jesus, you guys are supposed to be
in Glendale already.

He pulls over to the road side. The black van follows suit. Ray gets out.

EXT. ROADSIDE - I-5 S - DAY

Ray walks toward the van. He arrives at the winded down
window only to be faced with Dwight POINTING a gun in his
face. A Burly Accomplice (late 20's), is alongside him.

DWIGHT
Hello Ray. Mr Sullivan says 'Hi'.

RAY
Shit!

Dwight goes to pull the trigger but Ray grapples with his
hand. The gun GOES OFF and catches Ray in the neck. He
STUMBLIES BACK and the gun falls to the floor.

DWIGHT
Shoot him you idiot.

Dwight's Accomplice leaves the van and runs around to where
Ray is. He cocks his gun but the safety is still on. Ray
dashes back to his van, holding his neck.
Get after him!

Dwight then gets out of the van.

Ray manages to get to his van and grab his gun as a couple of shots are FIRED behind him. The commotion causes some panic on the road and a few cars SWERVE to avoid each other, HONKING their horns.

Ray holds one hand to his neck and DUCKS behind the back wheel of the van. He gets a SHOT-OFF and it catches Dwight in the chest. Dwight STUMBLES BACK ROARING in pain.

The Accomplice FIRES at Ray and catches Ray in the knee. Ray FALLS to the side of the truck and he's an open target. So is the sidekick and Ray takes him out with a SHOT to the head. Ray reloads but by this time Dwight is on his feet and CHARGING at the van. Ray is shot in his chest through the windshield. He CRUMBLES to the deck but is partly shielded by his door.

Dwight is now struggling but gets off TWO MORE SHOTS. One hits the van door and the other goes wildly into the road causing a TRUCK to SEVERELY SWERVE.

Dwight sees the truck coming straight at him but TRIPS OVER his Accomplice's body. The truck crashes straight into Dwight wiping him out. Traffic is chaotic all around Ray. Police SIRENS can be heard in the distance. Ray gasps for air as he reaches for his phone a few feet away in his van. BLOOD pours out of his multiple wounds. He runs out of time and SLUMPS to the dusty ground, then dies on the roadside.

INT - HANNIGAN’S BAR - GLENDALE - NIGHT

The joint is nearly empty. Two Guys play pool in the b.g. Mike is standing at the corner of the bar drinking a beer. He spots a newspaper on the bar stool next to him. It's the 'Glendale Weekly'. He skims through it briefly but his mind is clearly elsewhere. The entrance door CREAKS open and a rake of a man walks in. It is LARRY WEST (mid 60's), and he's quite drunk already. Mike glances at him before signalling to the BLACK BARTENDER for another beer.

Larry STUMBLES a little before reaching the bar. He sits next to Mike.

BLACK BARTENDER

Just a water is it, Larry?

LARRY

Ah, fuck you. A beer and a whisky. Go easy on the ice.
The Black Bartender ROLLS his eyes. Mike discreetly watches as Larry gets out a puzzle book from his jacket pocket. Larry WAVES the book at Mike.

    LARRY (CONT’D)
    Can't beat a good puzzle, huh?
    Keeps the mind ticking over.

    MIKE
    I guess.

The Black Bartender arrives with their drinks. Larry gives him a THUMBS UP. He downs the whisky and swigs on the beer.

    LARRY
    Cheers.

Larry holds up his bottle to Mike, who follows suit.

    LARRY (CONT’D)
    You new in town?

    MIKE
    No, just here for a couple of days.

    LARRY
    Oh. I'm Larry West. Town drunk.

    MIKE
    Mike Feldman.

    LARRY
    Welcome, Mike Feldman.

Larry has another swig of beer. Mike clocks the Black Bartender who indicates that Larry is a little cuckoo.

    LARRY (CONT’D)
    Feldman. Name is familiar.

    MIKE
    You may have heard of my book.

    LARRY
    No, I just like puzzles.

    MIKE
    I used to live here, if that helps.
    Up on Maple Tree Avenue.

Larry suddenly looks like he has seen a ghost.

    LARRY
    Wait a minute. Your Mom married Bob Harrison, right.

    MIKE
    Yeah, were you his friend?
LARRY
Um, not really. Just did a few jobs for him.

MIKE
Jobs?

LARRY
Yeah.

Larry gulps and looks blankly ahead.

MIKE
Are you okay, pal?

LARRY
You had a younger brother, right?

MIKE
For my sins.

LARRY
Bob made me do some bad things, you know.

Mike is suddenly concerned.

MIKE
What bad things?

FLASHBACK:

INT. BOB'S BARN - NIGHT

A moment passes and the lights come BACK ON. Bob is standing in front of Frankie and is now flanked by Two Guys (late 40's), with varying builds. Bob smiles sadistically.

BOB
This is your mother's main gift, Frankie. The best gift of all.

Larry West, wearing a short perm and fuller cheeks, stands near the light switch in the corner of the barn. He is apprehensive.

MONTAGE

- Two of Bob's cronies LAUGH as Bob FURIOUSLY LASHES Frankie with his horse whip. Larry, pretends to enjoy the spectacle.

- Two of the gang haul Frankie into an old chair as Bob reaches into a tool bag. He pulls out some pliers.

- Larry holds up Frankie and Bob uses Frankie as a punching bag.
- Near the barn door, Larry and another one of the guys help Frankie onto his motorbike while Bob shouts angrily into Frankie's face.

END OF MONTAGE

EXT. TAP HOUSE - ROADSIDE BAR - NIGHT

Two drunken men stumble out of the bar laughing. We see it's Mike, slimmer build without a beard and his friend Steve (early 30's), a portly black man.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Frankie is WEAVING a little on his motorbike. He loses complete control on a sharp bend. Before he can do anything he skids onto the sidewalk into the path of Mike and Steve. Mike tries to haul Steve out of the way but it all happens so fast and Frankie's bike CRASHES hard into Steve. KILLING him almost instantly. Mike gathers himself to survey the wreckage. He runs to Steve only to find he is dead.

Mike then looks across at Frankie who takes off his helmet. Mike is stunned.

MIKE
Oh my God Frankie! What have you done!

END OF FLASHBACK

Mike is SPEECHLESS. Larry is shame-faced.

LARRY
He was a bastard was Bob. Truly evil. He got into our heads, especially mine.

Mike struggles to take all this in.

LARRY (CONT'D)
It almost killed me, the guilt of what I did. Years later I wrote your mother a few times to explain but she never replied. I guess Bob controlled her mail, just like he controlled everything else.

MIKE
And this isn't just the booze talking, huh?

LARRY
As God is my witness. We buried the tools and stuff, in the back yard.
LARRY (CONT'D)
Bob planted some apple trees there soon after, help cover them up some more.

Mike shakes his head in despair.

MIKE
I remember the trees. He was always funny when anyone went near them.

Mike stands up.

MIKE (CONT'D)
I gotta go.

Larry grabs Mike's arm.

LARRY
Hey, tell me you forgive me? Please.

Mike looks down at Larry's shaking hand for a moment, then back to his face. He's a pitiful state.

MIKE
I do.

Mike, then turns and hastily leaves the bar.

EXT. CEMETERY - GLENDALE - OREGON - DAY

A Member of the Staff walks away from Frankie.


Frankie takes it in for a moment, letting out a slight smile.

In the b.g. Mike appears and he hears Frankie talking so he holds back.

FRANKIE
I'm sorry that I'm here alone, Ma. We tried to get along but we are trapped by our past. Something's are better left broken, I guess. I'm gonna be a Dad, you know. I hope I can make you proud. Love you, Ma. Always will.

Frankie looks at his father's grave.
FRANKIE (CONT’D)
Hey Dad. I miss you so much. Things would have been so different with you around.

Mike steps forward.

MIKE
Frankie.

Frankie is startled and turns around.

FRANKIE
What the hell, Mike.

MIKE
Steve's death was not your fault. It was an accident.

FRANKIE
What? Why the sudden change of heart?

MIKE
A guy at the bar. He was in the barn that night. Confessed everything to me.

FRANKIE
You spoke to one of Bob's men? Where's he now? I need to beat his ass.

MIKE
No, Frank. He's just a guilt-ridden drunk. Bob broke him too.

Frankie is frozen to the spot, trying to digest the situation.

FRANKIE
If only you had believed me, Mike.

MIKE
I know. I was so stupid, Frank. How could I be so wrong? But I can't go back and fix it so I'm asking you to forgive me. I love you, Frank, and I won't let you down again. I swear. We'll be a family from now on, okay? Brothers. So let's loosen that rope. It's time to breathe and look to the future.

Frankie is teary-eyed.

FRANKIE
Do you really mean that?
MIKE
Every word.

Mike holds out his hand. They shake hands. Mike, then grabs Frankie and they HUG in front of their parents graves.

INT. ROOM - HOTEL - GLENDALE - EVENING

In a mid-range hotel the brothers are watching TV but Mike is a bit distant.

MIKE
Think I'll take a shower.

Mike gets up and grabs a towel off the desk chair.

FRANKIE
Hey Mike, you should try giving Marie a call again.

MIKE
I've tried. She has blocked my number now.

FRANKIE
That's too bad.

Mike bows his head and heads to the bathroom.

Frankie starts to watch the news.

ANCHORMAN (O.S.)
More now on that earlier roadside shoot-out. We understand that one of the victims was a man from the Queens area of New York....

Frankie's EYES WIDEN. The Anchorman's voice can no longer be heard as Frankie takes in the scene on TV. A split screen shows police cars and forensics stationed around body bags on one side and a PHOTO-FIT of Ray's face on the other side.

FRANKIE
Oh my God. Mike! You better get out here quick.

He stares at the TV screen IN HORROR.

EXT. MAIN STREET - GLENDALE - OREGON - MORNING

The small town with a meager population is eerily quiet as the sun breaks through the cloud. The surrounding forestry looks spectacular against the quaint premises lining the street.
EXT. GLENDALE SAWMILL - GLENDALE - DAY

The yard is empty of workers and all machinery is shut down. Tommy has arrived in a blacked out car. He has two Beefy Goons (30's), with him helping him out of the car into his WHEELCHAIR. He looks ready for revenge.

EXT. WOODS - GLENDALE - DAY

Mike's with Frankie. Mike is wearing a cowboy hat and has a bandage around his leg.

   FRANKIE
   This better work, Mike.

   MIKE
   Just do what we discussed and...

   FRANKIE
   And what?

   MIKE
   And we will be fine.

Frankie is unconvinced.

   MIKE (CONT'D)
   Frank. We have been over it numerous times. Now we just need to get this thing done, okay?

   FRANKIE
   Yeah. Come on, we better get a move on.

EXT. GLENDALE SAWMILL - GLENDALE - DAY

The brothers emerge from the woods and are surprised by Tommy's appearance. Mike HOLDS Frankie by the arm with a gun to his back.

   MIKE
   (whispering)
   He's in a wheelchair, Frank. I thought you said he was some sort of psycho?

   FRANKIE
   (whispering)
   I wasn't expecting that. But he does have a couple of monsters with him.

   MIKE
   (whispering)
   How many guns do you count?
FRANKIE
(whispering)
At-least two but Sullivan must be packing.

MIKE
(whispering)
Right, let’s get into character.

Mike SHOVES Frankie and he TUMBLES to the ground in front of Tommy and his guys.

MIKE (CONT’D)
Get to your feet asshole. Move it.

Frankie WEARILY gets up and Mike grabs his arm again. They arrive before Tommy.

TOMMY
You must be Randall McIntyre?

MIKE
(Mock Randall accent)
You must be Sullivan?

TOMMY
Mr Sullivan to you.

MIKE
Whatever. I got your man. Let’s talk money.

TOMMY
I wanted both brothers.

MIKE
I had to kill the writer. Had no choice.

TOMMY
Fine. Saves me money, I guess.

Tommy looks at Frankie.

TOMMY (CONT’D)
And you. You must be the elusive Frankie Feldman. The piece of shit coward who murdered my son.

FRANKIE
I didn't kill your son.

TOMMY
Lies. I know you did. I heard you.

MIKE
Hey, before anyone else gets killed can I get my damn money?
TOMMY
Go get the bag.

One of Tommy's men heads to the car.

MIKE
Good. Make sure it's all there. I want it counted.

TOMMY
You ain't in charge here.

MIKE
Hey, I'm the one holding a gun to his head. I pull the trigger and you miss out on your revenge. So I would suggest you get your guy to count the money. I have been screwed too many times before.

TOMMY
Bring over the money and both start counting. I want this clown outta here on the double.

One Goon comes back with a suitcase. He opens it and rests it on the floor. There's money, a lot of it.

MIKE
Actually, I want to count it.

TOMMY
You are testing my patience now.

Mike PULLS the trigger.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
Step back. Let this asshole count.

Mike PUSHES Frankie down. And then heads to the case to start counting.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
Oh, I am going to enjoy making you suffer, Feldman. It is going to be hell, you understand?

Frankie looks at Tommy briefly before making his way back to his knees.

MIKE
Can you tell your guys to get their balls out of my face?

TOMMY
Take a step back you two. One of you go get the tool bag.
One of the Goons heads off back to the car.

    TOMMY (CONT’D)
    Pass me my water, will ya. All this killing is making me hot.

The other Goon bends down and reaches into a bag on the wheelchair.

Mike glances at Frankie and WINKS knowingly.

Frankie gets up and makes a DASH for it.

    TOMMY (CONT’D)
    Hey!

Mike deliberately gets in the way of the nearest Goon, but is subtle about it.

    TOMMY (CONT’D)
    What the fuck! Get after him!

Frankie's FAST and heads into the woods. The Goon's lead the chase. Mike reluctantly follows.

    TOMMY (CONT’D)
    Find him cowboy or you're dead too!

Mike RUNS OFF in pursuit.

EXT. WOODS - GLENDALE - DAY

Mike catches up with the Goons who are at a loss where Frankie's gone.

    MIKE
    I checked these woods out yesterday. It's practically a circle. You two go that way. We can squeeze him into the middle.

The Goons take off in the other direction.

Mike runs a few yards, checks behind him, then comes up to some fallen tree trunks.

    MIKE (CONT’D)
    It's clear.

Frankie stands up.

    FRANKIE
    They bought it?

    MIKE
    Yeah, they should reach the trap pretty soon.
FRANKIE
You sure you covered it up?

MIKE
Absolutely.

We hear two SCREAMS of agony for a few moments, then silence.

MIKE (CONT’D)
Told them I knew these woods. You go back. I will go check on them.

EXT. GLENDALE SAWMILL - GLENDALE - DAY

Tommy is alone in his chair looking around. He checks his watch and holds a gun in his hand.

Frankie SNEAKS UP to Tommy. He holds a gun to the side of Tommy's head.

FRANKIE
Drop the gun Tommy or you're dead.

Tommy reluctantly throws the gun to the ground.

TOMMY
Do it soon coz my guys will be back?

Mike then arrives.

MIKE
No they won't. They are having some trouble with bear traps.

TOMMY
You motherfucker. I knew I shouldn't have trusted you.

MIKE
Me. I'm just a writer.

FRANKIE
That's right, Tommy. The cowboy is dead. This is my brother.

TOMMY
You sons of bitches.

FRANKIE
I never had anything to do with your son dying. It wasn't me. So this is where it ends.

TOMMY
You better end it kid coz if you don't, then I will.
Frankie pulls the trigger. Mike looks concerned.

MIKE
Frank. Come here a minute.

Frankie and Mike get close.

FRANKIE
We need to get this over with, Mike.

MIKE
I know but you aren't a killer.

FRANKIE
I have to be.

MIKE
No, I have an idea.

TOMMY
Hey assholes. You better hurry up. I got friends everywhere. They will be looking for you.

FRANKIE
We know about you, Tommy. You are nothing now. Look at you. Any friends of yours are only scared of your old reputation. You're just a weak old man now.

TOMMY
Let's see about that.

He reaches inside his pocket and pulls out his phone.

Mike's quick to react and PUNCHES him hard in the face knocking Tommy out. Frankie puts some gloves on, grabs the phone and SMASHES it into the ground.

FRANKIE
What's this plan then?

EXT. I-80W - DAY

Mike's car travels down a near deserted road as the sun SHINES BRIGHTLY.

INT. MIKE'S CAR - DAY

The brothers are silent trying to take in the moment. Mike then turns to Frankie and smiles at him.

MIKE
Are you okay?
Yeah. We did the right thing, didn't we?

MIKE
Yes. Let the cops sort it now. Or the wolves.

FRANKIE
Yeah.

Frankie looks out of his window at the scenery.

EXT. GLENDALE SAWMILL - GLENDALE - DAY

Tommy's out cold. He's tied and propped up against lumber in the yard. His wheelchair is MANGLED next to him.

A note is pinned to the chair that reads:

TOMMY SULLIVAN - MURDERER AND MOBSTER. CALL FBI.

EXT. I-80W HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Mike's car cruises through traffic. Road signs for Nebraska are up ahead.

INT. MIKE'S CAR - NIGHT

The brothers are silent and exhausted by the day.

Frankie then notices that Mike is looking in the direction of the signs ahead.

FRANKIE
You sure you don't want to turn off? Head to Red Cloud?

MIKE
No. I messed up.

FRANKIE
I still think you should tell her the truth.

MIKE
What happened at the mill can never be talked about. You understand?

FRANKIE
Okay but it was us or them, Mike. We had no choice.
MIKE
I told her I was different from other guys but I just left her. I didn't give her a moment's thought.

FRANKIE
Maybe give it some time, then go see her.

MIKE
Maybe.

Mike looks at the exit for a few seconds, hesitant. He drives past and sighs, then turns on the radio.

EXT - GLENDALE SAWMILL - GLENDALE - DAY

It's early morning and the yard is open for work. Two Workers stand in front of the dead body of Tommy Sullivan. He has been stabbed multiple times. Some animals have also nibbled on his body. The money has disappeared.

EXT – GAS STATION/WHINEY'S DINER - DAY

Mike's car pulls up. They both get out.

MIKE
I will get some gas.

Frankie heads inside the diner.

A truck pulls up in the parking lot. Out steps a badly beaten Randall. He soon notices Mike's car and his EYES WIDEN.

INT. WHINEY'S DINER - DAY

Frankie is helping an old lady into her seat. Randall enters the diner and quickly glances around. He spots Frankie but hangs back watching as Frankie enters the Rest-Room. He soon heads that way.

INT. MEN'S REST-ROOM - WHINEY'S DINER - DAY

There are two cubicles with their doors open. They are unoccupied. Frankie stands alone at a urinal.

The floor is wet and a wet floor sign is present.

Frankie finishes and zips up.

He turns straight into Randall's knife. Randall STARES down at Frankie, who is GASPING. Randall TWISTS the knife deeper.
RANDALL
It will be over soon, boy.

Randall pulls the knife out SLOWLY while covering Frankie's mouth with his hand. He eases Frankie to the floor.

Frankie's now CRYING.

RANDALL (CONT'D)
You should have done as you were told.

Frankie TWISTS to his side trying to get up. Randall PLUNGES the knife into his back.

Frankie is sent back to the ground.

RANDALL (CONT'D)
Have a nice life, kid.

Randall gets to his feet. Frankie tries to shout out but can't.

FRANKIE
Help me.

Randall looks down at him in pity. He LAUGHS. He starts to DRAG Frankie's body into one of the cubicles but WINCES in pain at his damaged leg.

In this moment Frankie manages to SPIN around slowly and KICKS out at Randall's damaged leg a couple of times. It causes Randall to SLIP on the wet floor.

Randall falls backwards and SMASHES his head on the sink. He crumbles to the hard floor. BLOOD pours out from behind Randall's head. He dies.

Frankie SCREAMS in pain. He SPURTS blood from his mouth. A few moments pass and Frankie, with TEARS flowing, slowly closes his eyes.

A Member of Staff (20's), forces open the door. Mike BARGES past him and RUNS to Frankie.

MIKE
Oh Jesus Christ, Frankie.

He leans over Frankie open-mouthed.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Oh, Frankie. No, no Frank. Come on stay with me. Come on now.

Frankie's motionless.
MIKE (CONT’D)
Someone call an ambulance! Come on please, Frank. Please.

Nothing from Frankie.

MIKE (CONT’D)
Please Frank. Please!

TEARS POUR down Mike's face.

EXT - JERSEY CITY - DAY

The sun shines over the bustling city scape.

SUPER: 1 YEAR LATER

EXT - RILEY’S BOOKS - DOWNTOWN JERSEY CITY - DAY

In the main shopping district an independent bookstore is showcasing a new book by Mike Feldman. A sign in the window reads ‘Acclaimed author Mike Feldman – in-store signing of his new book - The Road Home’.

INT. RILEY’S BOOKS - DAY

A decent sized crowd of mainly mature fans are having their books signed by Mike, who sits behind a table full of fresh copies. He has lost a little weight and his beard is neater.

Mike smiles through the routine. Kara and Angela are both mingling, drinking coffee. They are delighted for him.

It's a cordial affair. Mike SIGNS another book.

INT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT - JERSEY CITY - EVENING

Mike is seated with Angela and Kara. They sip champagne. Angela and Kara enjoy a LAUGH.

Kara then notices Mike is subdued.

KARA
Are you okay Mike? You looked a little distant at times today.

MIKE
Yeah, I am okay, just sad that Frankie wasn’t here. It was his story too.

Kara pats Mike on the back. Mike looks down at his plate of pasta. Kara then beams with happiness at something. She nudges Mike who looks up.
He's faced by Frankie, holding a WALKING STICK, Julia and a little baby girl. His face LIGHTS UP.

    FRANKIE
    Surprise!

Mike JUMPS to his feet. He's delighted.

    MIKE
    You said you guys couldn’t make it!

    FRANKIE
    Just kidding with you. We would have been there for the signing but the flight was delayed.

    MIKE
    Fantastic.

He HUGS his brother.

    FRANKIE
    Easy Mike.

    MIKE
    Oh sorry.

He turns to Julia and gives her a KISS on the cheek.

    MIKE (CONT’D)
    Hey Julia. You okay?

    JULIA
    I’m good. Thanks Mike. Congratulations on your book.

    MIKE
    Thanks. Were you in on this too?

    JULIA
    Afraid so.

She LAUGHS so do Mike and Frankie. Kara gets up and walks around the table. Mike turns to her.

    MIKE
    Was this your idea?

    KARA
    Combined effort.

Mike EMBRACES Kara.

    MIKE
    Come on guys, sit down and have a drink. Let me take the little one off you Julia.
Julia hands over her daughter. Kara HUGS Julia and gives Frankie a PECK on the cheek. Mike is over the moon.

**INT – BAR – JERSEY CITY – NIGHT**

Mike and Frankie are sat at the bar with a couple of empty beers and half-drunk whiskies.

**FRANKIE**

To my brother. And to many more great stories.

They CLINK glasses.

**FRANKIE (CONT’D)**

So come on Mike, tell me the truth. The character of Jane. Is she based on Marie?

**MIKE**

You won't give up on that, will you?

**FRANKIE**

I hope she is.

**MIKE**

Okay fine. She is.

**FRANKIE**

That's good. I hope Marie reads the damn thing!

**MIKE**

Me too.

Mike's smile is bittersweet as he finishes his drink.

**EXT. SAN FRANCISCO BAY – DAY**

A vast shot of the bay area with the Golden Gate Bridge taking center stage.

**EXT. NAPIER LANE – SAN FRANCISCO – DAY**

A wooden planked sidewalk runs past Victorian homes that are tucked away behind gardens. The bay can be seen in the distant b.g.

**EXT. MARIE’S HOUSE – NAPIER LANE – DAY**

Marie is watering some plants on the porch of a pleasant, well kept three bedroom home.
INT. MARIE'S HOUSE - EVENING

There are a few birthday cards on display in her artistic looking lounge. There is a PHOTO of Marie with a class of school kids. Marie sips on a glass of wine. She then opens a present. It's a copy of Mike's new book - The Road Home. She wryly smiles to herself.

    MARIE
    Thank you, kids.

Marie stares at the book for a few moments before opening it.

    CU: It reads: For the girl in the Red Cloud. Until we meet again.

She puts her hand to her mouth. Then sits back on the couch deep in thought. Her eyes begin to well-up.

EXT. JERSEY CITY SUBWAY - DAY

A crowd of commuters walk up the subway exit steps. Marie emerges. She takes a look in both directions before walking up to a Newspaper Vendor, who is standing on the sidewalk.

    MARIE
    Excuse me. Could you tell me the way to Liberty State park please?

EXT. LIBERTY STATE PARK - JERSEY CITY - DAY

The sun GLIMMERS on the river. Mike is sitting on his favorite bench sipping on a coffee. He looks out over the Hudson and then turns to his right. A moment passes. Something makes him smile.

THE END