

MAN ON THE TRAIN

Written by Dan Taplitz

Adapted from the Patrice Leconte film,
L'Homme du Train

June 11, 2007

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**LANDSCAPE ENTERTAINMENT
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FADE IN:

EXT. AMTRAK VERMONT - TWILIGHT

The train threads through a blizzard. New white snow blankets the rough countryside.

INT. TRAIN

BILLY (49) sitting alone in a half-empty train-car. His life is stamped clearly on his face: tough-lived, tough-loved and still dangerous. He stares out the window, watching the world slide by.

Suddenly the white-blue snow blooms leaving a slight halo hovering over the landscape.

Billy brings his calloused hands up to his eyes. The beginnings of a migraine. Reaching into his pocket, he pulls out a plastic medicine bottle. It reads, Zomig. He flips the lid -- it's empty of pills.

CUT TO:

INT. DOCTOR WAITING ROOM - TWILIGHT

JACK JONES (70's) is waiting in a mostly-empty outpatient waiting room. He is wearing a casual jacket and tie. His collar is too big. He is resigned to the wait. In fact, everything about him is a bit resigned. On his lap is a book, "Red Harvest", but he's not reading. He is using the last page to write a list. A list of dreams:

- 1) Go to Rio.
- 2) Score with waitress.
- 3) Bitch-slap son-in-law.
- 4) No more blood-sucking doctor.

As he's writing out the last item, a NURSE appears...

NURSE

The doctor will see you now.

JACK

Yes, of course.

Resignedly, Jack closes his book and follows her into the examining rooms.

CUT TO:

EXT. BARRE, VERMONT, TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

Billy gets off the train with a small bag. A sign on the empty platform reads -- BARRE, GRANITE CAPITAL OF THE WORLD. Billy's leather jacket and cowboy-boots are ill-suited for the cold and the snow.

CUT TO:

EXT. NORTH MAIN STREET - NIGHT

A small depressed commercial town with many old stone buildings. The place is buried deep in snow. Shops are closing as Billy walks down the street. Up ahead he sees a pharmacy.

CUT TO:

INT. PHARMACY - NIGHT

Jack is looking through a spinning display of cheap plastic eye-glasses while waiting for his prescription to be filled. He tries on a pair of +5's reading glasses. The eye-chart is sharper -- how depressing. Looking at himself in the small mirror, he fingers his collar.

JACK

Every year the number on my glasses goes
up and the number on my collar goes down.
I will end my days with coke-bottle
glasses sticking out of an empty shirt.

The pharmacist shrugs. The front door opens, setting off chimes. Jack looks up and sees...

A BLURRED IMAGE OF A MAN (BECAUSE OF THE READING GLASSES),

in the doorway. Even out of focus, Jack can tell the man is not from around here. Jack lowers the spectacles and Billy swims into focus -- stubble, long sideburns, leather jacket.

BILLY

walks up to the counter and hands the pharmacist the empty bottle of medication and his prescription to be refilled.

PHARMACIST

Zomig? I'll have to check.

Billy sits down on one of the chairs lined up for waiting. Jack, casually, takes the seat next to him. Billy doesn't seem to notice his existence -- his head is splitting.

JACK
(finally)
Migraine?

Billy doesn't answer.

JACK (CONT'D)
My wife used to get them, before she died. I guess it would be unusual for her to get them after she died. Any colors, lights? She would get flashing red lights, like popping balloons.
(no answer)
I can fix it, you know. I know this trick.

For the first time Billy looks at him. It's not a particularly friendly look.

JACK (CONT'D)
"Trick" makes it sound shady. It's more of a technique, a process. I used it at the high-school I taught in, before I retired, because we couldn't give the kids drugs. They were all stoned up to their eyeballs on bud, booze, glue, oxy, chronic, candy-flipping, yay-yo and-who-knows-what-concoction-of-the-moment -- but we couldn't give them a simple aspirin. Rules! I despise rules. Though I'm slavishly addicted to them.

Billy stares at the pharmacist who's talking on the phone. Seeing that he's losing Billy, Jack re-focuses...

JACK (CONT'D)
But to the point at hand, or head, it can be a very effective... ah, process. All I do is ask you a series of questions that you answer.

BILLY
What sort of questions?

JACK
Descriptive. Close your eyes.

Billy just looks at him, hard -- then closes them.

JACK (CONT'D)

Ok, relax. What shape is your headache?

Billy opens his eyes.

BILLY

What?

JACK

Is it round, square, oblong? Look,
you'll see.

Billy closes his eyes again and looks...

BILLY

Irregular.

JACK

Good. Hot or cold?

BILLY

Hot.

JACK

Color?

BILLY

Green and red.

JACK

Hard or soft?

BILLY

Hard.

JACK

Surface texture?

BILLY

Bumpy.

JACK

Now keep that all in mind. This
irregular, hot, green-red, hard, bumpy
thing. Now imagine a box around it. Ok,
got it in a box? Good. Now, keeping the
headache inside, shrink the box in half.
Now shrink it again. And again.

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)
And again. Now continue until it's just
a single spot. Now make it disappear.
Poof! OK. Open your eyes. Your
headache is gone.

Billy opens his eyes. Stares at Jack, who is pleased with
himself. Billy looks up, gauging the condition of his head.

JACK (CONT'D)
Don't look for it!

BILLY
It's still there.

JACK
No.

BILLY
Yes.

JACK
Not even a little bit gone?

BILLY
No.

JACK
How strange. It usually works. For most
people. Maybe you lack, I don't know,
the proper... imagination?

Billy seems quite capable of "imagining" hitting Jack upside
the head -- but instead he turns away, back to his land of
hot-green-red pain.

CUT TO:

EXT. PHARMACY - NIGHT

It's snowing heavily. Stepping outside, Billy takes some
pills from his new prescription, swallows them, then heads
down the street. Jack comes out of the pharmacy holding a
paper bag. He watches Billy walking away then turns and
heads in the opposite direction.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE BARRE HOTEL - NIGHT

The sign reads -- CLOSED FOR SEASON. Billy is looking in the deserted hulking building. It looks like there hasn't been a "season" for many years.

CUT TO:

EXT. DINER - NIGHT

On the main square and commons. The only place open in this snowed-in, cold, dark town. A taxi cab is parked outside. Seeing that the cab is empty, Billy heads for the door.

CUT TO:

INT. DINER - NIGHT

Billy enters and approaches a MAN sitting at the counter.

BILLY
Is that your cab?

MAN
Yes, sir.

BILLY
I need to go to a hotel.

MAN
The only hotels open are in Montpelier or off 89. I can't get out there until they plow the roads.

BILLY
When will that be?

JACK (O.C.)
6:15.

Billy turns and sees Jack sitting at a table. He's having a tuna sandwich and a cup of tea.

JACK (CONT'D)
The storm is supposed to blow through tonight. They won't plow until the morning.

Jack motions for Billy to join him. Billy sits.

JACK (CONT'D)

How's your...

BILLY

Better.

A waitress, TAMMY, approaches. She's in her 50's, attractive with a sexy full figure and bottle-red hair.

TAMMY

What can I get you?

BILLY

Coffee.

TAMMY

Your boots are wet.

They are. His cowboy-boots are soaked. Billy doesn't comment and Tammy goes to get the coffee.

JACK

I've come here every night for a year just to oggle her. Unrequited lust, yes, even at my age. Sadly, she barely notices that I breathe. But you walk in, once, all harsh and silent and she comments on your... boots. How rewarding that must be.

BILLY

What?

JACK

To cause a stir in a woman by just being.

Billy doesn't comment.

JACK (CONT'D)

You're not much of a talker.

BILLY

Not much.

JACK

Fortunately I'm capable of talking for two. The town has a shelter set up for people put out by storm and ill luck. Just down Broad Street. It's in the police station.

Billy is not happy about this. Jack sees this.

JACK (CONT'D)

I know, not very appealing. For me it's the smell. They use a very harsh detergent. Whenever I go in to pay a parking ticket I gag.

(longish beat)

If you wish, I have an extra bed at my house.

Billy looks at him, trying to gauge his motivation. But Jack is plainly harmless -- just a lonely old guy.

BILLY

A generous offer.

JACK

It's what people do around here when conditions demand.

(holds out his hand)

Jack Walden-Holt Jones.

They shake.

BILLY

Bill.

CUT TO:

EXT. WASHINGTON STREET - NIGHT

They are walking down a mainly commercial street. Jack stops at a large metal gate set in a high brick wall. He opens it and enters, revealing a large stone mansion that has seen much, much better days. The house is very old, the town has grown up and surrounded it. A bit of history caught out of time and place.

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jack and Billy enter. The living room is dark. There are six table and standing lamps scattered about the room. Jack walks around clicking them on, one at a time. What's slowly revealed is a time-capsule, somewhere short of the 20th century. Shabby-derelict meets Victorian romantic. Big fireplace with a leather chair in front of it. Billy takes it in.

BILLY
(appreciatively)
Old.

JACK
I prefer a Japanese style. Rice paper,
tea cups, anime. You have to respect a
culture that venerates little girls in
short skirts and ribbons as killer-
warriors.
(motions to the room)
But my wife liked all this moldy
ancestral decor and I never had the nerve
to change it.

He flips a light on in front of an oil painting of a stern
looking man with enormous white mutton-chops.

JACK (CONT'D)
The glorious patriarch. Jonathan Jones.
Was present at the Battle of Bunker Hill.
Though what he did, or for what side, is
unclear. But he did open one of Barre's
first granite quarries before he blew out
his brains showing his mistress how to
properly load a french pistol.
Unfortunately for the family, and the
town, the granite has mostly run out.
The smart ones moved into the tombstones
business. Smaller pieces. Barre is now
the "Tombstone Capital of the World" --
which says a lot about the place.

Jack looks at Billy's boots and shakes his head.

JACK (CONT'D)
Those won't do. Wet boots give you
bunions.

Going to a closet by the stairs, Jack starts digging through
it...

JACK (CONT'D)
There are two types of men. Those that
say, "I have worn out my slippers and I
must buy a new pair." They are
adventurers. And those that already have
an extra pair.

BILLY
What are they called?

JACK
School teachers.

Voila! Jack pulls out of the closet a box of brand new slippers. Billy takes the box of slippers but doesn't open them. Jack goes to the bar and pours a tumbler of scotch.

BILLY
You have two of everything?

JACK
(proudly)
No. Three. A scotch? It's 12 years.

BILLY
No, thank you.

JACK
Drinking alone is one of the saddest facts of old age. One I have no talent for. My daughter wants me to give up the house and move into the Fireside Retirement Suites. Plenty of wrinkled company for drinking and moaning. It's a confusing place. In the brochure not one of the Fireside suites had a fireplace.

Billy yawns; he clearly just wants a bed to lie down on. Jack puts the untouched glass of scotch down on the side-table.

JACK (CONT'D)
Let me show you your room.

They walk into...

THE LIBRARY

Shelves of books from floor to ceiling. Large desk on one side with an unfinished 1000-piece jigsaw puzzle of an ancient Greek monument and a few family photos. On the other side of the room is a day-bed and dresser.

JACK
Most of the upstairs leaks so I set a bed down here.

BILLY
 (looking at all the books)
 What did you teach?

JACK
 English. Still do a bit of tutoring.

BILLY
 Have you read all these?

JACK
 Most of them. Here, this is my childhood favorite. My grandfather thought he was buying the ancient Chinese novel Ching P'ing Mei. But unknowingly he bought an ancient Chinese pornographic novel Ching Pig Mei. It's about a man who gets a doctor to graft a dog penis onto his own and then has many erotic adventures. It inspired in me a lifelong love of literature. More blankets are in the chest. The bathroom is through there. You've never owned a pair of slippers, have you?

BILLY
 No.

JACK
 (impressed)
 Ah. Good night then.

BILLY
 Good-night.

Jack leaves the room and closes the door.

CUT TO:

IN THE LIVING ROOM,

Jack looks at the six illuminated lamps around the room and sighs. Resignedly, he starts to turn them off, one lamp at a time.

CUT TO:

IN THE LIBRARY,

Billy throws his bag on the bed and unzips it. From under his folded clothes, he pulls out three handguns: two Glock 17s and a Smith & Wesson 1911. He places the guns in the top dresser drawer and locks it with the skeleton key. He puts the key in his jacket pocket. Lying down on the bed he lights a cigarette and watches as the smoke rises up among the wall of books.

For the first time he seems to relax.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOUSE - MORNING

Brilliant, sunny, warm winter day.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE, KITCHEN

Jack is reading the paper, brewing a cup of a tea and preparing an injection of Avonex (for Multiple Sclerosis). He mixes water with the white powder in the single-use vial, then sucks the liquid into a syringe. With a practiced hand, he plunges the needle into his upper butt. He shows no discomfort. Looking out the window, he sees...

A SUV

pull up in front of the house. SUSAN (Jack's 30-something daughter) and her big brutish husband, FRANK, get out of the car. Frank is wearing overalls with a SHELL logo on the back. Susan is carrying three loaves of bread.

JACK

is less than thrilled.

JACK

Oh crap!

CUT TO:

THE HOUSE, VESTIBULE

Susan and Frank enter the house.

SUSAN

Dad?!

Frank has taken out a measuring tape and is measuring the room.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Do you have to do that now?

FRANK

Need the square footage for an appraisal.
I want this place sold 30 seconds after
he moves to that old-age-hospital place.

SUSAN

Retirement Suites.

Frank shrugs a "whatever". He finishes measuring then heads upstairs. Susan doesn't want an argument. She goes into...

THE KITCHEN

She sees the tea and the newspaper on the counter. She puts the loaves of bread on the table.

SUSAN

Dad?!

No answer.

CUT TO:

UPSTAIRS, ROOM

Frank is measuring one of the rooms. Jack wasn't kidding, the upstairs is a mess. Stains on the walls, fallen plaster and holes in the ceiling from water damage.

IN THE ATTIC

Through one of those holes Jack can see Frank below. Frank moves to another room and Jack moves to another hole.

The attic is vast and empty except for one dry corner that is piled high with boxes, old furniture and the odd flotsam of generations.

Jack toe-pushes a good size chunk of plaster towards the hole.

FRANK

is just finishing up measuring when the chunk of plaster hits him square on top of the head.

FRANK

Owww! Shit!

Rubbing his head, he looks up at the crumbling ceiling and hole.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Fucking dump.

CUT TO:

DOWNSTAIRS IN THE LIVING ROOM,

Susan is still looking for her father...

SUSAN

Dad?!

She stops at the mirror above the mantle and pulls out her lipstick (brand: Stila; color: Dominique). Just as she's about to apply the lipstick, she hears a noise. Cautiously, she opens the door to...

THE LIBRARY --

Where she finds Billy putting on his shirt. Susan is startled, then embarrassed, then suspicious and a bit scared. Billy is unperturbed.

SUSAN

Oh my god! I'm sorry. I was looking for my dad. Who are you?

BILLY

Bill.

SUSAN

Bill?

BILLY

Yes.

SUSAN

What are you doing here?

BILLY
I'm a guest of Jack's.

Billy looks her over (she's very attractive) and half-smiles.
Susan blushes.

BILLY (CONT'D)
And you are?

SUSAN
I'm... I'm Susan.

BILLY
Pleasure to meet you, Susan.

SUSAN
So you're a friend of my father's?

BILLY
Yes.

Susan waits for more of an explanation, but none is forthcoming.

SUSAN
Do you know where he is?

BILLY
No.

SUSAN
He's probably hiding. He does that when we come over. A game he plays. Not a very funny one. Have you known my father long?

BILLY
No.

SUSAN
You're not much of a talker?

BILLY
So I've been told.

Frank has come down the stairs to the vestibule where he can see through the living room into the library.

FRANK
Who the fuck is he?

SUSAN
A friend of dad's.

FRANK
He has friends?

Susan looks back at Billy and smiles, sweetly.

SUSAN
Apparently.

CUT TO:

INT. ATTIC - LATER

Jack is sitting in a broken down lawn-chair poking through a dusty box. He finds an old wedding photo.

In it he (as a young man) feeds his bride a piece of white cake. Everyone is laughing. Another lifetime ago.

Hearing voices outside, Jack goes to the small window. Looking out, he sees...

THE DRIVEWAY

His daughter and son-in-law have exited the house. Frank is yelling at Susan. It's unpleasant to watch. They get into their SUV and drive off.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE, UPSTAIRS

A collapsing staircase unfolds and Jack climbs out of the attic.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM

Jack stands in middle of room. The house is very still.

JACK
Bill?

No answer.

JACK (CONT'D)
(resignedly)
Bill?

CUT TO:

THE LIBRARY

Jack looks into the library, expecting it to be empty but happily finds that Bill's bag is still there.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOWN SQUARE PARK AND COMMONS - DAY

Billy is standing inside a Victorian white-wedding-cake gazebo. A snowplow is circling the park, clearing the road. Two large MEN [TOM DRAGO (45) and LEO DRAGO (25)] approach.

BILLY
You've grown fat.

TOM
You've gone old.

BILLY
Who's this?

TOM
My cousin Leo. He's the driver.

BILLY
What happened to Rico?

TOM
Tax problems.

BILLY
Is your cousin good?

LEO
I'm good.

TOM
Where's Mr. Sam?

BILLY
Late. By a day or two. He has the flu.

LEO

That sucks.

TOM

I hate these precious little shitty towns.

BILLY

It is what it is.

TOM

I know Mr. Sam has the big rep. I don't personally know him but I personally do know us. And us are good enough for a little job like this.

BILLY

I like four.

TOM

Three pays better. I know you need the money.

LEO

And what if this Mr. Sam's flu turns into bronchitis or pneumonia or a broken hip. He's old, right?

TOM

How's he going to get a broken hip?

LEO

Coughing?

BILLY

We wait.

CUT TO:

INT. STUDY

Jack is behind the desk working on the 1000-piece jigsaw puzzle. He's having a hard time concentrating. He keeps looking over at Billy's beat up western style leather jacket lying on the chair. Finally, Jack gets up, peeks into living room to make sure that he's alone, then puts the jacket on. He stands before the vanity's mirror admiring his new tough look.

JACK

(cowboy-gunslinger)

Sure is rough-looking country. What do they call this place? Just over the rise there. Town called Tombstone. Well, there are some things a man just can't run away from. Fill your hands, you son-of-a-bitch!

He draws with his fingers and shoots his image in the mirror...

JACK (CONT'D)

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Smiling, he takes the jacket off. As he does so, the skeleton key falls out of the pocket. It goes clinkity-clink on the dark wood floor.

Landing in a pool of light, the key flashes like a fishing lure.

CUT TO:

INT. DARK SEDAN - DAY

Tom, Leo and Billy are checking out the Merchant Bank from across the street. It's an old, ornate granite structure.

TOM

A piece of cake.

BILLY

You can choke on cake.

Leo rolls his eyes. Billy gets out and walks toward the bank. Tom puts the car in gear and drives down North Main Street.

LEO

This guy for real?

TOM

I once saw him stare-down a punk with a Beretta. Took it away and beat him with his own gun 'til his head was a ripe tomato.

LEO

No joke?

TOM
The man doesn't know how to blink.

LEO
Like an iguana.

TOM
They don't blink?

LEO
Not to my knowledge, no.

CUT TO:

INT. BANK - DAY

Billy is pretending to fill out a deposit slip but is really memorizing the lay-out and finding the location of the security cameras. Suddenly, he finds something pressing into his back...

JACK
Freeze.

Billy turns to find Jack. Jack is very lit-up.

JACK (CONT'D)
Small town.

BILLY
Very.

JACK
Sleep well?

BILLY
(shrugs)
Enough.

JACK
I'm sorry. It's a musty room. With all the books.

BILLY
I liked the smell. I found it comforting.

JACK
But you didn't sleep.

BILLY

I haven't slept since 1983.

Jack takes his social security check and starts to fill out a deposit slip.

JACK

Did you meet my daughter?

BILLY

Yes. She was... nice.

JACK

And her Neanderthal husband?

BILLY

Less nice.

JACK

He owns a gas station off the interstate. The fumes have made him mean and stupid. You know, I've had an account here for fifty-eight years. Want to hear a secret?

BILLY

Do I have a choice?

JACK

My greatest fantasy, beside the more recent one with lovely Tammy, the coffee-shop waitress, has always been to blow this place up. BOOM! Ha!

Jack says this a bit too loud for Billy's comfort -- a few customers look their way.

JACK (CONT'D)

My father, a famously difficult man, was President of this branch. Complete workaholic. As a child, this was the place that took his love away from me. Locked it in the vault, no doubt, before coming home. If he had any that is. Dried-up onion. Very proper New England.

Jack yells across the bank to a man behind the counter.

JACK (CONT'D)

Nathan! Hello!

NATHAN waves back. Billy tries to keep his head down.

JACK (CONT'D)

The bank manager. Shall I introduce you?

BILLY

Why would I want that?

JACK

I thought maybe you were interested in the bank... opening an account?

BILLY

No.

JACK

Smart choice. Bad hours, low interest.

BILLY

I have to go.

JACK

Will I see you back at the house?

BILLY

I have to pick up my bag.

JACK

Spend the night again, if you wish. I'm enjoying the company.

Billy nods (in a completely noncommittal way) then walks out of the bank. Jack smiles happily and goes back to his deposit slip.

CUT TO:

EXT. BARRE - LATE AFTERNOON

Billy walks past the old Opera House. He walks past a large hill of granite scree at the edge of town. At the bottom of the pile is an old quarry filled with water, now covered with ice. Picking up a hunk of granite, Billy throws it into the air and catches it. What a strange town. His cell phone rings...

BILLY

Sam, where the fuck are you?

FROM A DISTANCE,

we see Billy talking on the phone against the mountain of crazy jumbled-stone. We can't hear him but his body language indicates bad news. Abruptly, he flips the cell phone off. He bows his head -- then in anger, throws the rock as far as he can onto the lake of ice.

CUT TO:

EXT. JACK'S HOUSE - TWILIGHT

The old house seems bigger in the blue failing light.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE, LIBRARY

Jack and a skinny teenager (NEVIN, 15) dressed in disaffected black are sitting at the large desk in the library. Jack is tutoring the boy in English studies. Nevin is busy butchering a Robert Frost poem...

NEVIN

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth.

IN THE LIVING ROOM,

A pair of wet cowboy boots have been placed next the fireplace where a fire is burning away. Billy is looking down at the pair of slippers he is wearing. The slippers seem exotic to him.

NEVIN (O.C.)

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same.

BACK IN THE LIBRARY,

Nevin takes a deep bored breath and continues...

NEVIN

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

BACK IN THE LIVING ROOM,

Billy is walking back and forth in the slippers reveling in their comfort.

NEVIN (O.C.)

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I--
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

BACK IN THE LIBRARY,

Nevin has finished.

JACK

What do you think it means?

NEVIN

He took the wrong path?

JACK

Why do you say that?

NEVIN

Because he got lost.

JACK

Where does it say that?

NEVIN

Here.

JACK

Where?

Nevin looks at the poem.

NEVIN

He must have left it out.

JACK
 (frustrated)
 It's about choice. The choices we make.
 What choice did he make?

NEVIN
 To take a walk?

JACK
 He chose one path rather than the other!
 And it made all the difference! Don't
 you see that!?

NEVIN
 (no)
 Yes.

JACK
 Why?

NEVIN
 He didn't get lost?

JACK
 I think that's enough for today.

BACK IN THE LIVING ROOM,

Billy sits in the big chair in front of fire. He looks at the slippers on his feet resting on the ottoman. There's something about this place that speaks to him, something he can't understand. He takes a sip of that 12 year-old scotch and picks up a book. It's Ching Pig Mei. Opening to the title page, he sees that Jack has scribbled a list below a dirty illustration of a man with large dog penis. The list reads:

- 1) Buy motorcycle.
- 2) Ask Tammy out for ride on motorcycle.
- 3) Forego helmet.

Jack and Nevin walk into the room from the library. Bill quickly puts the book down and stands.

JACK
 Ah, the slippers. How do they feel?

BILLY
 (wryly)
 Like my entire life is wrong.

JACK
Walk, let's see.

Billy walks.

JACK (CONT'D)
No, no. A connoisseur drags his feet,
with the heel turned in. Yes, better.
Here is a man, Nevin, that knows a bit
about paths not taken. If he had only
bought a pair of slippers in his youth
who knows how his life would have been
changed.

Nevin has no idea what Mr. Jones is talking about. Billy
gives Nevin a look of solidarity (which Nevin greatly
appreciates). There's a KNOCK on the door.

JACK (CONT'D)
Come in!

Nathan, the bank manager we saw earlier, walks into the room.
Nevin starts to gather his books and jacket.

JACK (CONT'D)
Nathan, I want to introduce you to a
friend of mine, Bill.

Billy is not happy, but shakes hands with Nathan.

JACK (CONT'D)
Nathan manages our biggest bank, or at
least the one with the most money, and of
course, is Nevin's father. Bill is a
visiting English scholar from Syracuse.
He specializes in... Rimbaud.

Billy doesn't say anything.

JACK (CONT'D)
Young Nevin could benefit from a touch of
tutorial from Bill here.

NATHAN
Anything that raises his SAT score I'm
behind.

NEVIN
I'm fine.

NATHAN

You can't even spell "fine".

NEVIN

F..., wait, I know it, F... u,c,k.

JACK

See? You underestimate the lad!

NATHAN

Are you visiting long?

BILLY

No.

NATHAN

There's not a lot of tourist attractions, besides the tombstones in the cemetery.

JACK

Exceptional workmanship. My daughter used to give cemetery tours.

NEVIN

You don't look like an English teacher.

JACK

He's not no janky teacher, Nevin, he's a "associate professor". They're different, they're phat.

Both Nevin and Billy cringe.

NATHAN

Let's go. I have to drop you off at your mother's. Nice meeting you.

As Nevin and Nathan walk out, Jack sits down behind the piano and begins to play Schumann's Carnival.

JACK

You know, apart from needlepoint, I have all the skills of a well-bred early 19th century young woman.

(still playing)

When you play music people think that you're enjoying it. "The happy moments he must have at the piano." In truth, the piano can be a deadly bore.

BILLY
(a bad feeling)
Why did you call me a professor?

JACK
Cover.

BILLY
Why do you think I need a cover?

Jack stops playing the piano -- he can barely contain his excitement.

JACK
Because you're here to rob the bank.

BILLY
Why didn't you tell your friend that?

JACK
Isn't it obvious -- I want to rob it with you!

More silence. Billy breaks into laughter. Jack joins him. But then Billy suddenly stops. Jack awkwardly keeps laughing.

BILLY
What are you laughing at?

JACK
(finally stopping)
Because you were laughing?

BILLY
I was laughing because you're a fool.

JACK
Oh. That's not so funny.

BILLY
No.

JACK
I know how it sounds. But think about it. Here I sit. With suitcases that will never be packed. A passport that will never be stamped. Filling my days with puzzles of the Acropolis. When, suddenly, a stranger comes to my town.
(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

To my mausoleum of a house. And what does the stranger want? To rob the very bank that robbed me of my father. And there it is. A chance to grab at something so beautifully quixotic. To do something so extreme, so unexpected, that even I won't recognize myself.

BILLY

You read too many books.

JACK

Exactly!

BILLY

I don't rob banks.

JACK

OK, I'm going to level with you...

(beat)

I'm dying.

BILLY

(dryly)

Now?

JACK

I'm serious. I have MS, Multiple Sclerosis. They've given me a couple more good years, if I'm lucky. And then it's a slow, horrible progression. Losing my body one nerve at a time. It's why my daughter wants me in the Fireside. I start in a private room, then a private room with a nurse, then a room in the hospice, then the hospital in the basement, then the graveyard out back.

BILLY

I'm sorry.

JACK

So you can see why the idea of jail or dying in a hail of bullets doesn't sound so bad to me.

BILLY

Not that sorry.

JACK

Oh, I have every confidence of us getting away with it.

BILLY

There is no "us".

JACK

What do I need to do?

BILLY

Nothing.

JACK

There must be something. I'm a quick study.

BILLY

You want a "tutorial"?

JACK

Yes.

BILLY

(not unkindly)

Look, Jack, it's a fucked world. I do my time by looking out for one person.

JACK

You.

BILLY

Me.

JACK

Bit of a cliché, but I understand. You're not altruistic by nature.

BILLY

If I knew what that meant I would probably say, yes.

JACK

What about money? After-all, bank robbery is about securing money, right? And you must need money. You probably go through money like water. Fast cars, women, gambling debts, waterbeds.

BILLY
I need another drink.

Jack continues to talk as he brings out a bottle of scotch and refills Billy's glass.

JACK
Let's approach this strictly as a business deal. What's the most you can make robbing a bank? Ah, theoretically.

Jack hands Billy the drink. Billy sizes Jack up -- and makes a conscious decision to relax. He doesn't know where Jack is going but it's damn hard to be threatened by the man.

BILLY
Theoretically, it depends how you rob it.

JACK
How many ways are there?

BILLY
Three.

JACK
Really?

BILLY
One -- pass a teller a note: "This is a robbery put money in the bag." That's 2-12,000. Two -- three men, plus a driver, take over the bank. You get into the open vault. 50-500,000. Three -- break in off hours and force open the vault and the safety deposit boxes. That can be a million.

JACK
OK, door number two. Four men, say 200,000 split. That's 50,000 a piece.

BILLY
So?

JACK
I will give you half that, 25,000, up front for my training. And I'll take only a 10% cut in the robbery.

BILLY

You'd pay me \$25,000 dollars to be part of a robbery that you will earn less than that?

JACK

I'm a dying man. What do I need with money?

BILLY

Dying can be expensive.

JACK

I can afford to die. I have a pension. I'm offering you 25,000. Legally. On a schedule.

BILLY

What sort of schedule?

JACK

Half up front, and half once I'm inducted into the fraternity.

Billy shakes his head.

JACK (CONT'D)

Come on! 25, 000. That's a Toyota Camry. With air-conditioning. And if I prove un-trainable you can cut me out. How can you lose?

Billy's head is hurting, again. He takes out the container of Zomig and chases down a few pills with the booze.

BILLY

In my experience as soon as someone says, "how can you lose" -- you've already lost.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOWN SQUARE PARK AND COMMONS - DAY

Billy is again standing in the wedding-cake gazebo, smoking a cigarette. In the south corner of the commons, a large number of STUDENTS have gathered during noon recess. Billy sees..

NEVIN

(the boy that Jack was tutoring). Nevin is trying to talk to a pretty GIRL. Poor Nevin. It's the agony of adolescence in motion.

TOM AND LEO

approach the gazebo.

TOM

So?

BILLY

We have to wait a week for Mr. Sam.

TOM

Shit.

LEO

Bronchitis?

BILLY

Does it matter? We'll meet back here in one week and do this thing.

TOM

This is fucked. What are we supposed to do in this wasteland for a week?

BILLY

Gamble in Niagara, get drunk, read a book, I don't care.

LEO

(incredulous)

Read a book?

TOM

You're not fucking with us because you don't want to do that.

LEO

Truth.

BILLY

Very scary. Next Tuesday 10:00. Here.

Tom is totally pissed-off but there's nothing he can do about it.

TOM
What's Mr. Sam look like? How will we
recognize him?

BILLY
(thinks)
He looks like a retired high-school
English teacher.

CUT TO:

EXT. ABANDONED QUARRY - DAY

Jack (looking very much like a retired high-school English teacher) is trying on his new name, making select words echo off the enormous stone walls.

JACK
(attempted-tough)
That's Mr. Sam, to YOU. MR. Sam. Mr.
SAM. MR. SAM.

Behind him, Billy is setting up empty beer cans in row on a rock.

BILLY
Jesus, don't wear it out.

JACK
Are you sure he won't show up?

BILLY
Yes.

JACK
How?

BILLY
He's in the hospital with a collapsed
lung.

Billy walks away from the cans. Jack follows. They stop about 30 feet from the cans. Billy takes out a Glock from underneath his jacket. He pops the clip and loads the gun.

BILLY (CONT'D)
Do you know why banks are robbed?

JACK
It's where the money is.

BILLY

No. There are a lots of places that have money. Banks are robbed because they're easy.

JACK

They don't look easy.

BILLY

They are. For a simple reason. They let you rob them. They encourage you. Every bank employee has been trained to do two things during a robbery. One, help the robbers get the money as quickly and effortlessly as possible. No one will try to stop you. Just the opposite, they want you to take the money and leave the bank. This includes the tellers, the managers and even the guards. They are all working for you.

JACK

How convenient. And two?

BILLY

They hit the silent alarms and cameras.

JACK

And that's bad.

BILLY

No. We wear masks. And silent alarms are routed through a security company to a police station. It's impossible for the police to respond in under two minutes. At two minutes you drop everything, take what you have and leave.

JACK

You can really rob a bank in two minutes?

BILLY

Most things in life can be done in less than two minutes if you focus.

JACK

You must be quite the lover.

Billy jams the clip back into the gun and slides the safety off.

JACK (CONT'D)
Have you ever been caught?

BILLY
No.

JACK
Impressive.

BILLY
It's not. A chimp can rob a bank. The
problem is that most people that rob
banks are stupider than chimps.

Billy hands the gun to Jack.

JACK
What do I do?

BILLY
Point and pull the trigger.

Jack tries to assume the shooting-stance he's seen in all
those TV cop shows.

JACK
What should I imagine it is?

BILLY
(taken aback)
Why imagine it's anything?

JACK
I just thought, you know...

BILLY
Imagine it's an empty beer can.

Jack shoots. BANG. Misses by a mile. He shoots again.
BANG And again. BANG. The bottles remain whole. He lowers
the gun.

JACK
Any tips?

BILLY
Don't shoot your foot.

He raises the gun and tries again. BANG. BANG. No luck.

JACK
Closer that time?

BILLY
Close doesn't count.

BANG. Miss.

JACK
I suppose practice helps.

BILLY
No.

JACK
Then what?

BILLY
(shrugs)
Lack of pity.

Jack tries on his best pitiless-face. He looks painfully constipated. He fires. BANG. Then again. BANG.

A TIN CAN

shudders as the bullet grazes it. Then, as delicately as leaf in autumn, the can falls over.

JACK

leaps into the air with a shout. He does a little touchdown dance.

JACK
Oh yeah, oh yeah, oh yeah!

Billy's deadly-serious face edges toward almost a smile.

CUT TO:

INT. DINER - DAY

Billy is alone at a booth having a cup of coffee and reading "Ching Pig Mei". He is a quarter through the Chinese novel and is clearly enjoying it. Looking out the diner window, he sees...

SUSAN'S SUV

pull up. Susan gets out, opens the back, and reaches far inside to grab something.

IN THE DINER, BILLY

takes note of the accentuation of her shapely ass. Susan enters the cafe carrying two large bags of bread. She puts them behind the counter for Tammy to pickup. Turning, she sees Billy at the booth. Taken by surprise, she blushes, then waves.

SUSAN

Hi.

BILLY

Hi.

SUSAN

Still here?

BILLY

Yes.

SUSAN

What are you reading?

Billy turns the book around.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Oh.

BILLY

Your father let me borrow it. It's about a man who gets a doctor to...

SUSAN

Yes, I know.

BILLY

You've read it?

SUSAN

And how do you know my father?

BILLY

Similar interests.

SUSAN
Teaching, I hope.

BILLY
What else?

SUSAN
You don't look like a teacher.

BILLY
(as if this explains it)
Associate professor.

SUSAN
(dubious)
Really? Where?

BILLY
Syracuse. What's with the bread?

SUSAN
I work at a bakery.

Billy smiles.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
What?

BILLY
The first time we met you smelled like
fresh bread. I thought it was a perfume.

Susan blushes again.

SUSAN
Why did you come to Barre?

BILLY
The normal attractions.

SUSAN
There are none.

BILLY
There's the cemetery.

SUSAN
Have you been?

BILLY

I was hoping for a tour.

SUSAN

You can get a pamphlet at the main gate.

BILLY

I'm more of a people person.

Susan laughs -- he's so not a people person.

SUSAN

You're trouble.

BILLY

Don't you ever get into trouble?

SUSAN

Where's my father?

BILLY

He had do some banking.

SUSAN

Has he talked at all about moving to the Fireside?

BILLY

Yes.

SUSAN

I keep scheduling times for him to look the place over and he keeps not showing up.

BILLY

I could talk to him.

SUSAN

Really? Would you do that?

BILLY

(for you)

Yes.

SUSAN

That would mean a lot.

Susan looks at Jack, hopeful. Who knows, maybe she's misjudged him.

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Billy is sitting at the table looking at money in an envelope (first payment of 10G). He's a lot less pleased with it than he thought he would be. Jack is behind the counter tossing a salad for dinner.

JACK

Do you have tatoos?

BILLY

Why do you want to know?

JACK

I just thought a man like you would have tatoos. Maybe a snake or a broken heart.

Billy doesn't answer. He puts the money away.

BILLY

I saw Susan at the cafe. I don't think she believed I was a professor.

JACK

(pleased)

You need to be more arrogant. The only thing that a professor knows, is that he knows everything.

BILLY

I don't know everything.

JACK

Neither do professors. If you get in trouble just say, "how ironic".

BILLY

(flat)

How ironic.

JACK

Good! A natural.

BILLY

She expects to see you Friday at that retirement place.

JACK

Are you her messenger now?

BILLY

If you don't go she'll get more suspicious.

JACK

You know she's married.

BILLY

I know.

Jack brings the food over and sits down. He starts to dish it out.

JACK

Ever been? Married.

BILLY

(beat)

Yes.

JACK

Really? What happened?

BILLY

It didn't.

They start to eat. It's surprisingly peaceful and domestic, like they've been doing this for years.

CUT TO:

EXT. STONE STREET - NIGHT

Jack and Billy are walking down a mean looking industrial street of Barre.

JACK

After my wife died I took off and went to New York. I was going to tear-up the city.

BILLY

Did you?

JACK

It rained. I saw 12 movies and came home.

They stop at a hole-in-the-wall bar, called THE QUARRY.

JACK (CONT'D)

Here?

BILLY

Ever been?

JACK

It has a reputation for being a bit rough.

Billy opens the door for Jack to enter.

CUT TO:

INT. THE QUARRY BAR - NIGHT

Dark. Very basic. Crowded. Jack and Billy are sitting at a table near the end of the bar. Both are drinking beer.

BILLY

Three of us enter. I go to the vault. You and Tom control the bank. Keep the customers in order. You have to be confident, firm, unafraid. The most dangerous part is the unexpected hero. The employees have all been trained to rollover but occasionally you find a customer with strange ideas.

JACK

Even with our... you know...

Makes a gun with his fingers under the table.

BILLY

Yes. You have to take the idea out of their head.

JACK

How?

BILLY

Look at the man at the end of the bar. See how the others give him space.

They are looking at a big young man, drinking alone.

JACK

He's big.

BILLY

That's not it. It's how he holds himself. But mostly it's the look in the eye. That don't-fuck-with-me look.

Jack examines the man then turns back to Billy with his best D.F.W.M look. The ludicrousness of the situation strikes Billy hard. He rubs his head.

BILLY (CONT'D)

You're scaring me.

JACK

In a good way?

BILLY

No.

Two ROWDY FRIENDS are having a scuffle over picking a song on the jukebox. One pushes the other and he falls back against Jack and Billy's table, hitting Billy and sloshing his drink. The rowdy guy barely looks back before he's up and yelling at his friend. Billy has said nothing. Jack is surprised that he has let this pass.

JACK

You said nothing.

BILLY

Know why?

JACK

No.

BILLY

Because they're a team. And one guy can't take on two except in the movies.

JACK

Aren't we a team too?

BILLY

Not so long ago he'd have apologized. That's how you know you're getting old.

Taking the envelope of money out of his jacket, Billy places it on the table. He pushes the envelope across the table to Jack.

BILLY (CONT'D)

And if I'm old, you're a toothless fossil.

Jack doesn't touch the money.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Everyone gets old, Jack. That doesn't mean you have to be a fool about it.

Jack refuses to accept this. He looks away at the two rowdy guys by the jukebox. There's a crazy look in Jack's eye.

JACK

Hey! You two, shut up!

THE ROWDY GUYS

continue to roughhouse. They don't even bother to look back at him.

JACK

gets up. Billy stays seated, watching -- some lessons need to be painful. Jack walks up to the first guy, grabs him by the shoulder and swings him around.

JACK (CONT'D)

I said keep it down!

The guy stares intensely at this angry old man. It looks like he's is going to hit Jack when...

ROWDY GUY 1

Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.
Beware the Jabberwock, my son!
The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun
The frumious Bandersnatch!

Needless to say, Jack is confused.

ROWDY GUY 1 (CONT'D)
 You were my teacher in the 9th grade!
 Joseph Puissoneau.

JACK
 (slowly remembering)
 Ah, Puissoneau.

Joseph enthusiastically pumps Jack's hand.

ROWDY GUY 1
 I work at Florents' as a carver. Are you
 still teaching poetry?

JACK
 No, I'm retired.

ROWDY GUY 1
 I hated you for making me memorize that.
 But now I think it's the only thing I
 took away from school. I recite it to my
 three year-old son at night and it makes
 him laugh. I have you to thank for that,
 Mr. Jones.

JACK
 I give you a B plus.

Joseph is very pleased. Jack nods his head and walks back to his table.

SITTING BACK DOWN, JACK

looks at the envelope of money on the table, then up to Billy. At first, Jack is all seriousness -- then he smiles -- then he laughs out loud.

JACK (CONT'D)
 I picked a fight with the one guy in this
 town that likes me!

BILLY
 (deadpan)
 How ironic.

Taking the envelope of money, Billy puts it back into his jacket pocket.

CUT TO:

EXT. BARRE - EARLY MORNING

Small town quiet. A lone dog wanders through the town square.

CUT TO:

INT. BARBER SHOP - EARLY MORNING

No customers yet. The BARBER sits in the corner reading a boating magazine. The door bell tinkles and Jack walks in. He sits down in the chair and barber puts the apron around his neck.

BARBER
Beautiful morning.

JACK
Is it? I hadn't noticed.

The barber takes up his scissors to give Jack "the usual" haircut he's been getting in the same place, with the same barber, for 20 years.

JACK (CONT'D)
I want something different today.

BARBER
(surprised)
A different haircut?

JACK
Yes. No part. And short. Very short.
Razor short.

The barber looks like a meteor has slammed into his shop out of the clear blue sky.

BARBER
No part? Razor?

JACK
Yes. Somewhere between 'heading to Baghdad' and 'fresh out of jail'.

BARBER
Are you feeling alright?

JACK
Never better.

BARBER
Just a... change?

JACK
And the sideburns, I'm going to grow them
long. Maybe even, what do they call it?
A soul patch.

The barber doesn't know what to do with his hands. He picks
up the electric razor.

BARBER
(shaken)
I thought I knew you.

JACK
(very happy)
Nobody knows me!

The barber nods and turns on the razor.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE, LIBRARY - MORNING

Billy, in bed, wakes up. He stares up at the walls of books.
Sitting up, his feet naturally slide into the slippers on the
floor. He looks down and notes this as strange and
enjoyable.

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM - MORNING

Billy has borrowed Jack's razor and is shaving for the first
time since we've met him. True to form, we can see a broken
heart tatoo on his forearm. He examines his long sideburns
and impulsively decides to shorten them up.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - DAY

Jack is walking down the street. He stops at a shop window
and looks at his new haircut in the reflection. It looks
good. The shop is a men's clothing store and in the display
window are spring coats. Most are very practical New England
but to the side Jack spies a brown leather one...

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE, VESTIBULE - DAY

Billy is heading out. He reaches for his leather jacket hanging on the coat-rack -- and hesitates. Next to his leather jacket is one of Jack's long tweed overcoats. Billy fingers the texture of the wool coat.

CUT TO:

INT. DINER - DAY

Jack is sitting in his normal spot. He is wearing the brown leather jacket we saw in the window (and his new haircut). Tammy, the waitress, comes over. As usual, she's doesn't really look at him.

TAMMY

Tuna sandwich and tea?

JACK

Just coffee.

Tammy looks up at Jack. She's puzzled. Like she thinks for a second it might be somebody else, but wait, no, it's the same person -- just changed a bit.

TAMMY

Coffee?

Jack doesn't say anything. Tammy hesitates then turns and heads to the counter to get the order.

Jack breathes deep. Ah, life.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOPE CEMETERY - DAY

Grey granite tombstones and memorials rising from the white snow ground. Billy, clean shaven and wearing one of Jack's tweed overcoats, is standing in front of a large sculpture of an angel. The angel is sitting, its legs crossed. The name BRUSA carved above it. Billy is contemplating the angel's unusual expression. Susan walks up from behind.

SUSAN

(re: the angel)

I always thought she looked hopelessly bored.

BILLY

Like she's thinking, "Come on, die already".

Billy turns and sees that Susan has a black-eye. She waits for him to say something about it -- but he doesn't.

SUSAN

Did you talk to my father about the Fireside?

BILLY

He'll be there.

SUSAN

Then you've earned your tour. Are you ready, sir?

BILLY

Yes, ma'am.

SUSAN

Hope Cemetery is the newest cemetery in Barre. Founded in the year 1895.

They stop in front of a tombstone graced with a carving of a man smoking a cigarette dreaming of his wife far away from home; emerging from the smoke is an image of his wife.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Donati. He was a master carver in the 30's. The tradition of Barre is for the carver to carve his own tombstone.

BILLY

Before he dies?

SUSAN

It helps.

Susan catches Billy looking at her black-eye.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Does it look that bad?

BILLY

(yes)

No.

SUSAN

I walked into a pole. Really?

BILLY

You look beautiful.

Susan smiles. Together, they walk off into the snowy depths of the cemetery...

CUT TO:

THE TOUR - MONTAGE

A tombstone soccer ball, a tombstone race car, a tombstone of an armchair (stuffed), a tombstone airplane. An exact replica of Michelangelo's Pieta. Billy and Susan are clearly enjoying each others presence. Finally, they end at...

THE HALVOSA TOMBSTONE

It's of a couple sitting up in bed in their pajamas, holding hands. Billy reads the inscription:

BILLY

"Set me as a seal upon thine heart for
love is strong as death."

AT HIS SIDE, BILLY'S HAND

is millimeters away from Susan's hand. Behind their nearly-touching hands are the touching stone hands. Conscious of their almost-physical-connection, Susan allows her fingers to linger next to Billy's for a few moments before willing them to slowly drift apart.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The furniture in the living room has been rearranged to approximate the interior of the bank. The sofa and chair are in line to represent the teller's counter. The standing lamps have paper bags over the shades with smiley-faces drawn on them. Suddenly Jack, with black knit mask over his face and a gun in his hand, storms into the room.

JACK

Ladies and gentlemen your attention,
please! This is a robbery! Everybody
must lie on the floor! NOW!

Jack approaches a suspicious lamp and gives the smiley-face shade his best D.F.W.M stare.

JACK (CONT'D)

YOU! Yes you, you ugly Tiffany knock-off! Down on the FLOOR!

He pushes the lamp over with the muzzle of the gun then turns to confront a dangerous Victorian lamp behind him. Unfortunately, he's failed to take into consideration the heroics of a brave little ottoman and trips over it. Trying to control his fall, he grabs a side-table but it topples along with him. The gun breaks free of his hand and skitters across the oak floor until...

A COWBOY BOOT

stops it. Billy has been watching from the corner. He bends down and picks up the gun.

JACK

is on the floor with the cloth-covering of the side-table wrapped around his face. He's banged his shin and grunts in pain.

JACK (CONT'D)

It's not my fault. I wasn't expecting a midget. But I can assure you, Barre has only one midget, Mrs. Foster, actually a dwarf, I think, she has a large head, but not to worry, she's at least 82 with extremely bad arthritis.

BILLY

What's the matter with your hand?

Jack's right hand is shaking and he seems to have trouble closing it.

JACK

(standing)

Nothing.

Billy just looks at him.

JACK (CONT'D)

It's nothing.

Jack walks out of the living room and into...

THE KITCHEN

He takes down his Avonex medication to prepare an injection.
Billy appears behind him.

JACK
Why Barre?

BILLY
What do you mean?

JACK
A million banks in 50 states. Why this one?

BILLY
It's not fate.

JACK
Then what is it?

BILLY
Blue collar towns keep more cash on hand for payrolls.

JACK
That's it?

BILLY
And it's forty-eight seconds from Route 89.

Jack mixes the powder and loads the syringe.

JACK
What if someone identifies the car?

BILLY
The driver steals a car the night before.
We switch to a safe car before we get on interstate.

Jack sticks the needle into his upper butt, injects the liquid and throws the needle in the sink.

JACK
May I have the gun, please.

BILLY

Why?

JACK

I'm going to kill the ottoman.

Billy hands the gun over to Jack. Jack smiles, like a boy that's about to be naughty, and exits the kitchen. Billy goes the sink and fills a glass with water. He takes out the container of Zomig and shakes out a few tablets.

BANG! -- a gunshot is heard from the living room.

Billy sighs and swallows his pills.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE FIRESIDE RETIREMENT SUITES - DAY

Large structure. Could be a small hospital. Not unfriendly. Susan is waiting in front. She is nervously playing with her lipstick. Finally, she sees Jack walking down the street toward her. He kisses her on the cheek, noticing her still bruised eye.

JACK

Sorry I'm late.

SUSAN

(surprised)

You got a haircut.

JACK

And you got a black-eye.

SUSAN

Walked into a pole.

They enter the building.

CUT TO:

INT. FIRESIDE, A SINGLE ROOM - DAY

Jack and Susan are being given a tour by an efficient middle-aged CARE-MANAGER. The room is bright, very small, clean. There's some minimal furniture. It couldn't be more different from the large rambling mansion where Jack presently lives.

CARE-MANAGER

This room is not available, but they all look pretty much the same.

SUSAN

It's nice, isn't it?

JACK

Hmm. No fireplace?

CARE-MANAGER

That wouldn't be to code.

CUT TO:

INT. FIRESIDE, GAME ROOM

Table with board games. Two OLD LADIES are watching a soap on TV. The care-manager shows the room to Jack and Susan.

CARE-MANAGER

And this is our game room.

JACK

No fireplace?

CUT TO:

INT. FIRESIDE, CAFETERIA

Jack, Susan, and the care-manager view the hall. It's empty except for kitchen staff setting up lunch. Attempts have been made at making the room cozy and nice but an institutional quality still seeps through. There is, of course, no fireplace.

JACK

Hmmm. No...

CARE-MANAGER

(tight)

No. There isn't.

CUT TO:

INT. FIRESIDE, HOSPITAL

Not large but efficient long-term care. They walk down the single hallway. They pass patients in most of the rooms. It's not pretty.

People dying slowly with the help of modern medical technology. Jack stops and looks into one of the rooms. He sees...

AN ELDERLY MAN,

drugged-out, possibly in a coma, and hooked to an oxygen tank. Tubes going everywhere.

JACK

stares at him. Very sobering.

CARE-MANAGER

We have the most modern equipment and an excellent medical staff...

The care-manager's beeper goes off. She looks at the message.

CARE-MANAGER (CONT'D)

Please, excuse me. But I have to take this.

The care-manager walks down the hall, back to reception. Jack has continued to stare at the patient.

JACK

I know him.

SUSAN

Really?

JACK

He used to teach math in Montpelier.

Jack finally turns away from the sick and dying man and wanders into...

AN EMPTY ROOM

He sits down on the narrow hospital bed. Susan stands at the door. Jack looks up at her.

JACK

Their only fireplace is a crematorium.

SUSAN

Oh, dad.

Susan sits next to him and tries to comfort him.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
It's not that bad.

JACK
I made my will.

SUSAN
(tersely)
It's just a place to live.

Jack looks at her.

JACK
How did we ever get this way?

SUSAN
What way?

JACK
Remember when we use to tell each other everything? Important things. And now, it's the weather or pretty lies so we don't offend. This is not just a place to live.

SUSAN
You're upset.

JACK
And you married a prick!

Susan stands, shocked and affronted.

SUSAN
I won't have you say that!

JACK
I'll say it if I want to. It's the truth. This is a place to die, and Frank is a prick. You can say it too. Frank... is... a... prick. Go ahead and say it.

SUSAN
I will not.

JACK
You've thought it for eight years. Go on, say it.

SUSAN

What good would it do?

JACK

I don't know. Let's find out. Frank is a stupid fat prick.

SUSAN

No.

JACK

(re: her black-eye)

Why? How many poles do you need to walk into while he was drunk and didn't mean it? Frank is a prick.

SUSAN

Stop!

JACK

He's ruined your life with his dullness and bowling and bullying. He won't even knock you up! Is he impotent to boot? And you've never once told him to fuck-off!

SUSAN

And you would?

JACK

I want you to be better than me. My life is an example of what-not-to-do. Yours should be so much more.

SUSAN

I've never seen you like this.

JACK

Unfortunately.

Silence. Then Susan gently tries to find some familiar footing...

SUSAN

I know this is hard.

Jack resigns himself to "the weather".

JACK

Of course.

SUSAN

But staying in the house doesn't make sense.

JACK

Yes, I know.

SUSAN

Where is that woman?

Susan goes to the door. But she doesn't leave. She just stands there. Frozen. Long beat, then...

SUSAN (CONT'D)

(barely a whisper)

He is a prick.

JACK

(not sure he heard right)

What?

SUSAN

(louder)

Big. Fat. Prick.

Susan turns, she's crying. Jack stands. They rush to each other and embrace. Jack holds her tight; she's his little girl again.

JACK

(gently)

It's alright, sweetheart. It's alright...

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE, LIBRARY - DAY

Billy takes a tobacco pipe from a rack of many and knocks it against his palm. Pulling apart his unfiltered cigarettes, Billy stuffs the tobacco into the wooden pipe.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

Billy is sitting in the big leather chair by the fire; he is wearing slippers, smoking the pipe and slowly turning the pages of a book on Renaissance painting. He is extremely content. A KNOCK on the door is heard...

CUT TO:

INT. VESTIBULE

Billy opens the door to find Nevin, the boy that Jack has been tutoring.

BILLY

Yes?

NEVIN

(hangdog)

I have a lesson with Mr. Jones?

BILLY

He's not here.

Nevin's spirts suddenly soar. A reprieve! Billy finds this disrespectful and acts impulsively.

BILLY (CONT'D)

I'm giving your lesson today.

To Billy's satisfaction, Nevin visibly deflates.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE, LIBRARY

Nevin and Billy take seats at the desk.

BILLY

Did you have an assignment?

NEVIN

A poem.

BILLY

Did you study it? Be honest.

NEVIN

Not really.

BILLY

Good. Let's hear it.

Nevin takes out his book. Clears his throat and proceeds to mangle poor Andrew Marvell.

NEVIN

But at my back I always hear
Time's winged chariot hurrying near;
And yonder all before us lie
Deserts of vast eternity.
Thy beauty shall no more be found,
Nor, in thy marble vault, shall sound
My echoing song: then worms shall try
That long preserved virginity,
And your quaint honour turn to dust,
And into ashes all my lust:
The grave's a fine and private place,
But none, I think, do there embrace.

Billy seems lost in the language.

BILLY

Let me see it.

Nevin gives Billy the poem. Billy looks it over while Nevin waits and waits. Finally, Billy cracks the meaning of the poem and his face lights up.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Know what it means?

NEVIN

No.

BILLY

Do you care?

NEVIN

No.

BILLY

What do you think of girls?

NEVIN

What do you mean?

BILLY

Do you like them, do you want to get laid
before you're forty?

NEVIN
(turns red)
Yeah.

BILLY
This poem, that you don't care about,
tells you how.

NEVIN
It does?

BILLY
Tells you how to get into their pants.
Plain and simple. I would think a skinny
little virgin like yourself would find
that interesting. Oh, well...

Billy goes to close the book -- but Nevin stops him.

NEVIN
I'm, I'm interested... but I don't, you
know... get it?

BILLY
This guy has a girl who's not putting
out. So, he tells her: I don't have all
year for this waste of time. And neither
do you. You're pretty now but you're not
getting any younger. Time is not going
to be kind to those hips. No way. Wait
too long and worms will be the only thing
tapping your ass. So let's do-it, baby,
before there's nothing left to do.

NEVIN
That works?

BILLY
No. She would tell you to fuck-off.

NEVIN
Oh.

BILLY
It's not what he says, it's the way he
says it. "The grave's a fine and private
place, but none, I think, do there
embrace." Lord, that will work. That
will set her spinning. Understand?

NEVIN
Say it... pretty?

BILLY
(nods)
Poetry... gets... you... sex.

Nevin touches the poetry book like it might be Aladdin's lamp.

NEVIN
Sick.

Billy stands indicating that the lesson is over.

NEVIN (CONT'D)
Is that all?

BILLY
Yeah.

NEVIN
Should I write a paper on it?

BILLY
Why bother.

Billy picks up the copy of "Ching Pig Mei" from the table and tosses it to Nevin.

BILLY (CONT'D)
Here. The hero uses another strategy.
Not medically legal in Vermont but still
makes a good read.

NEVIN
For next week?

BILLY
(beat)
Yeah, for next week.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Again, the furniture in the living room has been rearranged to approximate the interior of the bank. Upbeat musak is playing on the stereo. Again, Jack storms into the room, masked and holding the gun.

JACK

Ladies and gentlemen your attention,
please! This is a robbery! Everybody
must lie on the floor! NOW!

Jack approaches the smiley-face shade.

JACK (CONT'D)

YOU! Down on the FLOOR!

He pushes the lamp over with the gun, then without looking, coolly kicks the ottoman (with a bullet hole in it) out of the way. Turning with grace and confidence, he confronts the Victorian lamp.

JACK (CONT'D)

DOWN!

The lamp falls. He stands surveying the room of cowering and subservient furniture -- master of his domain.

Jack's watch beeps.

JACK (CONT'D)

Two minutes. I thank you all for your
time and patience. Good day.

IN THE LIBRARY

Billy is sitting behind the desk working on the 1000-piece jig-saw puzzle of the Acropolis. He's just finishing a row of 13 Doric columns for the Parthenon. On the desk is a photo of Susan smiling. Next to that photo is one of Frank and Susan. Billy turns down the photo of Susan and Frank -- leaving just Susan smiling at him. Jack enters, pulling off his ski-mask.

JACK

I slayed 'em.

BILLY

Figuratively?

JACK

Of course. I'm a furniture pacifistic by nature.

BILLY

The ottoman would disagree.

JACK

The others have been cooperative since I made an example of him.

Billy glances at the turned down photo on the desk.

BILLY

Then it's time for your final test.

JACK

(thrilled)

Bring it on.

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S FORD - DAY

Access road off Route 89. Jack and Billy are in Jack's car looking across a vacant lot at a Shell gas station.

JACK

You want me to rob my son-in-law's gas station?

BILLY

Yes.

JACK

The fact that you like Susan wouldn't have anything to do with this?

BILLY

Who said I liked Susan?

JACK

You did.

BILLY

You're afraid of Frank. That makes it a good test.

JACK

It's not good, Bill -- it's bloody genius. Where's my gun?

Billy takes out the gun, pop's the clip and starts ejecting the bullets.

JACK (CONT'D)

Aww. Is that necessary?

BILLY
Does he own a gun?

JACK
(sulk)
No.

Billy snaps back in the empty clip and hands the gun over to Jack.

BILLY
Get the money, get out.

Pulling down his black-knit ski-mask, Jack salutes his captain and exits the car.

CUT TO:

VACANT LOT - DAY

Jack walks across the field of crusty snow. He looks like a Barre version of Lawrence of Arabia: a small, lone man against a big sky marching toward his destiny.

CUT TO:

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Typical station: small office connected to a small garage. No cars filling-up. Jack stops behind the gas pumps to reconnoitre. He can't see a soul anywhere.

CUT TO:

INT. GAS STATION, OFFICE - DAY

Jack enters, all business: gun out, mask down. But nobody is there. The office is empty. He swings the gun wildly to the right, the left. Going to the door separating the office from the garage, he carefully looks through the window. He sees...

FRANK (HIS SON IN LAW)

in the garage under an old car replacing its oil.

JACK
(to himself)
Sweet.

JACK SLIPS BEHIND THE COUNTER

Lined up on the shelves are rows of bowling trophies. And here Jack meets his first big obstacle: an old dirty Sharp cash register; which he has no idea how to open. It's basically a minicomputer. Jack starts pushing buttons (Return, Esc, Total). He gets an occasional BEEP and BURP but the cash-drawer refuses to slide open.

JACK (CONT'D)

Oh crap!

Then he sees that the drawer itself has a keyhole and below that, on a hook, a key-ring holding a dozen keys. The first three keys don't fit. The forth does. He turns it and nothing happens. Frustrated, he slams the butt of the gun down on the keypad -- just as...

The window to the garage EXPLODES.

Shocked, Jack looks through the jagged glass into the garage and sees...

FRANK HOLDING A GUN

If possible, Frank looks as scared as Jack. As Frank fires again...

JACK DUCKS BEHIND THE COUNTER

BANG, BANG! A bullet hits a trophy's, knocking the bowling ball from the figurine's hand.

CUT TO:

ACROSS THE VACANT LOT, IN THE FORD,

Billy hears the shots. He looks down at the bullets in this hand.

BILLY

Shit.

CUT TO:

BACK IN THE OFFICE,

Jack leaps up and fires his gun back at Frank. Of course nothing happens.

In his excitement, Jack forgot it wasn't loaded. He stands there, momentarily confused, then yells out...

JACK

BANG!

Stupid for sure, but fortunately Frank didn't notice. He was too busy diving behind the car.

Jack ducks as four more shots are fired -- BANG, BANG, BANG, BANG!

One of the bullets slams into the cash register and, miraculously, the drawer slides opens with a DING!.

FRANK

I'm going to shoot your ass off, you mother-fucker! I'm going to shoot your ass! Then I'm gong to shoot your mother-fucking dead ass!

Jack grabs the money out the drawer, while staying down, and looks desperately toward the door.

JACK

(a mantra to himself)

Get money, get out. Get money, get out.
Get money, get out...

Jack hears a CLICK. Sneaking a peek into the garage, he sees...

FRANK PULLING THE TRIGGER

of his gun without effect. It's, praise the Lord, empty.

JACK (CONT'D)

Ha!

JACK

jumps up and runs to the door, clutching the money in his hands.

CUT TO:

OUTSIDE THE GAS STATION,

Jack bolts from the office. He makes it just past the gas pumps when Frank comes out of the garage holding a shotgun.

FRANK

Run, you motherfucker, run!

He fires the shotgun. BOOM!

LUCKILY FOR JACK,

the shot was blocked by the pumps, leaving him unharmed.

UNLUCKILY FOR FRANK,

the shot hits the hose to the gas pump and lights it on fire. Black smoke billows upward as the plastic hose burns.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Motherfucker! Fuck me!

Frank turns and quickly scrambles back into garage, searching for a fire-extinguisher.

CUT TO:

THE ROAD

Jack runs down the center of the long access road as if his life depended on it (which it does). This sort of exercise is not advisable for an out-of-shape man in his 70's.

Behind him, in the receding distance, black smoke continues to rise. It's looks like Jack's escaping Armageddon...

THE FORD

cuts Jack off at the intersection. The passenger door swings open and Jack barely manages to crawl inside. The car instantly accelerates, tires squealing.

INSIDE THE CAR,

Jack gasps like a fish out of water, desperately trying to catch his breath.

BILLY

You said he didn't have a gun!

JACK

I...

(gasp)

was...

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)
(gasp)
mistaken.

BILLY
I've seen Utah militias with less
firepower.

Out the back window, we see...

THE GAS STATION EXPLODE --

KA-BOOM!! Black smoke and red shooting flames. Nicely
impressive.

BILLY AND JACK,

both look back to see the destruction. They also see Frank
running away from the burning station, unharmed.

JACK
Oh, my bad.

Billy turns his attention back to the road and concentrates
on putting as many miles as he can between them and the
burning station. They ride in silence for awhile. Then
Billy looks over and sees that Jack is smiling.

BILLY
What?

Jack pulls the money out of his pockets and starts to slowly
count it.

JACK
(singing softly)
And he's bad, bad Leroy Brown
The baddest man in the whole damned town
Badder than a-old King Kong
And meaner than a junkyard dog!

Jack laughs. Billy tries to keep a straight face but he
can't hold on to it -- his scowl become a smile, which
becomes a grin. Soon he's laughing along with Jack...

JACK AND BILLY
(together)
And he's bad, bad Leroy Brown
The baddest man in the whole damned town
Badder than a-old King Kong
And meaner than a junkyard dog...

OUTSIDE, THE FORD

shoots down the country road making a clean getaway.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Billy is sitting at the piano, tinkering with the keys. The pipe is between his teeth.

IN THE KITCHEN,

Jack is talking on the phone while drinking a whiskey and stuffing his face with nachos.

JACK

Horrible. Just horrible. What's the world coming to?

INTERCUT WITH: INT. SUSAN AND FRANK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Susan is on the phone. Frank is behind her in a barcalounger angrily drinking beer after beer. His eyebrows are missing.

SUSAN

I know. He could have been killed. And the station is totally destroyed.

JACK

But it's insured?

SUSAN

Yes, of course. But still.

JACK

Was he able to give a description?

SUSAN

Frank thinks he was, you know, African-American.

JACK

Really? He didn't wear a mask?

SUSAN

He did.

JACK

Then how does he know?

SUSAN

(pained)

Frank says it was the way he moved. He could tell.

JACK

Let's talk later.

SUSAN

Ok, bye.

JACK

hangs up. He takes his drink and moves into...

THE LIVING ROOM

After his long run, Jack can barely walk. He limps along like a sore old man (which he is).

JACK

Apparently I move like Kobe Bryant.

BILLY

Hmm.

Jack tries to stretch; he attempts to touch his toes but only makes it, painfully, to his knees.

JACK

There are three essential rules for old men, Bill. One: never pass a bathroom without peeing. Two: never waste an erection -- even if you're by yourself. And three: never, ever, trust a fart.

Billy smiles but suddenly his smile fades. He smells something -- something gaseous.

BILLY

Oh man! You didn't?

JACK

(guilty)

Did what?

BILLY

It's like something died.

Billy opens the door to the garden for some needed fresh air and walks outside.

CUT TO:

THE TERRACE - NIGHT

Jack finds Billy staring up at the stars. They are unnervingly bright.

JACK
Ever see them this bright?

BILLY
Yes.

JACK
Not in the city.

BILLY
I didn't grow up in the city.

JACK
Where?

BILLY
Kentucky.

Billy takes a long pull on his pipe. Jack follows the smoke as it snakes its way up into the night sky.

JACK
Do you ever feel, Bill, that who you are, really are, deep down, is not totally right with the life you're living?

BILLY
Why?

JACK
You make a very good professor.

BILLY
You think?

JACK
I would go as far as to call it ironic.

BILLY
Hmm.

JACK
Do you?

BILLY
(sad fact)
No. What you do is who you are.

JACK
Aren't we more than that?

BILLY
Often less.

JACK
But if we change.

BILLY
We don't.

JACK
(beat)
You're very un-American.

Billy doesn't respond. He just slowly smokes his pipe and looks at the bright stars.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOWN SQUARE AND COMMONS - DAY

Pissing rain. Cold and grey. Jack and Billy are huddled under the gazebo. Tom and Leo are approaching -- umbrella free and soaked.

BILLY
Say as little as possible.

JACK
You must have me confused with a talker.

BILLY
I'm serious.

JACK
But I have a few suggestions.

BILLY
About what?

JACK

The plan.

BILLY

If they don't shoot you in first ten minutes you can make whatever suggestions you want.

Tom and Leo arrive. They are wet and miserable.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Mr. Sam. Tom, Leo.

JACK

Pleasure to meet you, gentlemen Forgive my delay. It was unavoidable. Pleasant weather, no?

Tom gives him a cockeyed look.

TOM

Yeah, real nice.

BILLY

Let's get out of here.

LEO

Wait.

TOM

What?

LEO

Something ain't right.

BILLY

What are you talking about?

LEO

(re: Jack)

Something's not right with him.

Tom looks at Leo, then at Jack. Tom's hand casually enters his jacket pocket -- as does Billy's hand in his jacket.

Jack gets right up in Leo's mug. Jack has on his best D.F.W.M face.

JACK

You got a problem?

Jack's expression is about as intimidating as killer butterfly -- but he does look rather insane; and insane people can be unpredictable, even dangerous.

LEO

Maybe.

JACK

Maybe what?

Leo wavers. Maybe he's got it wrong.

LEO

Nothing. It's wet.

TOM

You think, moron? Let's get back to the fucking car.

Leo and Tom make a dash through the hard rain back to the sedan park on the street.

Still in the gazebo, Billy glances at Jack -- damn if it isn't Pygmalion made good. Jack is very, very pleased with himself. Jack smiles and takes off, jogging to catch up with Tom and Leo -- his new gang.

Alone in the gazebo, Billy lights a cigarette. The park is now empty -- it's like the white gazebo is the last dry refuge in a drowned world. Looking out, Billy sees...

A RED FOX

trotting across an open, swampy commons. The fox stops and stares at Billy.

BILLY

stares back at the fox. He's not used to wildlife so close or not behind bars. It amazes him.

TOM (O.C.) (CONT'D)

(yelling from the car)

ARE YOU FUCKING COMING OR WHAT?!

The fox runs into the bushes. Billy watches it go. Then, turning up his collar, he steps out into the rain and begins to walk to the car.

CUT TO:

INT. TOM'S CAR - DAY

Rain, rain, rain. Leo driving, Tom next to him. Jack and Billy in the back.

JACK

Take a left. To the end of the block,
take a right...

BILLY

Where we going?

JACK

You'll see. Left.

TOM

I'd like to see now.

BILLY

What's the game, Mr. Sam?

JACK

(enjoying himself)

What a bunch of punks you all are.

Billy stares hard at Jack. He's not happy.

JACK (CONT'D)

Stop!

THE DARK SEDAN

stops in front of a nondescript suburban house along a
nondescript suburban street.

BACK IN THE CAR,

Tom, Leo, and Billy look at the house.

LEO

What are we looking at?

JACK

Time.

TOM

Time?

JACK

In that house lives a man. Alone since his divorce. He has a kid that lives with the ex. They both hate him. Poor sod is miserable. All he's got to stop him from slitting his throat is his job. And his routine...

CUT TO:

EXT. NATHAN'S HOUSE - SUNNY DAY - 8:25 AM

Nathan the bank manager comes out of his house and goes to his car...

JACK (V.O.)

Leaves the house everyday at 8:25.

CUT TO:

EXT. BANK - SUNNY DAY - 8:40 AM

Nathan's car pulls into the empty parking lot behind the bank building...

JACK (V.O.)

Arrives at work at 8:40.

CUT TO:

INT. BANK - 8:43 AM

Nathan opens the door and punches in his code to deactivate the alarm...

JACK (V.O.)

Deactivates the alarm at 8:43. The time-lock on the vault opens at 8:45...

CUT TO:

THE VAULT -- 8:45

The time-lock reads 8:45, BEEPS three times and the vault CLICKS open...

JACK

Then he has 15 minutes blissfully alone.
15 minutes to cherish and get his head
ready for the day ahead...

CUT TO:

AT NATHAN'S DESK -- 8:50

Big empty bank. Nathan is sitting at his desk, crying. Big
manly full-body sobs.

CUT TO:

BACK TO THE CAR - RAINY PRESENT

Jack, Billy, Tom and Leo are still looking at Nathan's house.

JACK

If we pick Mr. Bank Manager up at his
house and help him to get on with his
routine we will have a clean 15 minutes
in the bank -- not two minutes.

LEO

Fucking brilliant.

BILLY

I don't like it.

TOM

You haven't liked anything since the
miracle Mets. I love it.

JACK

Then it's a plan?

Billy looks like he swallowed a lemon but he nods his head in
agreement.

BILLY

Thursday.

JACK

Thursday? That's my birthday!

TOM

We'll make sure to bring a fucking cake.

LEO

Careful, you can choke on fucking cake.

Leo and Tom laugh. Billy doesn't. And Jack has no idea why they're laughing -- which is unnerving.

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

A chocolate cake. Susan is writing on the top with white icing, HAPPY BIRTHDAY JACK. Billy sipping a whiskey, watches her lean over with intense concentration trying to get the lettering right, or at least readable. A strand of her hair falls down into the frosting. Billy reaches out and delicately places it back behind her ear. She glances at him and smiles. She's not used to tenderness.

SUSAN

Do you know why we're celebrating his birthday the night before his birthday?

BILLY

Did you ask him?

SUSAN

He said it was traditional in Sweden.

Frank comes into the room. He's already drunk. But even drunk he can sense something between Billy and his wife. He reaches past Billy to grab the bottle of whiskey on the counter. He's close enough to Billy for the reach to be an aggressive act.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Maybe you should slow down, honey.

FRANK

Maybe you shouldn't tell me what to do.

Frank generously refills his glass with whiskey. Turning to Billy, Frank takes a long hard look.

FRANK (CONT'D)

So tell me, do you bang a lot of coeds down there, Professor?

BILLY

(beat)

Do you think your eyebrows will grow
back, Frank?

FRANK

Faster than your head if I knock it off.

BILLY

Think you could?

FRANK

(dismissive snort)

This ain't no fag college, Professor. No
it ain't.

To Susan's great relief, Billy shrugs; Giving a little half-
smile, Billy lets the words pass.

The doorbell CHIMES.

JACK (O.C.)

I got it!

CUT TO:

AT THE STAIRCASE

Jack bounds down the stairs toward the door. He's in a suit
and looking quite debonair. Reaching the door he opens it to
reveal...

TAMMY, THE WAITRESS

New hairdo, nicely made up. A bit shy.

TAMMY

Hi.

JACK

Tammy. Come in, come in. I'm so glad
you came. Let me take your coat.

He helps her out of her old overcoat. She's wearing a sexy
black dress.

JACK (CONT'D)

You are a vision of rare beauty.

TAMMY

Why thank you, Jack.

JACK

This way, my dear The party is about to begin. It's going to be grand!

CUT TO:

BIRTHDAY PARTY MONTAGE:

Jack brings out a cooked turkey. Drinks are poured, then poured again. Susan catches Billy looking at her and smiles to herself. Frank knocks over a bottle of red wine. Tammy and Jack dance in the dinning room as Susan, Frank and Billy sit uncomfortably at the table. Susan nervously plays with her lipstick. Jack whispers a joke into Tammy's ear. She laughs like a ringing bell.

CUT TO:

A YELLOW TIE

is pulled out of a pretty box. We are back in...

THE DINNING ROOM

Dinner has ended. Dishes are still on the table along with many dead soldiers of wine. Bolero is still playing on the stereo. Jack holds up a present.

JACK

(to Susan)

Thank you.

SUSAN

I hope you like it.

JACK

It's lovely. It is. And what's this?

He picks up a little brown box and shakes it. It's from Billy.

TAMMY

I feel bad not bringing anything. Why didn't you tell me it was your birthday?

SUSAN

He's shy.

TAMMY

Is he? I was surprised when he asked me out. I never thought he noticed me before.

JACK

Oh please, I order 523 tuna sandwiches from you.

TAMMY

I thought you just liked tuna.

Jack opens the lid of the small box and finds a stopwatch. It's set for a 2 minutes. Jack laughs. He clicks the big button and starts the countdown.

BILLY

Time.

JACK

It's perfect. Thank you. I would like to propose a toast.

Jack stands up and holds up his glass.

JACK (CONT'D)

To beautiful women,
And a daughter I love.
To new friends,
And old slippers.
To dangerous pursuits,
And the road less traveled.

They all clink their glasses, except for Frank who couldn't care less and seems to be falling into a drunken stupor.

SUSAN

What dangerous pursuits?

JACK

Old age.

TAMMY

You're not that old.

FRANK

(under his breath)
Old enough to smell like piss.

SUSAN

Cake! Who wants cake?

(standing)

Frank can you help me in the kitchen,
please.

Susan walks to the kitchen, Frank stumbles behind her. The
buzzer to stopwatch goes off. BUZZZZ!

JACK

Everyone out of the building!

TAMMY

What do you mean?

JACK

I mean, would you please accompany me to
the terrace for a breath of fresh air?

TAMMY

Of course.

Tammy stands and taking Jack's arm they disappear into the
living room. We hear Tammy giggle as if pinched.

TAMMY (O.C.) (CONT'D)

Oh, Jack!

Billy is left alone at the table. Seeing Susan's Stila
lipstick on the table, he picks it up and examines it. He
can hear Susan and Jack arguing in the kitchen -- mostly
Jack's part of the conversation as he's doing most of the
yelling.

FRANK (O.C.)

You let the old fart he'll be in the
house next year.

SUSAN (O.C.)

It's ultimately his choice.

FRANK (O.C.)

Like fuck it is. And if I see you make
eyes at the fag one more time I'm going
to bust you across the face.

SUSAN (O.C.)

What are you talking about?

FRANK (O.C.)

You know... Don't you turn your back on me!

SUSAN (O.C.)

Let go...

FRANK (O.C.)

Come here...

There's a scuffle. Billy stands up. He's moving to the kitchen, lipstick still in his hand, when the door swings open and Frank comes out. Frank gets right into Billy's face.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Next time I see you, Professor, I'm going to knock out all your teeth.

Frank pushes past Billy and walks and lurches out of the room. We hear the front door slams behind him. Billy pockets the lipstick and enters...

THE KITCHEN

Susan is by the sink, facing away from the door. Billy walks up behind her. She is suddenly backlit by the SUV's headlights from the driveway as Frank starts the car and drives away.

SUSAN

Dangerous pursuits.

BILLY

What is?

SUSAN

(lightly)

My marriage.

Susan turns around to face Billy. Her cheek is red where she's been hit.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Have any dangerous pursuits, Billy?

Billy looks her directly in the eye then moves forward and kisses her on the mouth. Susan responds. They have an appetite for it. Finally, Susan breaks off the kiss. Without looking back, she walks out of the kitchen.

Billy is surprised. He waits a few moments then follows her...

AT THE BOTTOM OF THE STAIRCASE,

Billy hears Tammy and Jack upstairs laughing and giggling like naughty school children. He moves into...

THE LIVING ROOM

It's empty. The fire is burning. Ravel is still playing on the stereo. He stops in the doorway to...

THE LIBRARY

and sees Susan sitting on his bed, feet on the floor. He goes and sits next to her, side by side.

SUSAN

(softly)

I won't pretend to know what's going on between you and my father. But I hope, if I ask, you will do something for me. I need you to promise to protect him.

(beat)

Sometimes Jack needs somebody to look after him.

Billy doesn't say anything. But he reaches out and touches her hand.

AND THERE THEY SIT,

on the bed, holding hands, staring out --looking like the Holvosa tombstone in the middle of Hope Cemetery.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - MUCH LATER THAT NIGHT

Jack slips out of his bedroom in his bathrobe. Inside we catch a glimpse of Tammy in his bed, under the strewn covers, asleep.

CUT TO:

IN THE KITCHEN

Jack fills a glass with water from the tap. Next to the sink is his birthday cake, untouched; the dozen candles standing like miniature pink sentries.

CUT TO:

AT THE STAIRCASE,

Jack is about to head upstairs with his water. When he notices that all six lamps are still on in the living room. Jack enters...

THE LIVING ROOM

and sees Billy sitting in the big leather chair, fully dressed, smoking a cigarette.

BILLY
Nothing wasted?

Jack grins.

JACK
Nothing wasted. What are you doing up?

BILLY
I called Leo and Tom.

JACK
All lock and loaded?

BILLY
No. It's off.

Jack is stunned.

JACK
What?

BILLY
I called it off.

JACK
Why?

BILLY
It doesn't feel right.

JACK

What the hell does that mean?

BILLY

Just what I said.

JACK

What did Leo and Tom say?

BILLY

They were pissed.

JACK

I don't understand.

BILLY

There's nothing to understand.

JACK

That's bullshit! You can't do this.

BILLY

Of course I can.

JACK

You took my money. We had an agreement.

BILLY

We agreed that the final decision was mine.

JACK

If I didn't measure up!

Billy stands to face Jack.

BILLY

You don't. You're a disaster.

JACK

No.

BILLY

You've got one fantasy checked off your list. She's lying in your bed upstairs. That should be fun enough.

JACK

You think the bank is about fun?

BILLY

Fun, pride, fantasy -- who cares.
There's only one reason to rob a bank.
One. And that's money. It may be the
stupidest way in America to get it -- but
it's pure. No glamour, no fun, no high,
just a bunch of dumb bucks for a bunch of
dumb losers who can't figure out a legit
way to live and survive. We do it
because we lack the imagination to do
anything else. Look at yourself...

Billy pulls Jack over to mirror above the mantel and forces
him to look at his own image.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Look! You've got learning, style, grace.
You're magnificent. You have history and
family. You have a house full of
memories and shelves full of adventures.
You would trade that in for something
which is less than nothing?

JACK

Fuck you.

Jack pulls away from him. He's furious.

JACK (CONT'D)

You never planned to rob the bank with
me.

Billy doesn't respond.

JACK (CONT'D)

Answer me!

BILLY

Why would I? You've given me enough
money that I don't have to.

JACK

Welcher!

Something in Jack snaps. Words have left him. He rushes
toward Billy in a white rage...

JACK (CONT'D)

AAAAAAAAAAAAAH!!!

Billy steps back and trips over the damn (bullet ridden) ottoman. Jack's momentum carries him into Billy and they fall together onto the wood and carpet floor. Jack furiously tries to hurt Billy with a mad flurry of blows but he's too close to be very effective -- it has become more of a wrestling match. Billy, for his part, is mostly just trying to protect himself.

Finally, Jack runs out of steam. He's huffing and puffing and barely able to catch his breath. Billy pushes him back, and stands up.

Jack is a total mess. Besides not being able to breathe his right arm is spasming. Standing above him Billy watches as Jack curls himself into a miserable ball.

Billy walks out of the room and into...

THE KITCHEN

He opens a cabinet and takes down Jack's Avonex medication and a syringe.

THE LIVING ROOM

From his fetal position on the floor, Jack watches as Billy walks, unhurried, back into the room. Jack's right arm is still spasming.

Bending down, Billy lifts Jack's gown to find a spot to give him the shot. He cleans a patch of Jack's upper thigh with a swab. Billy then pushes the needle in. The whole process is oddly intimate. Jack cringes in pain and embarrassment.

Then grabbing Jack beneath his arms, Billy pulls him into the big chair. Billy sits on the sofa across from him and waits. Soon Jack looks better. Color is coming back into his face. His arm and hand have stopped their spasms.

The men look at each other. Neither say a word. What's left to say? Jack slowly gets up. He walks out of the living room to...

THE STAIRCASE

Painfully, he climbs back up the stairs to his room.

IN THE LIVING ROOM,

Billy listens to Jack ascending the stairs. Jack's slippers scraping the wooden steps. When he can hear him no more, Billy rises and turns out the lamps. Six lamps, one at a time, the room slowly pooling darker, until only one lamp is lit -- then night.

CUT TO:

EXT. JACK'S HOUSE - MORNING

Clear skies. The sun is barely up.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE, LIBRARY - MORNING

Billy is waking up. His eyes barely open, he reaches to the side table to find a cigarette. Lighting up, he watches the smoke drift past the shelves of books. Only then does he notices that the dresser drawer is open a touch. He immediately goes to check his guns.

One is missing. One of the Glocks.

BILLY

Jack? Jack. Jack!

The house is quiet as a tomb.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Billy, now dressed, comes in from the library. The room is empty. Billy walks quickly up...

THE STAIRCASE

And into...

JACK'S BEDROOM

It too is empty.

BILLY

Shit.

He hears a car pulling up outside. Going to the window, he sees...

THE SUV

stopping in the driveway. Frank gets out. He looks like he been up all night drinking and getting mean.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE, VESTIBULE

Frank enters.

FRANK
Professor!

Frank looks into...

THE LIVING ROOM

Empty.

FRANK (CONT'D)
No use hiding like a little girl. You make me go and find you it's gonna be bad!

Frank looks into...

THE LIBRARY

Empty.

FRANK
You're making me mad, Professor!

Then he hears footsteps on the stairs. He turns. He sees Billy coming from the vestibule into...

THE LIVING ROOM

Frank walks right at Billy. But rather surprising (at least to Frank) is that Billy is walking right at Frank.

FRANK
You are so fucked!

Frank balls-up his meaty fist to pound Billy -- but Billy, without stopping, steps inside the blow and sharply elbows Frank in the throat. Then punches him in the gut, knees him in the face and when Frank falls, viciously kicks him a number of times in the ribs and balls.

It's all happened in a violent blink of an eye: drunken bully to whimpering bloody mess. Frank is making noises like a leaky radiator.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Hhhhhhssssssss.

Billy grabs Frank by the hair and jerks up his face so he can look Frank directly in the eyes. Through the pain, Frank is still trying to figure out what hit him. Brought low by higher learning.

BILLY

Yeah, I know, Frank, how ironic.

Billy slams Frank's head against the floor. Then taking Susan's lipstick from his pocket, Billy leans over Frank's face blocking our view of his actions.

Standing up, Billy turns and walks out of the living room.

Frank is left on the floor, dazed and hurting. Billy has given him a pair of lipstick eyebrows. He looks like a demented Kabuki clown.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOUSE - MORNING

It's cold. Turning up the collar of his leather coat, Billy heads into town to try and find Jack before he does something stupid.

CUT TO:

EXT. NATHAN'S (BANK MANAGER'S) HOUSE - MORNING

A dark sedan is parked across the street from the house.

CUT TO:

INT. CAR

Tom and Leo are in the car watching the house. They are waiting for Nathan to leave for work at the bank. They have obviously decided to go ahead with the robbery without Billy or Jack (aka Mr. Sam).

TOM

Fuck Bill.

LEO
Fuck Mr. Sam.

TOM
Spend almost two weeks in this hick state
and he calls it off. How do you figure?

LEO
Pussy.

TOM
He used to be good. Tough. Smart.
Lucky.

LEO
Not now.

TOM
What time is it?

LEO
8:10.

CUT TO:

EXT. BARRE BAKERY - MORNING

Commercial bakery. Brick building. Jack is waiting outside.
He is wearing his new leather jacket and black knit hat. By
his feet is a small brown traveling bag. Susan goes out the
door. She has flour on her hands and is wearing a long white
apron.

SUSAN
What are you doing here?

JACK
I'm going on a trip.

SUSAN
Why?

JACK
I can't tell you that?

SUSAN
Where are you going?

JACK
Can't tell you that either.

SUSAN
(frustrated)
When?

JACK
Soon.

SUSAN
(mad)
Not much of a talker this morning, are
you?

Jack smiles. He likes that, "not much of a talker" -- how cool. Susan study him. She let's her anger go. There's an honesty in their eyes.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
You're not coming back. Are you?

Jack can only meet her eyes.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
(beat)
You'll stay in touch?

JACK
Always.

SUSAN
I left Frank.

Jack is not surprised.

JACK
He carved his own stone years ago.

Susan kisses her father on the cheek then buries her head in his shoulder.

SUSAN
Happy Birthday, daddy.

CUT TO:

EXT. BANK, NORTH MAIN STREET - MORNING

Billy walks past the bank. It's still closed and quiet. He looks around trying to figure out where Jack would go with a gun.

BILLY
(to himself)
Where are you, Jack?

Checking his watch, he makes a decision and takes off at a fast walk down the street.

CUT TO:

EXT. NATHAN'S HOUSE - MORNING

Dark sedan still parked across the street.

CUT TO:

INT. CAR

Tom and Leo are getting impatient. Leo checks his watch.
It's 8:35.

LEO
Maybe he overslept.

TOM
Let's go wake him.

They check their guns and get out of the car.

CUT TO:

EXT. NATHAN'S HOUSE, BACKYARD

Tom and Leo put on the black ski-masks and move to the back door. They try the knob and happily find it's unlocked -- small town hospitality. They enter...

INT. NATHAN'S HOUSE, KITCHEN

Guns out, Tom and Leo look around the kitchen. It's empty. They move into...

THE LIVING ROOM

Also empty. The move into...

THE HALLWAY

Checking out bathrooms and bedrooms as they go. Finally they end at the last room...

THE MASTER BEDROOM

It too is empty.

TOM

Fuck.

Tom and Leo pull off their masks.

LEO

What do you want to do?

Tom sits on the bed.

TOM

Let me think.

Suddenly, they hear an orgasmic GRUNT followed by the sound of a toilet flushing.

Tom jumps up and grabs his gun. The bathroom door knob turns. There's no time for the Tom and Leo to put back on their masks. The door opens...

IT'S NEVIN

holding Ching Pig Mei, the ancient Chinese porn that Billy gave him. Seeing Tom and Leo, Nevin stops cold in his tracks. What are these strange men doing in his father's bedroom?

TOM AND LEO

also stand frozen for a moment, staring at this gangly adolescent.

TOM (CONT'D)

Don't just stand there -- grab him.

Leo steps forward and roughly grabs Nevin by his upper arm and pushes him onto the bed. Tom aims the gun at Nevin's face. Nevin is terrified.

TOM (CONT'D)

Where's your father?

NEVIN

He left.

TOM
What are you doing here?

NEVIN
Staff day.

TOM
What the fuck is "staff day".

NEVIN
I don't know, but there's no school.

LEO
What do we do with him?

Tom has not moved his gun away from Nevin's head. He's considering the situation. The fact that Nevin is looking at them without their masks and can identify them later is definitely not good. There seems a real possibility that Tom might just shoot the boy.

AT THE END OF HALL,

Billy suddenly appears. He can see straight down the hall into the bedroom. Leo turns and sees him.

LEO
Hey, looks who's here.

BILLY
What's going on?

TOM
We have a situation.

BILLY
Where's Jack?

TOM
Who?

BILLY
Mr. Sam.

TOM
Don't know, don't care. You change your mind?

Billy has been moving forward down the hall until he can see Nevin on the bed. Nevin sees Billy.

BILLY
It's time to go, Tom.

TOM
Go where?

BILLY
Out of this town.

LEO
Don't tell him what to do.

As Billy steps into the room, he pulls out his two guns, pointing one at Leo and one at Tom. Tom turns his gun away from Nevin to point it at Billy.

TOM
What the fuck is this?

BILLY
Nevin, get out of here.

TOM
You know this kid?

Billy doesn't answer. Not taking his gun off Billy, Tom grabs Nevin by the ear and twists it.

TOM (CONT'D)
You know this man, kid?

NEVIN
Och! He's my tutor.

LEO
Your what?

NEVIN
Tutor.

TOM
Tutor of what?

Tom twists Nevin's ear again.

NEVIN
Poetry!

LEO

Poetry?

(short beat)

What kind of poetry?

TOM

What the fuck does it matter what kind of poetry?

LEO

You got, you know, distinctions. There's your sonnets, your epics, your haiku...

TOM

What's the game, Billy?

BILLY

No game.

TOM

What's the boy to you?

BILLY

Nothing.

But then there Billy is: a gun in both hands, two men against him, sticking his neck out for... nothing.

Nobody wants to get shot. Leo is looking particularly sweaty and nervous. But it's Tom that is looking right into Billy's eyes. And what Tom sees is cold -- a D.F.W.M glare that could make ice-cubes. And Tom was right, Billy doesn't blink...

LEO

(muttering)

Fucking Iguana.

Finally, it's Tom that does the blinking (literally and figuratively) and lowers his gun.

TOM

I'm not getting shot for nothing.

(to Leo)

Let's go.

Leo still has his gun raised. He seems too scared to put it down.

TOM (CONT'D)

Leo!

Leo hears him and lowers his piece. Together, Leo and Tom walk out of the room and down the hall, disappearing into the living room.

Billy is left looking at Nevin sitting stiffly on the bed, not moving. Billy waits until he hears the front door close, then turns and exits into...

THE HALLWAY

He walks slowly down the hall with his guns still out. He enters into the...

LIVING ROOM

It's empty. Going to a front window, he looks out and sees...

OUTSIDE, TOM AND LEO

driving away in their car.

BILLY

puts his guns away and slumps into a chair. He takes a deep, deep breath and a long, long exhale. He sits there wondering what he just did and why.

Suddenly the front door swings back open --

Billy starts up, going for his guns. But it's not Tom and Leo -- it's Nathan, carrying two grocery bags. He's taken-back to see Billy in his living room. Billy is at a loss to help him with an explanation.

NATHAN

Hello?

Fortunately, Nevin has come into the room from the hall. He's still holding the book, Ching Pig Mei.

NEVIN

Here's that book you wanted back.
Thanks.

Billy takes the book.

BILLY
Did you like it?

NEVIN
(truth)
Best book ever.

Nathan is surprised and pleased.

NATHAN
You read a book?
(to Billy)
Took a sick day. Hanging with Nevin.
Want some coffee?

Billy stands.

BILLY
I have to go.

CUT TO:

EXT. BARRE, NORTH MAIN STREET - MORNING

Jack is walking down the street holding his traveling bag.
He's walking toward the Merchant Bank. He's walking calmly
but with a steady purpose. People and cars move past him.
Including one dark sedan...

CUT TO:

INT. DARK SEDAN - MORNING

Leo is driving. Tom sits next to him. Tom is in an angry
sulk. They're heading out of town toward the interstate.
They hadn't noticed that they just passed Jack on the
sidewalk.

CUT TO:

EXT. MERCHANT BANK - MORNING

Just opened. Jack stops by the front doors. He opens his
jacket. The gun (Billy's missing Glock) is tucked into his
belt. He pulls his black ski-hat down to cover his face.
Thus prepared, he pushes the doors open and enters.

There's no way not to expect disaster.

CUT TO:

EXT. INTERSTATE 89 - SAME TIME

The dark sedan is moving down the highway.

INSIDE THE CAR,

Tom is still in a state.

TOM
Turn the car around.

LEO
What?

TOM
Fuck him.

Leo is not happy but he takes an exit off the interstate to head back to Barre.

CUT TO:

EXT. ELM STREET

Billy is walking down a street lined with bare trees. He's heading back to the bank, still looking for Jack.

CUT TO:

INT. BANK

Sleepy morning. THREE TELLERS behind the counter. Only TWO CUSTOMERS.

Jack is standing just inside the door. Masked. Gun in his right hand. Stopwatch in his left hand.

Surreally, nobody has noticed him, yet.

JACK
THIS IS A ROBBERY!

The three tellers and two customers' heads finally turn and look at him.

Jack clicks down on the stopwatch, starting a two minute countdown. As he does so, the SOUNDS OF THE BANK AND THE WORLD mute. What we hear is the TICK, TICK, TICK of the stopwatch.

THE EVENTS PRECEDE LIKE A PERFECT DREAM. SLOW, PRECISE, LIKE A WELL REHEARSED DANCE:

Jack orders the two customers to sit on the floor. They obediently listen.

TICK, TICK, TICK.

Jack orders two of the tellers to put all the large bills from their cash drawers onto the counter. They instantly obey.

TICK, TICK, TICK.

Jack hands the third bank worker his suitcase and orders him into the vault. The worker opens a metal latticed door with his key.

TICK, TICK, TICK.

Standing between the vault and counter, Jack can see everyone -- controlling the action like a puppet master.

TICK, TICK, TICK.

In the vault, the bank worker diligently fills Jack's suitcase with large bills.

TICK, TICK, TICK.

The tellers having finished putting all the 100 and 50 dollar bills on the counter sits down with the customers.

TICK, TICK, TICK.

The bank worker comes out of the vault with the suitcase. Hands the suitcase to Jack and goes and sits with the rest of them.

TICK, TICK, TICK.

Jack takes the suitcase and slides the money off the counter into the suitcase.

BUZZZZZZZZZ!

The two minute alarm on the stopwatch has gone off. All the sounds in the bank return in loud RUSH.

Like a true professional, Jack leaves the last of money on the counter. Taking his suitcase, he walks to the exit. He stops at the door.

JACK (CONT'D)

Thank you all for such a pleasant experience.

Turning away from tellers and customers, he puts his gun away and pulls off his mask.

Then Jack Jones, criminal and desperado, calmly walks out of the bank.

CUT TO:

OUTSIDE THE BANK

Jack stands for a moment, holding his suitcase of loot. The world looks brighter to him. He has no getaway car. Or for that matter a getaway plan. He really didn't expect to get this far. Well, nothing for it, he begins to walk down North Main street toward the train station.

CUT TO:

EXT. NORTH MAIN STREET

Further down and on the opposite side of the street, Billy is walking back toward Jack's house. The dark sedan passes him from behind.

CUT TO:

INT. DARK SEDAN

Leo is driving to the bank. Tom is checking his gun, getting ready. They don't notice that they just passed Billy. Neither do they notice as they pass Jack on the other side of the street. The stop in front of the bank.

TOM

Ready?

Leo nods.

CUT TO:

EXT. BANK

Leo and Tom get out of the sedan. They rush toward the bank's doors as they put on their masks and pull out their guns.

CUT TO:

INT. BANK

The bank employees and customers are milling together waiting for the authorities to show up. Instead they turn and see two masked men with guns.

TOM
Everyone on the floor!

No one moves.

CUSTOMER 1
Is this a joke?

LEO
It's a robbery!

TELLER 2
Fuck you.

Leo and Tom exchange glances -- what the hell is going on here?

CUT TO:

EXT. NORTH MAIN STREET

From east and west three police cars come racing toward the bank. Their siren are off but their lights are flashing. They squeal to stop...

IN FRONT OF BANK

The COPS pour out of the cars and take up defensive positions. As far as they're concerned they've caught the robbers in the act.

CUT TO:

FURTHER DOWN NORTH MAIN STREET

This, of course, leaves Jack clean and clear to amble away. Untouched and unsuspected. Jack can see the flashing lights of the police cars at the bank behind him...

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STREET,

Billy can see the flashing lights of the police cars at the bank in front of him...

JACK AND BILLY

pass each other -- without ever knowing that they were on the same street, at the same time, moving in opposite directions.

JACK

takes a right on Depot Road which leads into the train station.

BILLY

stops at the intersection of North Main and Washington. Ahead, he sees the dark sedan, the police, the rifles -- and then Tom and Leo appearing in the bank's doors, their hands on top of their heads. Jack is clearly not there.

Behind Billy, in the distance, an Amtrak WHISTLE sounds. Billy partially turns his head toward the whistle. He hesitates for a long moment -- then turns left on Washington Street, walking away from the bank, away from the train station. Back toward Jack's house.

CUT TO:

EXT. BARRE TRAIN STATION - MORNING

Jack is standing on the "south" platform. He can see an Amtrak train in the distance heading for the station.

CUT TO:

EXT. JACK'S HOUSE - MORNING

Billy enters through the metal gate and walks up the path to the ramshackle mansion.

At the end of the drive, Susan is just getting out of her car. She's holding three loaves of bread. Together, without a word, they walk to door.

CUT TO:

EXT. BARRE TRAIN STATION - MORNING

The train has pulled into the station. Jack waits for the train to make a complete stop.

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S HOUSE, KITCHEN

Billy watches as Susan makes french toast -- slicing one of the loaves, cracking the eggs, mixing in milk and vanilla, soaking the bread in the batter. It all looks so damn normal and domestic. Billy slips out of the room.

CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN

Jack walks down the aisle. He puts his bag in the overhead compartment and takes a seat...

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - SAME MOMENT

Billy sits into the big chair by the fireplace. His slippers are on the floor. There's a book on the side-table. Susan is humming a song in kitchen as she cooks. It feels right. It feels like he's been here forever.

CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN

Jack looks out the window, watching the barren Vermont landscape flash by as the train picks up speed. Heading south. He smiles.

Heading somewhere new.

THE END