

THE WEST IS DEAD

by
Andrew Baldwin

8/3/2008

Bard Dorros/David Kanter
Anonymous Content

Jay Baker/Josh Krauss
CAA

WGA:
1264846

A BLACK SCREEN.

BAM! A loud thud.

CUT TO:

INT. A DUSTY DESERT BAR - DAY

Pulpy black and white fill the screen. We don't know what we're looking at but as - BAM! - another thud comes, we CUT OUT WIDER - BAM! - and wider - until we see, in bold black typewriter ink:

NOVEMBER 28, 1934

BAM! Another slamming noise.

And now we see printed on the page:

LOS ANGELES EXAMINER

The newspaper is in the hands of - BAM! -

WILL KEMPT.

Forties. Well fed. He does a good job of filling his dirt-stained overalls and wool coat. He sits behind a bar, reading an ADVERTISEMENT FOR WOMEN'S NYLONS.

BAM! Dust falls from the cracks in the woodbeams above him.

In bold white, a title appears at the bottom of the screen:

NEVADA

Then BAM! Another damn thud. The walls creak. Sounds like hammering.

As the pounding continues, it becomes clear that the sound can only be one thing: a mattress hitting the wall again and again and again...

BAM! Another thud from upstairs. Dust falls on Will's shoulders. He looks up.

SHREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEK!

The sound of heavy wood dragging across the floor upstairs.

Then silence.

The HUMPING starts again. Glasses RATTLE.

The pounding builds to a crescendo. Then stops altogether.

Thank God.

A DOOR CLOSES.

FOOTSTEPS.

A YOUNG MAN, 18, descends the stairs. Sweaty and rosy-cheeked, he carries a flannel coat over his shoulder. Will will call him KID.

He approaches the bar.

THE KID
What's the damage?

WILL
Hour and a half. You do the math,
kid.

The kid scrapes up fifteen bucks.

WILL
Didn't know if it was gonna happen
there at the end.

Will stands to collect the money.

THE KID
You should be careful how ya talk
to people.

WILL
That right?

The kid moves his flannel to reveal -

A REVOLVER.

WILL
Have a drink, kid.

He drops a quarter on the bar and sits. Will pours him a glass.

THE KID
I don't drink gin.

WILL
Well, you do today.
(off the kid's glare)
Unless you want pump water.

The kid hesitates... slugs it back.

That's when he sees -

THE MAN AT THE END OF THE BAR.

Sitting in the shadows, his face hidden behind a brimmed hat. He slumps dejectedly over a mostly-empty glass of gin.

THE KID
What's his problem?

WILL
Who? Him?

THE KID
(to the man in the
 shadows)
Hey, doc!
(beat)
Anyone home?

The kid drains what little is left of his gin and stands. Walks down the bar, to the man. Who doesn't move. Will watches, wary.

The kid puts his fingers in front of the man's nose -

And *SNAPS*.

The man lifts his head. Just slightly. Face still hidden under that hat. He lifts the glass, downs the last of his gin. Wipes his mouth. All very slow, very careful, and from a man who doesn't talk, very intimidating.

THE KID
(to Will)
I'll stay the night. I'd ask you if
there's anything doin' round here
but I don't think I'll partake of
the town pig fuck.

The kid lights a hand-rolled cigarette as he makes his way out the door.

It SHUTS behind him. A posted sign on the door reads:

ORDER TO VACATE

Will lays a five dollar bill in front of the man in the hat.

WILL
There's your cut.

The man looks up. His EYES for the first time -

They could cut glass.

This is CLAY DERING. Late thirties, rough-looking. A drinker. He's got smarts behind his drunk eyes.

Will thinks better of it and leaves Clay alone. And Clay stumbles off the bar stool, glass still in hand -

CRACK!

The glass in his hand SHATTERS against the bar top.

BLOOD FLOWS BETWEEN HIS FINGERS.

WILL
Christ, Clay!

Clay stands, grabs a rag off the bar. Wraps his torn hand.

CLAY
(heading for the door)
Give the extra five to Annie. She earned it.

WILL
What about your hand?

CLAY
Don't worry. I'll keep it right here on the end of my arm.

He ties off the rag -

SLAM! The door shuts on his heels.

Bloody shards of glass on the floor.

EXT. STREET - LATE IN THE DAY

A MATCH is struck -

Clay lights a cigarette. Lets it just smolder in his mouth.

He stands in the middle of the dirt street. The Kid stands fifteen paces away, smoking. But not for long. The Kid walks away to smoke alone on the side of the building.

Clay looks toward the defunct POST OFFICE: empty.

Toward the FIRE VALLEY MINING CO. HEADQUARTERS: in disrepair.

The GENERAL STORE and BARBER'S across the street: closed,
just a Coca-Cola sign sitting by the door.

And...

There is a gaping hole in the nearest hillside, railwork
leads into it.

An unworked mine.

ANNIE (O.S.)
Jesus, what'd you do?

Clay turns: ANNIE is in her late twenties, dark-haired. She's
part-white, part-Navajo; got the best of both and it lends a
wise look to her face.

CLAY
(re: the kid)
I didn't touch 'im.

She approaches, looks at his bloody, bandaged hand.

ANNIE
You're drunk.

CLAY
I was drunk. I lost a lot of liquor
with the blood.

ANNIE
You're not drunk now?

CLAY
What'd I say?

ANNIE
You cut your hand.

CLAY
I cut my hand... You're a whore.
Let's not point out the obvious.

She looks in his eyes, angry.

He smells her, afraid to find the scent of another man.

CLAY
How was it?

ANNIE
He placed his hands on me in the
most manly of ways.
(MORE)

ANNIE (cont'd)
Ripped the stockings from my legs
so I could feel his ribs sliding
against my bare thighs. You can't
imagine how it felt. It was all so
strange. But then, my experience
with men of vigor is... lacking, at
best.

She backs up, heads to the brothel -

CLAY
Wait.

ANNIE
What d'you want from a fuckin'
whore?

CLAY
You gotta dirty mouth.

ANNIE
That's right.

CLAY
Lemme see it.

ANNIE
You can see it fine from there.

CLAY
Lemme see it...

She walks to him, tentatively. He brings his hand gently to
her face. Looks at her soft lips.

ANNIE
You got a good enough look?

And with his thumb at the thick of her lip...

CLAY
Don't leave.

ANNIE
Come with me.

CLAY AND ANNIE ARE TWO SPECKS, CLINGING TO EACH OTHER IN A
VAST, UNFORGIVING NEVADA LANDSCAPE.

EXT. THE OAK TREE - LATER - SUNSET

The sun is barely hanging on the horizon. Annie and Clay sit, clothes hastily put back on, hair messy, atop a coarse blanket under a thirsty Holm Oak Tree.

Clay is looking out at something that isn't there.

ANNIE

I like you sober.

She waits for an answer that doesn't come.

And Annie quietly removes the LOCKET from her neck. She puts it in Clay's hand. This is hard for her.

CLAY

I gotta see my cousin out. I'll come to you.

She looks in his eyes. Searching for truth in that statement. And now she looks to the horizon... the line that separates *here* from *there*.

The sun slips out of sight and sinks the world into darkness.

CUT TO:

EXT. BROTHEL - DAWN

A JALOPY is parked at the dirt corral in front of the brothel. Loaded with supplies.

Annie sits on her trunk in the back of the truck, forces a polite smile at -

THE DRIVER (60), who hands her a blanket before walking around and climbing into his seat. He starts the truck, not without some complaints from the rusted engine.

Annie watches the brothel windows for something, anything...

But the truck crawls away in the dirt.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT - DAWN

A male SAGE GROUSE struts through the sparse brush. One foot before the other, its beak raised regally.

EXT. DESERT - MOMENTS LATER

Clay and Will walk through the brush. TWO DEAD SAGE GROUSE swing from Will's hands, a shotgun over his shoulder.

He smiles at Clay.

CLAY

What're you smilin' about?

WILL

It's nice empty, in'it?

Clay follows Will's gaze three hundred yards. The town.

WILL

I gotta toss the man drives the
food truck an extra five dollars
just to keep him comin' now.

(beat)

It's a fair price.

They walk toward town. This is their home.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEVADA DESERT - DAY

We ride in the backseat of a 1930 PATROL CAR. That is to say, a BLACK CHEVY.

The driver is SHERIFF JOHN JOAD (45). A good old boy with a sizeable moustache. He WHISTLES the tune of the children's song: *DO YOU KNOW THE MUFFIN MAN*.

Sees an approaching JALOPY of a truck.

It rattles past: an OLD MAN and his WIFE driving it. ANNIE rides on the back with crates and blankets, next to her is a hand-painted sign: COLORADO OR BUST.

As Annie rolls by, Sheriff John's whistle changes to a sort of CAT CALL. She can't hear it.

His Sheriff's badge glints in the sunlight. The town ahead...

EXT. STREET

Sheriff John's CHEVY growls in, down the dirty main street.

HONK! *HOOONK!* Rolls to a stop. Sheriff John squeezes out.

EXT. OUTHOUSES - BEHIND THE BROTHEL - SAME

The hole in the outhouse seat leads to a stinking, murky, shit-laden soup somewhere below.

GARRETT COWLY (37), a gangly, unseemly man in dirty jeans stares into the depths from the open door. He has the look of a starved coyote. Weak and afraid, something unsettling about his lonely desperation. Not to mention his current fixation.

A MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Don't fall in.

Garrett turns, yellow-faced. He stands before two conjoined outhouses, one of them occupied. And -

Sheriff John's smile belongs to the Big Bad Wolf. But he isn't looking at Garrett now, he turns to -

Will. Who's at the wood block twenty feet from the outhouses, cutting the grouse. Blood runs. Will turns, their eyes meet.

SHERIFF JOHN
Didn't ya hear me honkin' my horn?

WILL
Didn't know that was you, John.

SHERIFF JOHN
You got so many customers you don't know who's honkin' and who's humpin', huh?
(beat)
Shall we?

CUT TO:

INT. BROTHEL - SAME

Clay sits at a table in the back next to JACK BRYAN. Thirties. Cold, tall and lean. He's unshaven and particularly dirty. A regular here. The only 'townie' left.

JACK
So... you really stayin'?

CLAY
What d'you think?

JACK
I think maybe you need a tall
drink.

CLAY
I'll be right here.

Jack gets up, taking his glass with him. ON CLAY AS:

EEEEEEK... the back door opens.

Clay lowers his face, hiding. JUST HIS EYES, as they follow
someone from the back door to the bar, *footstep by footstep.*

And now Sheriff John stands at the far end of the bar. Will's
behind it, digging into the cash box.

JACK
How's the sober life?

SHERIFF JOHN
Go crawl up a cooze, Jack.

Sheriff John looks at Clay - just a DARK FIGURE at the back
of the room, ducking under a hat. He stares curiously for a
moment. Until Will slaps something on the counter -

SHERIFF JOHN
What's that?

It's ten dollars. In singles and coins.

WILL
I can't help we got no customers.

SHERIFF JOHN
(nods to Jack)
He looks like a customer to me. Him
too.

THE KID sits at one of the tables. A coquettish, twenty-five
year-old hooker, MARY, sits on his lap - playing solitaire.

SHERIFF JOHN
How much you boys got on ya?

Blank faces. Sheriff John lopes over to Jack, shoves a hand
in his jacket, rifling for money.

He comes out with some change, keeps digging...

Red-hot indignation on Jack's face.

And Sheriff John turns, his eyes meet Garrett's for the brief second before Garrett shoots his eyes downward like a battered child. Sheriff John approaches.

And Garrett pulls out his coin purse -

GARRETT (CONT'D)
Uh... I got... fifty...

THE KID
I don't know what's worse... the
coward who offers up his cash or
the crooked man who takes it.

SHERIFF JOHN
What was that, little boy?
(walks closer)
Was that you askin' for attention?

THE KID
I don't ask for nothin'.

A tense moment. Clay watches from the dark.

SHERIFF JOHN
Where's your bills?

WILL (O.S.)
John, I got fifteen right here.

SHERIFF JOHN
Hold on Will. I can't take all your
profits, that wouldn't be fair. We
got a business arrangement.

The Kid just stares in his eyes. Mary is still on his lap.

SHERIFF JOHN
You gonna get up, girl?

She scurries away.

SHERIFF JOHN (CONT'D)
(to the Kid)
You know, solicitin' whores ain't
looked upon too kindly in Lincoln
County. We gotta lotta workers on
that dam we're tryin' to keep
wholesome. And I look at you, I see
a corruptor.
(beat)
So, we can do this one of two ways.

The kid sees Sheriff John's gun, worn at the hip. And we can see just the butt of THE KID'S GUN in his inside breast pocket, asking to be taken out. But the kid opens his jacket, hiding the gun as he does... humiliated. Sheriff John shoves a hand in the kid's pocket, comes out with a HANDFUL OF CASH. More than we, or Sheriff John, expected.

SHERIFF JOHN

Well, what's this? What you doin' with all this money? Seems like a burden, dunn it?

He tosses a bill back to the kid for the ride home.

And turns -

Clay can't hide his eyes quickly enough. He's just a hat and slumped shoulders now, but still... it's too late.

The air goes stale. These men go back a long way. Sheriff John didn't notice him before, but now, not even seeing his face... he knows the man in the hat. And it's been a while.

He approaches. Stops right in front of the table.

SHERIFF JOHN

Howdy, Clay.

He sees the bandage wrapped around Clay's fist. Like he's been in a fight. Clay's eyes are burning a hole in the table.

SHERIFF JOHN

Startin' trouble again?

No answer. Sheriff John kneels a bit to look in Clay's eyes.

SHERIFF JOHN (CONT'D)

I can see by that look on your face, maybe life on the outside's startin' to bore ya.

(beat)

Been makin' any money since you been back? Keep your hands on the table now.

He digs into Clay's pockets. Clay's eyes. Ice cold hate. Rummaging... his thick hands emerge with -

A golden LOCKET. Annie's.

SHERIFF JOHN

Very ladylike of you.

He turns the locket in his hand. It catches the light. And when Sheriff John sees Clay's burning face, he smiles -

And puts the locket in his pocket.

Clay makes eye contact with Will. Will's eyes say: *"Please. Please don't do anything."*

And so Clay doesn't. Sheriff John turns -

SARAH. Fifteen years old, a beautiful girl despite having not bathed in more than a week. She's just come down the stairs, a bucket in her hand, ready to be filled. She freezes.

Sheriff John's yellow smile seems anything but friendly.

SHERIFF JOHN (CONT'D)
(to Will)
She hookin' yet?

WILL
No... she's fifteen.

SHERIFF JOHN
Her mommy was a good one. She gonna mop up around here til she's dried up? That'd be a waste.

He puts a foot up on the bottom rung of the chair next to him. Smiles at Sarah suggestively.

SHERIFF JOHN (CONT'D)
Well, maybe next time, you boys don't have enough money... I might accept other forms of payment.

CRACK!

Clay's foot kicks out the chair, Sheriff John goes down -

THUD! His chin hits the table, sickening, lip splitting blood.

He's on the ground now, hyperventilating, red-black blood covering his mouth, looking up in Clay's eyes -

He pulls his REVOLVER on Clay.

Everyone freezes.

CLAY
Are you gonna shoot me, John?

DEAD SILENCE falls on the room at the sound of Clay's voice.

Sheriff John looks around the room. The Kid, Jack, Will all watching him for his next move. He's shaking.

Sheriff John keeps close to the wall, his gun on Clay.

SHERIFF JOHN

I ain't gonna shoot you. Get up.

Clay obliges. Just stands there. Still.

Sheriff John fumbles a pair of handcuffs from his belt. He tosses them toward Clay.

They *THUD* to the ground.

SHERIFF JOHN

Put 'em on.

CLAY

I can't do that.

SHERIFF JOHN

PUT 'EM ON!

Clay still won't budge -

So Sheriff John points the revolver at MARY, who's scared, back pressed up against the wall by the Kid.

Sheriff John *cocks* the hammer on his pistol. Mary is terrified, Sheriff John's finger tenses at the trigger...

Clay, still.

Sheriff John walks up to Mary, presses the gun to her temple.

SHERIFF JOHN

Come here.

His finger. The trigger. Blood sliding down his lip and over his chin. Mary's *CRYING*. *SHE'S ABOUT TO DIE*.

She starts to piss herself.

And Clay looks soft for the first time...

Clay picks up the handcuffs, starts putting them on.

EXT. STREET

Sheriff John leads Clay down the porch steps. Constantly looking over his shoulder.

They walk briskly to the car. Sheriff John opens the back door of the Chevy - pushing Clay in.

INT. SHERIFF JOHN'S CAR

Sheriff John gets in. Regaining his confidence...

He starts humming as he starts the car:

*Do you know the muffin man, the muffin man, the muffin man;
Do you know the muffin man who lives on Drury -*

BANG!

BLOOD AND TISSUE EXPLODE out the side of Sheriff John's head.

Clay ducks. Looks up -

The driver's side window is shattered. Sheriff John is slumped over, making a faint gurgling sound.

Through the window: THE KID is at the bottom of the steps, holding his REVOLVER.

Will hurries out of the door. Garrett right behind him.

The kid walks quickly to the car -

BANG! Shoots Sheriff John again.

Reaches through the shattered window, and pulls his cash out of Sheriff John's pocket.

The men just watch in horror.

The kid tosses the handcuff keys to Clay in the backseat.

Clay fumbles, undoes a handcuff. Looks at Sheriff John: dead. He gets out of the car. Looks at the kid in disbelief.

THE KID
(re: the sheriff)
Fuckin' coward. Fuckin'...

The kid is running high on emotion, kicks the car door shut.

INT. OUTHOUSE - SAME

It's dark in the outhouse. Just quick breathing. The door opens, letting in the blinding light -

It's A DAM WORKER (late 20s), taking a shit, dirty jeans around his ankles. He slowly gets up, from here he can see -

EXT. STREET

The kid is counting cash, hands some to Will -

THE KID
What he take from ya? Ten?

THE SOUND OF RUNNING FOOTSTEPS ON DIRT. The kid turns.

The dam worker is running from the outhouse to -

A dirty BLACK FORD COUPE parked by the post office. The kid's eyes follow as the man hops in, starts turning the engine -

The kid hurries over.

BANG! He fires.

VROOOOOM! The car finally reverses -

BANG! Another shot - the rear window shatters.

K-VROOOOOM! And the car tears off, chewing dirt. Driving erratically. The kid, reloading quickly. BANG! The kid fires again. No luck.

The car is fast becoming a speck on the horizon.

WILL
Jesus Christ, kid.

CUT TO:

INT. CHINESE RESTAURANT - BOULDER CITY, NV - NIGHT

TOM PICKETT, 39, in a weathered brown coat and dark hat, is sunken into a Chinese restaurant booth. Alone.

He's stuffing chop suey in his mouth as he looks across the restaurant at -

FOUR BOULDER DAM WORKERS, scarfing cheap Chinese in their still dirty jeans and work shirts. Hungry from a long day.

Tom regards the page two newspaper article in front of him:

MORE IMMIGRANTS NO JOBS.

A MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Mr. Pickett?

Tom looks up at a twenty-something man in a mid-priced suit, looks like a politician. He's Governor Griswold's AIDE.

THE AIDE
(extending his hand)
Daniel Lewis.

Tom shakes his hand without looking up from his chop suey.

TOM
I've been here an hour.

THE AIDE
I know, I'm sorry. Unexpected incident at city hall.

TOM
(already bored)
Somebody get a new haircut?

THE AIDE
(sitting)
A sheriff was shot.

TOM
No kidding?

THE AIDE
No, I'm afraid not. A man was killed in Fire Valley. Tried to shoot the dam worker who saw it, too.

TOM
Fire Valley? This really is the West, huh?
(taking off his hat)
Is Griswold gonna keep giving me the brush off and send his friends to meet me or can I get home to see my wife before my skin dries out?

The CHINESE WAITER puts a menu on the table for the aide.

THE AIDE

Thank you.

The aide looks over the menu, consciously taking his time.

THE AIDE (CONT'D)

Strange the paper didn't schedule an interview before sending you all the way out here. How'd they know you'd get one?

Tom puts his fork down. This will be a polite little fight.

THE AIDE

Slow news week in Hollywood?

TOM

Something like that. Look, I'm just here to ask some questions about the dam and what the extra electricty means for your average fifth grade graduate Californian. It'll be quick and painless. And then we'll both be out of each other's hair.

THE AIDE

Well, the Governor's a very busy man.

(flips over the menu)

He returns to Carson Friday.

TOM

That's wonderful.

THE AIDE

I *could* schedule an interview tomorrow, provided it's after he's returned from his visit to the dam and before city hall closes. It's a small window of opportunity.

TOM

When would that be, if you had to guess?

THE AIDE

Mmm, it's hard to guess.

Tom just looks at the aide, waiting.

THE AIDE (CONT'D)

Five o'clock?

TOM
Five. I'll be there.

Tom puts his hat on. Stuffs the newspaper in his coat.

THE AIDE
What's that you had?

TOM
Chop suey.

THE AIDE
Looks messy.

TOM
(standing)
It's yours.

He walks out.

EXT. CHINESE RESTAURANT - STREET

Tom exits onto an empty street. It's nine o'clock. The town is tiny, quiet. Dead. Not Tom's pace at all.

He sees a BOTTLE on the sidewalk, kicks it hard -

It *SMASHES* just shy of a big expensive-looking yellow and black car parked at the curb. He begins to walk -

An OLD WOMAN stands in the way - she's seen him all along.

Tom smiles politely, clutches his coat closed against the cold and walks toward a SMALL INN across the street.

INT. BROTHEL - NIGHT

The dim amber of oil light fills the bar. Clay, Jack, Will and Garrett sit around a table, hands folded.

The Kid sits at a bar stool, facing the others, gun in hand.

WILL
(to the Kid)
How'd you get here if you got no car?

As Will speaks, Garrett watches him nervously.

THE KID

I don't think it's any of your
business how I got here or where I
been or where I'm goin'.

WILL

Jesus Christ. Why'd ya shoot 'im?
You got rocks in your head?

THE KID

(points the gun)
Would you like ta go where he went?
Just sit pretty, fat man.

Quiet.

JACK

John was a son of a bitch... I was
beginning to entertain the thought.

Jack looks at the kid. Everyone looks at Jack, it's a
violation, talking about the recently deceased so vulgarly.

WILL

I wasn't.

CLAY

Kid.
(the kid turns)
Take his car. Take the money. No
one knows your name.

THE KID

How'm I supposed to take his car I
ain't never drove one before?

CLAY

We'll teach you.

THE KID

(suspicious)
Yeah... that's funny, isn't it.
You'll teach me. Next thing I know
you got me speedin' at a brick
wall.

WILL

Jesus, kid.

THE KID

(genuine)
You shouldn't take the lord's name
in vain.

Clay and Will share a look. This kid's nuts. The Kid stands up, walks to the door and looks out.

THE KID

You live in a real shithole, you know that? Ain't a single damn light in town. You'd think nobody lives here.

The Kid looks at the four men in front of him. Something on their faces has him suddenly feeling alone, suddenly nervous.

He's beginning to get the sense that he's stranded here.

THE KID

Where is everyone?

Nobody answers him.

THE KID (CONT'D)

What's'a matter, you all shy? I said where is everyone?

CLAY

Do you know how to read?

THE KID

What's that supposed to mean?

CLAY

See that sign? On the door.

The Kid squints at the "ORDER TO VACATE" sign.

CLAY (CONT'D)

You know what it says? It says you're not standing in a bar. It says you're standing at the bottom of a lake. The government bought up this town and paid two-hundred dollars to anyone who'd take it for givin' up their homes. That's how come no one lives here. Cause'a Boulder dam. They're gonna fill this valley with water.

(beat)

We're alone. And you're stuck here unless you wanna start walkin'. Or unless you wanna learn to drive.

The kid's eyes narrow. Still not trusting. He steps back and settles onto his bar stool. Gun pointing, as always, from his hip. Will lets out a sigh. There's no talking sense to him.

GARRETT
It's snowin'.

They all look outside. A light snow flurry descends at the edge of the light's reach.

WILL
We should move him. It looks bad if they come and he's still laying out there with his teeth on the seat.

EXT. STREET

A light dusting of snow covers Sheriff John's Chevy. Will and Clay approach the dark shape in the driver's seat. The kid watches from the amber-lit bar inside.

They open the car door.

Dried blood everywhere.

EXT. STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Clay and Will drag the heavy body toward the porch, his feet carve two jagged lines through the snow and dirt.

They sit him upright and lean him back against the pillar -

He BREATHES.

They jump back.

Clay stares at Sheriff John: nothing.

He presses on Sheriff John's chest -

Another BREATH.

Just an effect of the compression of the lungs.

WILL
Jesus.

Will and Clay sit in the snow. Their hearts racing.

Will starts laughing. Clay watches him.

Clay straightens up Sheriff John's jacket and wipes snow from his face, hat and coat. He takes the LOCKET from Sheriff John's pocket, stuffs it in his own.

WILL

Right now, you'd be in jail and John would be sitting down to eat with his wife. Probably stuffing his face with potatoes and gravy.

CLAY

He got married?

WILL

Who you think made him sober up?

CLAY

I didn't know he had a wife.

WILL

Lot can happen in a year.

Will and Clay both look at the empty street. The dead town. And Will can see now that Clay is looking back inside at the kid, gears turning in his head.

WILL

He'll undo himself.

Clay eases. Looks at Sheriff John. They sit in silence -

CLAY

You ever seen somebody shot before?

WILL

No.

CLAY

Me neither.

Will seems surprised. Clay sees the REVOLVER in Sheriff John's holster. He wants to take it, but he doesn't even need to look at Will this time to know what his response will be.

Quiet.

CLAY

He was an ugly son of a bitch. How'd he get a wife? I can't keep a hooker in town.

INT. BROTHEL - DOWNSTAIRS - LATE NIGHT

Late now. Seems everyone is asleep in the bar.

The kid is sitting on the stool, his eyelids heavy. They start to drop shut but snap back open a bit -

Clay is still awake. Watching the kid. Gonna be a long night.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. BROTHEL - UPSTAIRS - MORNING

Upstairs in the brothel at dawn. Sarah is asleep in her bed.

INT. BROTHEL - DOWNSTAIRS - SAME

Will, Jack and Garrett are asleep at the table. An empty gin bottle sits on its side.

And the Kid is asleep too, slumped in a chair with the pistol in his lap. Clay sits, eyes shut, seemingly sleeping.

The "BARBER" sign SWINGS in the breeze across the street.

Clay's eyes slowly crack open...

The sound of an APPROACHING CAR.

EXT. STREET

TWO BLACK '31 CHEVIES are slowly coasting into town.

INT. BROTHEL - DOWNSTAIRS

The Kid's eyelids flutter, still groggy. He can hear the crunching of dirt and rock under tires -

And leaps to his feet and to the door.

Garrett and Jack wake to the commotion. Will's out cold. And the Kid is at the door, pistol readied.

The cars come to a slow stop outside, just behind Sheriff John's car.

THE KID

Oh shit. Aw, there's a lot of 'em.

And now Will's awake.

EXT. STREET

The policemen are hesitant to approach the porch...

Where Sheriff John sits propped up like an omen, like a head on a stake.

INT. BROTHEL

The Kid is pacing now, shaking. He has NO PLAN.

He hurries to the back door, looking like a boy who's about to pee his pants. He looks outside.

Just desert and rock. Nowhere to run.

The Kid hurries back to the front of the brothel and looks out at the police:

One stands out amidst the group, he is the DEPUTY.

EXT. STREET

The Deputy holds his gun at the ready and watches the brothel windows for movement.

The door to the brothel cracks open.

The police flinch collectively. Impossible to see inside.

The "BARBER" SIGN swings.

INT. BROTHEL

A GIN BOTTLE lies on its side by a loose pile of cards on Garrett's table. It rolls back and forth, perilously close to the edge.

The Kid points his gun at Clay. Motions for him to walk over.

He nods toward the Sheriff's gun on the chair.

THE KID

Pick it up.

Clay hesitates, but with that gun pointed at his head...

THE KID
Hold on! I'm comin' out!
(to Clay)
Go on.

Clay picks up the Sheriff's gun. Almost tempted to point it at the Kid, but instead, he follows the Kid's direction.

Toward the door. The Kid hides to the side as he pushes the door open a bit for Clay, keeps the gun pointed at the back of his head.

THE KID
Don't say nothin', don't be wise.

I/E. BROTHEL/STREET

Clay is in the doorway, exposed before five police officers with pistols drawn.

DEPUTY
Throw down your gun!

Clay takes a tentative step forward, drops the gun. THUD.

DEPUTY
Now come down here, easy.

What follows unfolds excruciatingly slowly:

The *breeze stops*.

Clay descends the first few steps, wood creaking, while -

INT. INSIDE

The gin bottle wobbles on it's side, split seconds from rolling off the table with a crash.

The Kid changes his aim from Clay's back, to the Deputy waiting 20 paces away from him. Will stares at the Kid.

EXT. STREET

The police wait, fingers itching at triggers. An OFFICER takes a step forward, handcuffs in hand, waiting for Clay. He looks excited to get Clay locked up, ready to rough him up.

The Deputy looks in Clay's eyes. He has a funny feeling.

He looks at the doorway -

INT. INSIDE

The Kid tries to control his breathing.

The gin bottle rolls slightly, hangs at the edge...

Slowing as it nears the precipice...

But, slips -

SMASH!

OUTSIDE

BANG!

A police officer FIRES.

WOOD SPLINTERS -

CLAY FALLS and rolls off the side of the stairs -

THUMP. Into the dirt.

INSIDE

Quiet.

Will, Garrett and Jack try to peek out the window. They can't see much.

The Kid leans against the door, scared, building up courage -

Then, points the gun out the opening and -

FIRES blindly at the police -

BANG! BANG! BANG!

OUTSIDE

The officers start FIRING at the building -

CLOSE on Clay. He's alive, face in the dirt and the wind knocked out of him from hitting the deck.

BANG - BANG - BANG - BANG!

Clay holds onto the ground for dear life while a barrage of deafening bullets crack through the air -

INSIDE THE STATION

The Kid runs across to the window and points the gun outside -

FIRES three times -

A police officer crumples to the ground.

The Kid starts reloading frantically. Glass shatters nearby, cutting his forearm. Will takes the opportunity:

WILL
HOLD UP! EASY!

OUTSIDE - CLAY'S LOOKING UP NOW

The firing lets up a brief moment.

Will stands, hands raised...

Meanwhile, the Kid loads the last bullet in his gun, sneaks an eye by the corner of the window, aiming, a cop sees him -

BANG - BANG - BANG -

The barrage is back and the cops are shooting and one of them sees Will moving, so he aims - *BANG!*

Will's stomach ERUPTS BLOOD. He falls and -

OUTSIDE

Clay hears a loud *THUD* on the floorboards above him.

He can see the GUN on the porch. And now the cop twenty feet away is looking right at him.

INSIDE

The Kid, blasting all six rounds through the shattered glass.

Jack and Garrett, looking at Will bleeding over there -

BACK OUTSIDE

The OFFICER watching Clay scurry up the porch snaps out of it and - *FIRES*. Clay clamors for the gun he dropped.

IN THE BROTHEL

Now Jack's up and moving. He runs to the back of the room, leaving Garrett, who is ducking behind the table -

Jack's going for the hunting rifle behind the bar.

GARRETT

I can shoot it.

Jack ignores him, takes the rifle, rushes to the window.

Looks down at Will, who's hyperventilating. And aims outside.

OUTSIDE -

Clay grabs the pistol and turns around to see the officer pointing a gun right at him -

BANG! The officer misses.

Clay steels himself, and in that moment, his heart hardens.

He pulls the trigger:

BANG!

IN THE BROTHEL

Jack raises the rifle and -

BANG!

He misses, hitting the front tire on Sheriff John's car -

PSIISSSSS - It deflates.

BANG! BANG! BANG! The four cops still standing start shooting in Jack's direction.

Jack hides, then aims again - BANG!

An officer's head BURSTS RED.

Two of the officers quickly run behind the cars for cover.

THE KID
(to Jack)
Get 'em all! Don't let 'em get
away!

The Kid runs out the door and -

BANG! The Kid falls. Shot in the head. Dead in an instant.

THE PORCH

The pillar nearest Clay splinters wood across his field of vision.

Clay squints, splinters flying at his eyes. He fires back. Eerily confident and determined.

IN ONE OF THE CARS

The DEPUTY slides into the car, shuts the door.

K-BANG! The door handle is blown off by a bullet coming through the other side.

He starts the engine and drives as fast as he can.

IN THE BROTHEL

Jack can't get the bolt action to work, it's jammed -

He sees the car pulling away. He forces the bolt -

CHIK-CHIK.

He leans back to the side of the window and takes aim -

OUTSIDE

The last police officer, abandoned, aims a rifle at Clay from behind a car.

Clay lowers his gun. His eyes say *DON'T SHOOT*.

The officer hesitates, trains his rifle on Clay -

Clay raises the pistol, squeezes the trigger:

CLICK.

The officer squeezes his:

CLICK.

No more bullets for him either.

The officer reaches into his coat -

IN THE BROTHEL

Jack slides a bullet into the rifle, tries sliding the bolt action. No luck, it's stuck again.

Frustrated, he hurries away from the window -

OUTSIDE

Clay is staring helpless at -

The officer, who is searching his coat for bullets - shaking, trying to get them out in time.

Clay sees Jack, coming through the door twenty feet away, a rifle in his hands.

Jack -

Storming toward the officer, trying to slide the bolt back.

Getting closer -

The officer, sliding a bullet into the chamber -

Jack -

CHIK-CHIK, the bolt works -

The officer turns, raising the loaded rifle at Jack's face -

BANG!

THE OFFICER DROPS. DEAD WEIGHT.

He's still trying to breathe.

Jack looks down the road:

The DEPUTY's car tearing away. He slides another bullet into the rifle, tries sliding the bolt.

STUCK. Tries again. STUCK.

He drops the rifle to his side.

It's quiet...

The "BARBER" sign swings in the chill breeze. The FLAG FLUTTERS on the Post Office.

Inside, Garrett stands up slowly, shaken.

Clay looks across the porch at...

-

The Kid. BLOOD EVERYWHERE.

INT. BROTHEL - MOMENTS LATER

Will breathes erratically, clutching his gut. Clay, Jack and Garrett stand above him, overwhelmed.

Until Clay finally kneels, pulls up Will's shirt.

WILL
AGGHH!

Clay sees the wound. Will's words are barely comprehensible, desperate, the cry of a boy who wants his mommy:

WILL
I'm gonna die.

Clay looks on helplessly, no idea what to do. He looks up -
SARAH. She's at the bottom of the stairs. Staring.

CLAY
Get a cloth.

He pulls a DIRTY SERRATED KNIFE off the bar.

CLAY
(to Will)
Is the metal in there?

Will nods, hyperventilating.

JACK
(re: the knife)
What are you gonna do with that?

WILL
AGGHH! It hurts! It - ffff hurts!

CLAY
(to Garrett)
Do we gotta get the bullet out?

Garrett is just staring.

CLAY (CONT'D)
Garrett!?

GARRETT
I dunno.

CLAY
I thought you were in the war!

GARRETT
Yeah! I wasn't no doctor!

WILL
I'm bleeding! Look how much I'm
bleeding.

Clay pulls up Will's shirt even more. He turns to take the mostly clean rag from Sarah.

He dabs at Will's wound until he can see -

Torn flesh, fresh blood. Impossible to see much in there. He holds the cloth down until it soaks with blood. Hopeless.

WILL
(crying)
I'm gonna die. I can't breathe...

JACK
Shut up, Will, goddammit.

And Clay SNAPS, grabbing at Jack - Garrett pushes him back.

JACK (CONT'D)
We need to get in one of them cars!
They're comin' back. The kid shot
John how long'd it take? How long'd
it take!? You don't remember?
Less'n a day. Look at 'im now.

THE KID'S BODY. In a pool of blood.

JACK (CONT'D)
People hanged for less.

WILL
Clay?

JACK
We gotta get 'im to a doctor.

A long silence.

WILL
Clay?

EXT. THE PORCH - LATER

Clay, Garrett and Jack CARRY WILL. It's a great effort getting Will down the stairs and toward the car.

GARRETT
(quietly)
Clay.

Clay turns, sees what Garrett is looking at:

A police officer - THE SURVIVOR - sits propped up against the patrol car. He has a gun at his hip, pointed at them.

The survivor is pale, out of breath, blood-caked and sitting in the dirt. Even the rising and falling of his chest is a labor. But all he has to do is pull the trigger.

CLAY
Are you alright?

The survivor doesn't seem too capable of speech. Just the stare of a dying dog.

CLAY
You need water?

Clay is sweating under Will's weight.

EXT. BEHIND THE BROTHEL

Sarah tries her hardest to pump water from the hand-pump well behind the brothel.

The water trickles into a wooden bucket. Which Sarah carries away.

EXT. IN FRONT OF THE BROTHEL - CONTINUOUS

Sarah comes around the brothel carrying the bucket, some water sloshing out as she does.

She approaches the survivor carefully, sets the bucket down beside him.

I/E. SHERIFF JOHN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Will is in the back of Sheriff John's car, more blood than before. He watches Sarah and the survivor outside while -

Jack is sitting in the driver's seat, hand on the starter. They've all been waiting here for a while.

Garrett has his head under the hood, tinkering with the engine.

EXT. SHERIFF JOHN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Clay is leaning against the car outside. The rifle's at his side. He watches Sarah help the survivor to drink.

He looks at the brothel. The second floor window: Mary. She looks at him, afraid... and closes the blinds, disappearing.

Clay looks in the car, at Will, sprawled on the seat:

CLAY
You want water?

Will shakes his head 'no'.

CLAY
We're gonna get you fixed. Alright?
It won't be long.

Will nods.

GARRETT (O.S.)
I think I got 'er! Try her!

Jack twists the starter.

CLICK - CLICK - CLICK. No good.

GARRETT
Put your foot on the pedal.

Jack tries again: *CHIK-CHIK-VROOOOOOMMMMMM...*

The Chevy sputters to life. Garret drops the hood down with a *CLANG*. The survivor looks up, water dribbling down his chin.

JACK

Get in!

Garrett hurries around the car, hops in the front with Jack, almost excited.

Clay moves slowly, dragging the rifle with him. He looks around at his town.

The post office. Abandoned.

The general store. Abandoned.

The mine. Abandoned.

An entire town. Abandoned.

And there's Sarah. Sitting alone on the brothel porch.

About to be abandoned too.

Clay opens the back door of the Chevy.

Sarah stands, watches as he drops the rifle in the backseat and climbs in.

The engine *RUMBLES WEAKLY* as Jack pushes the accelerator. The flat tire under the driver's seat flubbing in the dirt - *K-THUMP, K-THUMP, K-THUMP...*

The Chevy steers around the Sheriff's car, and continues away. Headed into oblivion.

But...

Just as it seems we're about to cut away -

The car turns, circles back.

K-THUMP, K-THUMP, K-THUMP...

Coming closer, it pulls to a stop between Sarah and the survivor.

Clay points the rifle out the window at the survivor. Garrett hops out of the front seat, runs around to the survivor, and carefully plucks his pistol from the ground.

He hurries back to the car, which idles sickly with a constant, wheezing *rumble*.

Clay looks out at Sarah, she is all puppy dog eyes.

WILL
(wincing)
I can't leave her. I'm all she's
got. Been ten years since her mommy
left, Clay.

Jack and Garrett look to Clay for a decision.

CLAY
(to Garrett)
Get the girl.

JACK
(out the window at Sarah)
Kid!

Sarah gives the old "*who, me?*" look.

She makes her way down the steps, a little too slowly.

HONK! Jack lays on the horn and she picks up her step as Garrett gets out to let her in the middle of the front seat.

With the door closed, and Sarah sandwiched snugly between Jack and Garrett, the car sputters to speed again.

K-THUMP, K-Thump, k-thump...

Fading away until -

The survivor is all alone. Just him, a Chevy, four bodies and a bucket of water.

And the sound of that BARBER's sign squeaking.

CUT TO:

INT. BOULDER CITY - "CITY HALL" - NIGHT

Tom Pickett sits in the hallway of Boulder City Hall. Makeshift, dim, messy. A hastily assembled building to administer the large amount of workers at Boulder Dam.

Tom checks his watch:

5:45

Down the hall, FOUR MEN come walking into the building.

They walk quickly. Whatever they're here for, *it's important*. Their boots echo down the long hallway, an approaching storm.

They have REVOLVERS, all worn in a holster at the hip. All dressed in shades of black. POLICE.

One of them looks particularly dirty, tired and roughed up. He is the deputy, and he's just been to hell and back.

They stop right in front of Tom, right in front of the office he's waiting to be called into.

Tom sits up as -

KNOCK-KNOCK-KNOCK. They take their hats off respectfully.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Come in.

The men open the door and walk in. Tom gets a fleeting glimpse of GOVERNOR GRISWOLD at the desk inside.

The DOOR CLOSES. Tom is alone in the hall again.

He stands up. Leans against the office door and listens...

And listens...

INT. BOULDER CITY - "CITY HALL" - MOMENTS LATER

Governor Griswold's Aide exits the office, looking for Tom.

But Tom is gone. The seat outside the office is empty.

CUT TO:

EXT. BOULDER CITY POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Tom talks quickly into a metered phone outside the tiny police station, he's practically out of breath.

A SHOT-UP BLACK '31 CHEVY is parked behind him.

VOICE (PHONE)

(just picking up)

Yeah.

TOM

Frank.

VOICE (PHONE)

Tom?

TOM

Seven cops killed in Lincoln County.

VOICE (PHONE)

What?

TOM

Seven cops killed in Lincoln County.

Silence on the other end.

TOM (CONT'D)

Frank?

VOICE (PHONE)

That's great.

TOM

Do you want a photograph?

VOICE (PHONE)

What sort of question is that?

TOM

Do you want an exclusive, Frank? Or should I go to someone else?

Silence again.

VOICE (PHONE)

You work for us.

TOM (CONT'D)

I want that column we talked about. I want my own. I don't wanna write filler copy anymore. Frank? I'm gonna get you an exclusive, Frank.

VOICE (PHONE)

You're getting a big head -

TOM

You remember Dillinger? How many papers that son of a bitch sold?

VOICE (PHONE)

You remember Gomez?

TOM

Gomez?

VOICE (PHONE)
*Victor Gomez. He killed two cops in
 Recita last March. They caught him
 the next morning. Don't work
 yourself up. This could be over
 before it starts and then you're
 back here on obituaries. And I
 won't forget this conversation.*

CLICK.

Tom drops the phone back on the hook.

I/E. THE CHEVY - PARKED/ROADSIDE - NIGHT

It's the dead of night.

Blood covers Will from chest to knees in the backseat, it's slick on the leather seats. The car is parked, Will's awake but exhausted. Clay watches him from across the back seat.

Sarah is asleep in the front seat. Jack's gone somewhere.

And Garrett is walking toward the car from where he just took a piss outside.

GARRETT
 Clay. Can we talk?

CLAY
 What is it?

GARRETT
 Can you...

Clay gets up out of the backseat as if it's a burden.

EXT. ROADSIDE - CONTINUOUS

Clay and Garrett talk in the dark.

GARRETT
 I'm real tired...
 (beat)
 Are you worried about her? You
 think she's scared? I would be, I
 mean if I was a girl, y'know.

CLAY
 I guess I would be too.

GARRETT

Yeah... you think anyone's lookin'
for us?

Garrett seems uncommonly shaky, he's nervous, red-faced.

CLAY

I'd say there's a slight chance.
Let's get Will fixed. Then we'll
fix the rest.

GARRETT

I didn't kill no one. If we got
arrested, I mean, they wouldn't
hang me.

A silence. Clay looks in Garrett's eyes, trying to find his
exact meaning, suspicious.

GARRETT (CONT'D)

Right?

CLAY

No... You didn't kill no one.

Someone *WHISTLES LOUDLY* in the distance. Clay looks at the
road, and follows it to the horizon:

HEADLIGHTS APPROACHING.

He seems reluctant before picking up the rifle.

EXT. THE ROAD - SAME

Jack is standing by the road, playing the part of a
hitchhiker or a distressed motorist. Clay approaches, but
stays in the dark. Garrett falls back.

The car gets nearer, the sound replacing the silence. The
headlights cast an amber glow over Jack.

Jack waves his hands, the car pulls over... A nice-enough
looking SALESMAN and his seven year-old SON.

SALESMAN

Are you alright?

Jack is quiet, which puts the salesman a bit on edge.

SALESMAN (CONT'D)

Where's your vehicle?

Clay steps forward, pointing the rifle at the salesman.

SALESMAN
(hands up)
Oh dear God.

CLAY
Get out of the car, please.

Clay makes eye contact with the boy, who looks dumbstruck.
Jack hurries around, pulling the salesman out -

JACK
C'mon.

SALESMAN
Don't shoot, please, my boy!

CLAY
We're not gonna shoot. Hey!

The salesman is on his knees, his face in the dirt, drooling.

SALESMAN
Please!

CLAY
Jack!
(Jack lets go)
Hey! Sir! Stand up!

SALESMAN
No, no, no, no...

Clay puts down his rifle and puts a hand on the salesman's shoulder.

CLAY
Get up now, come on, it's alright.
Come on.

He helps the man to his feet.

CLAY
See? You're alright.
(beat)
Now we just need your car. We're in
some trouble got nothing to do with
you or your boy.

The man is still silently sobbing.

CLAY
That your son?

The man nods.

CLAY
Think you could ask him out?

This lasts a while. The boy is not so much scared as frozen in place, almost petulant:

SALESMAN
George. George, come on now. Come on George. They're not going to hurt you. George?

JACK
George, get out of the goddamn car.

George is startled and opens the door, stepping out gingerly.

EXT. ROADSIDE - LATER

Jack walks behind the salesman and his son, pointing a revolver at them as they're marched to the shot-up Chevy, which we now see is all but a smoking, gasless wreck. All the while, Jack shoots a cautious eye back at the road.

Clay walks alongside them with the rifle.

Garrett is waiting by the other car as they approach.

GARRETT
Girl, get up.

Sarah stirs awake and see's the man and boy as -

The salesman and his son see WILL in the back. Soaked with blood. The boy is mesmerized by the violence. For a moment, Sarah and the salesman's son make eye contact - two kids on opposite tracks. Clay pokes his head in the back:

CLAY
(to Will)
Can ya move?

Will's response is a tired stare.

CLAY
(to the salesman)
Is there a doctor 'round here?

The salesman just stares blankly at Will.

CLAY
(suddenly harsh)
Hey. Don't stare at him.

SALESMAN
I -

CLAY
Where do you live?

SALESMAN
Lennock.

CLAY
That nearby?

He nods.

CLAY (CONT'D)
Is there a doctor?

SALESMAN
Yes.

CLAY
Where?

SALESMAN
You... drive east til you come
to... to a sign.

CLAY
A sign?

SALESMAN
It says Lennock, it's not far.

CLAY
Where's the doctor live?

SALESMAN
In Lennock.

CLAY
Where's he live in Lennock?

SALESMAN
Church street. It's a yellow house,
with a porch.
(beat)
He's got grandkids.

Clay opens the driver's side door, the salesman gets in and slides across to the front passenger seat.

SALESMAN

Georgie?

JACK

(to George)

Get in, kid, be quiet.

The boy gets in behind his father and Clay shuts the door. He looks the salesman in the eye.

CLAY

No hard feelin's. My name's Clay.

He extends his bandaged hand to the salesman.

CLAY (CONT'D)

Sleep here til morning, a'right?

The salesman shakes Clay's hand, wary of the bloody bandage. Clay moves to the back, to Will:

CLAY

Hey cousin.

WILL

(with difficulty)

Hey cousin.

Clay, Garrett and Jack move to the back doors and open them. Will falls partially out, but Jack catches him.

They heave him out from the backseat.

EXT. DOWNTOWN CHICAGO - FBI OFFICE - EARLY MORNING

The second and third floors of a steel and cement building serve as the Chicago field office of the Bureau of Information (BOI) which only six months from now will be given the immortal acronym, **FBI**.

It's a cold, gray end to November in the Windy City.

INT. CHICAGO FBI OFFICE - SAME

Here, the frontline war on organized crime is fought by chain-smoking young men in white shirts, dark coats and suspenders. They work with their sleeves rolled up and their hair hastily combed aside.

They work with less sleep than the average American, into the dark hours, returning home on the last running rail cars just before nine.

These FBI AGENTS sit at desks, by telephones and telegraph machines. They read and they type.

The remnants of two day old ticker tape hang from a few pipes along the ceiling. There was a celebration here last night.

INT. AN OFFICE - CHICAGO FBI OFFICE - SAME

An empty office seen in close-up. A desk placard reads:

M. PURVIS

A hand-drawn banner hangs partly out of a trash can that's filled with discarded ticker tape:

...NGRATULATIONS MEL!...[illegible]... NELSON!

On the desk is the front page to the November 29, 1934 Chicago Herald Examiner. The headline reads:

DYING U.S. AGENTS KILL 'BABY FACE' IN BATTLE!

One of the room's two windows is blocked by a filing cabinet.

A DEEP GLASS FRAME sits on the cabinet. Inside is a .357 CALIBER REVOLVER, below the gun, a small plaque which reads:

JOHN DILLINGER - THE BIOGRAPH, 1934

The frame has a light accumulation of dust on its glass.

A cigarette is still smoking in the ashtray.

And the office is empty because...

INT. BATHROOM - CHICAGO FBI OFFICE - SAME

MELVIN PURVIS (31) - a slight, intelligent, southern man with dark hair - washes his hands at the bathroom sink. A voice comes through the bathroom door:

A MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Mr. Purvis?

Melvin looks at the door as it opens. An AGENT walks in, a TELEGRAPHED PAPER in his hand.

MELVIN PURVIS
I'm in the bathroom.

AGENT
A wire from Nevada, they said it
was for you.

MELVIN PURVIS
What is it?

AGENT
Six police were shot and killed in
Boulder City.

He hands the paper to Melvin.

MELVIN PURVIS
Nevada? Do you know why they didn't
give this to San Antonio?

AGENT
No sir. Maybe they thought it was
too big for them.

Melvin starts reading the paper.

AGENT
Are you going out for lunch?

MELVIN PURVIS
(re: the telegraph)
We don't have a description?

AGENT
I don't think so.

MELVIN PURVIS
(re: lunch)
Why, are you going to Franny's?

AGENT
Sure.

MELVIN PURVIS
Get me a beef dip.

Melvin finishes reading, then looks up, noticing the agent is
still there. He hands the paper back to the agent.

MELVIN PURVIS
Put out a two-thousand dollar
reward for information leading to
an arrest.

(MORE)

MELVIN PURVIS (cont'd)
Put it on the wires, we want it on
radio and in the papers. See what
you can find out, get a name from
the badges down there.

AGENT
Mel?

Melvin looks at the agent, waiting for him to continue.

AGENT (CONT'D)
Can I be on this one?

MELVIN PURVIS
I don't catch your meaning.

AGENT
I started here in June, before you
got Dillinger, and I was running
the telegraph then. Then, we had
our daughter in the fall, when you
went for Pretty Boy Floyd. And
Esther had complications, you know.
And... I missed Baby Face, I felt
like I was s'posed to be there.

MELVIN PURVIS
You and I, both. You know two men
died.

AGENT
I knew Hollis.

MELVIN PURVIS
(a rhetorical question)
Did you know his son?
(beat)
Listen, I talk straight. I don't
know the next time we're going out
for somebody, but I can tell you,
it takes a certain type of man to
fire a gun at another man and risk
his life out of righteousness. You
understand? It takes an entirely
different type of man to follow a
superior into the bathroom to ask
for a promotion.
(beat)
Do you want to be in the newspaper?
Answer me. Do you wanna be in the
newspaper? I believe you want to be
in the paper the way I was when we
got Dillinger, is that wrong?

AGENT

I do.

MELVIN PURVIS

Well, I don't trust men with
ambition.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROAD - DAWN

A WIDE OPEN ROAD at the early blue hours. Nothing but desert.

Until -

A BLACK FORD comes over a hill and out of the dark.

VROOOOM - CUT TO:

Traveling away from us now. *Quickly.*

Until it comes upon something up ahead...

A SHOT-UP CHEVY, parked twenty yards off the road.

The Ford slows to a stop, across the road from the Chevy.

A quiet breeze.

The door opens, the driver gets out:

TOM PICKETT.

He approaches the shot up Chevy, his feet crunching on
pavement, sand and rock. The sun is waking quickly.

K-CHUNK! A rock bounces off the road and into Tom's leg.

As Tom grabs his shin, he sees the SALESMAN'S SON, skipping
out from behind the Chevy and laughing to himself.

Tom approaches carefully, stepping between the rocks like
he's crossing a narrow rope bridge.

He sees a shape in the driver's seat, THE SALESMAN, who's
awake, looking at Tom, his shirt salt-stained from panic.

TOM

Hello.

(...)

My name's Tom Pickett. I'm a
reporter.

(MORE)

TOM (cont'd)
(beat)
What's your name?

SALESMAN
Jerome.

TOM
Nice to meet you Jerome. Are you hurt?

SALESMAN
They took my automobile.

TOM
(dry, looking at the
bloody shot-up car)
You mean this isn't yours right here?

SALESMAN
No sir.

TOM
Who is *they* exactly, who took your car?

SALESMAN
There was three of them. The fat one was bleeding, he was shot.

Tom sees the dried blood covering the back seat.

TOM
Looks like you had quite a night.
You must be shaken up.

SALESMAN
There was a little girl.

TOM
A girl. Huh. Where'd they go?

The salesman looks east. His son is playing among the rocks.

TOM
That way?

SALESMAN
I told them how to get to Lennock.

TOM
Lennock? Where's that?

SALESMAN

Are you gonna follow 'em?

TOM

Well, I don't know, Jerome. I'm a reporter. It's my job to be curious, I guess.

SALESMAN

Lennock's just east. There's a sign.

TOM

What kind of sign?

SALESMAN

It says Lennock.

TOM

Is that your son?

SALESMAN

That's George.

George is in his own world: he throws a rock at a boulder, spastic and hyperactive. Not like his quiet, shaken father.

EXT. ROADSIDE - LATER

The salesman sits stone-faced in the driver's seat, looking at something off-screen.

CLICK.

Tom's camera takes a photo from its wooden tripod. Tom folds up the legs and puts the camera over his shoulder.

TOM

Goodbye Jerry.

JEROME

Where are you going?
(Tom's still walking)
You got any water?

Tom puts the camera in his backseat. Closes the door.

TOM

I'm sure there'll be someone along.

He starts up the car and pulls away into a U-turn, leaving the salesman and his son in the soon-to-be-scalding desert.

INT. COLONIAL HOUSE - MORNING

Will lies whimpering, bloody and pale on a doctor's examination table in a small home practice office.

THE DOCTOR is in his early seventies. He hovers crudely over Will's torn abdomen with forceps and a fine blade.

Clay watches, his eyes heavy and sleep-deprived. Garrett is in a chair, stuffing his mouth with bread and jam.

THE DOCTOR
Steady, now.

The doctor nods at Clay nervously. Clay holds Will still by the shoulders. The blade lowers -

WILL
AGGGGHHHHHHH!!!!!!

THE DOCTOR
Hold him.

Will: deep fast breaths, then again -

WILL
AGGGGGGHHHHHHHHH!!!!!!

A bloody sliver of shattered rib is removed from the wound.

Will stops suddenly.

It's quiet. Clay and the doctor wait. Jack, Garrett and Sarah watch from the walls.

CLAY
Will?

GARRETT
He's passed out.

JACK
Will?

We notice for the first time that Jack has his revolver trained on someone sitting in the corner of the room: THE DOCTOR'S WIFE, an old woman with a perpetually worried face... especially right now. But Garrett's right -

Will is unconscious, his mouth agape, still breathing. Blood trickles out of him. Garrett looks at the half-eaten bread and jam in his hand, suddenly less hungry.

Sarah watches in shock.

CLAY
Keep going.

THE DOCTOR
He's going to die.

The room is stilled.

CLAY
Hey doc, look at me.
(beat)
He's gonna live. Y'understand?

Jack looks at the doctor's wife, his gun pointed at her gut.

THE DOCTOR
He's bleeding inside. I'd have to
cut into him, I could kill him.

The doctor is shaking, nearly crying, terrified.

CLAY
Look, I'm not gonna hurt ya if he
dies, okay? Ya gotta try... cause
I'm gonna hurt ya if ya don't.

THE DOCTOR
I need ether.

CLAY
You don't have ether?

THE DOCTOR
Across the street at Brown's...
He's a good man. He's my friend.

INT. COLONIAL HOUSE - THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Clay bends down to talk to Sarah, he hands her a REVOLVER.

Sarah looks up at him expectantly.

CLAY
Did Will ever show you one of
these?

She just looks at the gun quietly. He looks her in the eye.

CLAY (CONT'D)
Keep it pointed at them. But don't
pull *this*. Got it?

Her voice is even softer than we might expect:

SARAH
I got it.

Clay leaves with no more thought on it. And the gun sits in
her hand, cold and heavy and powerful.

Sarah cocks the gun, uncocks it.

CUT TO:

EXT. LENNOCK STREET - DAY

Clay and Jack stand on the street. Coats and shirts buttoned
up over blood stains, hands washed but still marred by blood,
revolvers mostly hidden in their belts. They cross the
street from the doctor's house.

A respectable BUSINESSMAN walking out of the shoe shop stops
in his tracks to stare at the men. Clay pulls his sleeve a
bit, hiding the dried brown blood.

INT. DOCTOR'S HOUSE - DOCTOR'S OFFICE - SAME

Will. Unconscious. Sweat beaded on his bone white face. The
doctor checks the strength of Will's pulse, making sure he's
still clinging on. But something is bothering him:

Sarah sits backwards on a chair, knees on the seat, aiming
the revolver right at him. It's just her, the doctor and his
wife in the room.

THE DOCTOR
Where's your parents?

Sarah points the gun right at his face.

SARAH
You know you look scared.

THE DOCTOR'S WIFE
You must have parents. Who raised
you?

SARAH
Nobody raised me. I raised myself.

She looks at Will on the table. Nearly bloodless.

GARRETT (O.S.)
What's this?

THE DOCTOR
 What?

INT. THE DRAWING ROOM - SAME

Garrett looks down curiously at something in the other room.

GARRETT
 This big, fat thing.

THE DOCTOR (O.S.)
 Haven't you seen a radio?

CLOSE ON: A hand reaches for the radio's volume knob, and turns it clockwise. The *SOUND FADES UP*:

INT. PHARMACY - SAME

We tilt up to reveal that it is MR. BROWN, a spectacled, vest-clad pharmacist, who has just turned up the volume on a radio broadcast that's taking the better half of his attention from an egg-salad sandwich:

RADIO ANNOUNCER (RADIO)
 (disrupted by static)
THE G-MEN say it's mass murder in Nevada! These gunslingers of the saloon variety have massacred ten lawmen in Lincoln county and J. Edgar Hoover's boys say they're out for more blood! Be wary and, if you're interested in rewards of the two-thousand dollar variety, be on the lookout in Boulder City, Lincoln county and Eureka. These men are armed and dangerous and out to kill. Why hello, Ms. Harlowe -

And as the announcer changes the subject to Hollywood...

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK.

Mr. Brown turns -

EXT. LENNOCK STREET - CONTINUOUS

It's Clay and Jack, just outside. They look out of place at best. Mr. Brown points to the sign on the door glass:

"CLOSED... SORRY!"

Clay *KNOCKS* again. Mr. Brown looks up at him sourly -

MR. BROWN (MUFFLED, THROUGH GLASS)
Closed, sorry.

INT. PHARMACY - CONTINUOUS

CLAY (MUFFLED, THROUGH GLASS)
Just need one thing.

Mr. Brown simply points at the sign again and bites into his sandwich to show how busy he is.

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK. Louder now because -

Jack is knocking. Mr. Brown looks up.

Jack has a revolver pointed right at him.

Mr. Brown stares... blood stained cowboys. Panic drips over his heart. The sandwich starts to slip apart.

INT. PHARMACY - LATER

Mr. Brown sweats as he places a bottle of ether in a paper bag...

CLAY
I'm sorry we got no money.

Mr. Brown looks in his eyes. Burning them into memory before -

EXT. PHARMACY - SAME

Clay and Jack hurry out of the pharmacy. Jack's holding a bottle of rubbing alcohol in one hand, stuffing the gun in his belt with the other. Clay leads the way.

INT. PHARMACY - SAME

And Mr. Brown reaches for his telephone, watching them cross the street through the mostly-glass door.

CUT TO:

INT. DOCTOR'S HOUSE - LATER

As the doctor operates, we travel the room:

Jack looks at Clay across the operating table -

Clay watches the doctor -

Sarah sits in the corner - admiring the gun, her mind on herself, not the life at stake.

Garrett watches Clay and Jack for their reactions, trying to figure out how he should be reacting.

The doctor's wife is hoping that her husband succeeds.

AND WILL.

Lies passed out from the ether. Cold metal tools pry into his bleeding abdomen, searching between his blood-slick organs.

The doctor is sweating, working as if before a raging fire.

Until...

He looks up at Clay apologetically. Clay doesn't understand why until he looks at Will's wound -

A reservoir of blood rises up within, filling slowly to the brim before spilling over Will's side and onto the table. The renal artery is severed inside.

Will's eyes are shut. Motionless.

NO SIGN OF LIFE.

Everyone is still. Somehow even Sarah can feel it -

She puts the gun down and looks up at Will. *Dead.*

EXT. CHICAGO STREET - DAY

HOOOOONK! A fat Ford Model A goes blaring through an intersection. The street is congested, cars trying to navigate through pedestrians.

INT. CHICAGO FBI OFFICE - SAME

Melvin Purvis watches from a third story window. Lost in the silent commotion below. He absentmindedly twists a wedding band in a slow circle around his ring finger.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Mel.

He turns to see a go-getter of an agent, CONRAD HALL (24), hair slicked back, a young face and a mouthful of gum.

CONRAD HALL (CONT'D)

(talking a mile a minute)

Lennock, Nevada. Two men with guns just held up a pharmacy. The pharmacist says they were covered in blood. Looked nervous. He's pretty sure it's them.

MELVIN PURVIS

They held up a pharmacy? What'd they take?

CONRAD HALL

Just ether.

We can see Melvin's gears turning. And he figures out pretty quickly why they might need ether.

MELVIN PURVIS

Where's Lennock?

CONRAD HALL

I don't know.

MELVIN PURVIS

Get me a map of Nevada.

The agent makes ready to leave.

MELVIN PURVIS

Connie.

(beat)

Did you call local law enforcement?

CONRAD HALL
There is no local law enforcement.

CUT TO:

I/E. BLACK FORD - PARKED

ONE CONTINUOUS TRACKING SHOT, IN PROFILE:

Tom Pickett is sitting in the driver's seat of his parked Ford. He pops a mint in his mouth.

He collects his camera, opens the door and steps out.

EXT. UNDER A TREE - CONTINUOUS

We continue moving with Tom as he walks out from under the shade of a beautiful oak tree, revealing scorched land beyond. Where Tom keeps walking...

Past a MAN IN A HAT, who is staring at something ahead.

After a few more feet,

Tom passes THREE PEOPLE, all looking in the same direction...

Then a LARGER GROUP.

Until it's clear that Tom is -

EXT. DOCTOR'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Outside the doctor's house. The gathering has the air of a town picnic, the grade school has let out for the day, young children watching with the schoolteacher. A beautiful day, everyone here to watch a show - just a little more blood and violence expected than on your average, say, Fourth of July.

And a few CURIOUS ONLOOKERS peer into the black car parked across the street.

Tom approaches, looks inside. Dried blood on the backseat. He snaps a picture.

The doctor's house stands before him. And he turns to see -

THREE MEN HOLDING RIFLES standing at the head of the group. Tom extends his upturned palm to the CHUBBY MAN on his right.

TOM
Chocolate mint?

And Tom pops a mint in his own mouth as the chubby man deliberates before eagerly taking one.

CHUBBY MAN
You a photagerpher?

TOM
I'm a neutral party. No shooting yet?

CHUBBY MAN
Naw, not yet.

Without looking, Tom offers another chocolate mint. The chubby man takes it. Like feeding a lapdog.

TOM
Who're they?

CHUBBY MAN
That's Branson Long.

TOM
He's the sheriff?

CHUBBY MAN
Branson's Branson. But I guess you'd know that if you live 'round here.

TOM
I guess. Thanks, bub.

And Tom walks away from the chubby man, maneuvering closer. He looks eager, the rifles almost a turn on. And he watches the gunmen quietly, studying...

EXT. 50 FT. AWAY - SAME

BRANSON LONG (33), the oldest of the three men and the clear leader, wears a wide-brimmed hat. Tall and wide and gifted with natural strength and a disarming face.

The man to his right is WENDELL (30), unshaven and nervous.

WENDELL
You think it's them?

The doctor's house looms before them.

INT. DOCTOR'S HOUSE

Inside, everyone sits in silence. Heads hung low, the air is thick with suffocating hopelessness. Everyone alone.

Clay hides beneath his hat, slumped on a sofa.

GARRETT

Clay?

(...)

Clay? What are we gonna do?

JACK

Who made him boss?

CLAY

Nobody.

His voice sounds different. Colder, dryer.

CLAY (CONT'D)

You all just like to follow.

JACK

Well then, where're we goin' now?

Clay looks down at the locket clutched in his fist. It is tender and precious and something to be protected.

He sees now: the blood pooled under the operating table, the guns in his friend's hands. In Sarah's hand.

JACK (CONT'D)

You're so smart, what do we do now?

CLAY

Jack. Look me in the eye.

Jack looks him in the eye. Seconds pass. His glare fades.

CLAY (CONT'D)

You know where I've been?

JACK

Yeah.

CLAY

You know why I went there?

No answer. Just Jack's eyes, afraid of Clay's.

CLAY (CONT'D)
Do you remember when we used to
work the mine together? When we
were young, you remember that?

Jack softens now. Clay's eyes are all cold determination.

JACK
Yeah.

CLAY
I want that again.

Jack and Garrett look at Clay. They want the same.

CLAY (CONT'D)
Now I got one place to go.

Clay sits a moment. And now he's up and moving. He looks out
the back window. Turns to the doctor.

CLAY
Doc.

The doctor is slope-shouldered now, heavy with guilt.

CLAY
Can you do us a favor? Think you
can hold your tongue a few minutes?
(approaching the doctor)
We're like you, you understand? We
come from a very small town.

The doctor isn't quite sure what he means.

CLAY (CONT'D)
Now, I'm gonna want ya to count to
a thousand.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOCTOR'S HOUSE

Tom squints in the blinding sun. He looks tired. An abnormal
shadow is cast across his face. And we see now that he's
squatting in the inadequate shade offered by his camera,
which is mounted on a tripod. He's watching -

Branson, Wendell and their silent associate take cover behind
Wendell's DODGE TRUCK...

WENDELL

They been just sittin' there ten minutes now. Ain't nuthin' goin' on.

In the front windows of the doctor's house, the doctor and his wife sit motionless in chairs, facing out at the crowd.

Branson wipes his face. He looks down and checks the bolt on his rifle. The bullet is lined up nice-and-clean.

BRANSON

We talkin' 'bout a two-thousand dollar reward. That's awful big, split or no, don't ya think?

WENDELL

Yeah, but what if it ain't them?

Branson can see that Wendell's nervous as hell.

BRANSON

Either way, I don't know 'bout you, but I don't tolerate no crime against no old man and woman. Y'all wanna go, I'll take the two thousand myself.

WENDELL

Nah.

BRANSON

What about you, Bill?

BILL

Nah.

And Branson looks at his two friends, slides the bolt home and stands.

THE DOOR to the doctor's house opens.

It's the doctor. Standing alone in the doorway.

Branson approaches, his men trailing reluctantly. Branson's eyes scan the second story, the inside. Seems the doctor is all alone with his wife. And as Branson reaches the porch -

BRANSON

What happened?

The doctor looks nervous, debating inside his head.

BRANSON (CONT'D)
Where'd they go?

Tom is watching. This isn't how it's supposed to happen.

And the doctor moves out of the way, letting Branson walk into the house. Where he sees:

An empty room. A door is cracked open a bit, Will's body visible on the table inside. And something else...

He walks toward the back of the house...

The back door is wide open. A swath of tall grass is trampled down by footprints. Branson is a man betrayed -

BRANSON
Why didn't you say nuthin'?

Wendell and Bill finally enter, noticing the dead body before anything else. But now they see the open door...

BRANSON
(to Wendell)
Get your truck.

The half-trampled grass blows in the spare breeze.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT

A BLACK 1929 DODGE PICKUP comes roaring toward us from the town of Lennock in the near distance. It sends plumes of desert dirt up from its wildly spinning wheels.

It's after the men like a bat out of hell.

CUT TO:

EXT. LENNOCK STREET - TOM'S CAR

Tom's camera is hastily dropped on the passenger seat as Tom sits behind the wheel. He twists the ignition. The engine is being fussy, but after a couple more tries -

He guns the engine and the car TEARS FORWARD.

But HE JERKS TO A BRAKING STOP -

INT. BATHROOM - THE DOCTOR'S HOUSE - MOMENTS EARLIER

A SCENE SHOWN IN SUPER TIGHT CLOSEUPS:

Clay sits on the sill of the bathtub, watching the bathroom door. The rifle sits propped in his hands, dead-set on the door. It's stuffy upstairs, suffocating.

Footsteps approach the door. *Eeek... eeek...*

The door opens. The doctor.

BACK TO:

EXT. LENNOCK STREET - BACK IN TOM'S CAR

Tom has stopped because right in front of him...

Three dirty, blood-mottled men are carrying a body down the steps of the doctor's house.

The Ford's engine grumbles.

Tom stares on in disbelief.

He gets out without even turning off the engine.

EXT. DOCTOR'S HOUSE - SAME

The recently-dispersing crowd around the doctor's house is transfixed as Clay, Jack and Garrett struggle with Will's bloodless body.

Tom takes a step forward and says something that will surprise even him:

TOM
You need a hand?

Clay catches Tom's eyes and holds them. Like a wolf, Clay's eyes betray nothing but wary mistrust. Tom freezes, because -

Sarah has the revolver pointed right at his chest.

TOM (CONT'D)
Easy... easy...

That gun isn't moving.

TOM (CONT'D)
They cut your tires.
(beat)
You need a car? Hold on.

Tom backs up slowly, and when he deems he won't be shot, runs back to his idling car. He hops in, drives forward, right up to the front of the doctor's house. And gets out as the men near the car, arms straining under Will's weight.

TOM
(to Clay)
It's a Ford Model A, three months old. I can get you pretty far. What's your name?

Clay scans the crowd. And as he looks at people, each one backs up as if repelled by his gaze. But not this one...

TOM
My name's Tom. I figure you need a hostage, if you wanna get anywhere.
(smiling)
Isn't that how it works?

CLAY
Open the door.

TOM
Wait.

CLAY
Open the door.

Tom opens the back door to his car.

TOM
You got a sheet or a something?

Too late. Will's bloody mass is being laid on the clean seat. Garrett makes his way to the driver's seat.

TOM
Hold on!
(beat, softer)
Now I'll drive you wherever you wanna go. I know my way around here. You can't take my car. Don't you wanna know who I am? I'm Tom Pickett. I'm a reporter.
(to Sarah)
What's your name, little girl?

SARAH
I'm not a little girl.

Sarah starts to step into the car.

CLAY
(to Jack)
She's not comin'.
(beat, off Jack's look)
What good we gonna do her?

JACK
We just leave her?

CLAY
Yeah.

Sarah sits in the car and shuts the door behind her.

CLAY
Sarah, get outta the car.

SARAH
No. I'm not gettin' out!

CLAY
(to Jack)
Pull her out.

SARAH
Pull me out yourself! I ain't
going!

Clay opens the door -

She starts kicking the dashboard -

Tom winces with each kick to his beloved car -

Clay drags her out by her underarms and she struggles,
clawing at his hands as she's dragged backwards -

CLAY
Don't you wanna go to school!? Just
be a goddamn normal kid!

Sarah is kicking in the dirt, fighting back, as Clay now has
her by the hair -

SARAH
*NO! I'm not a normal kid!! I don't
wanna be normal! I got no one! What
am I s'posed to do!?*

CLAY

You little cunt, we all got no one!

She lies defeated in the dirt.

The air is still.

Jack and Garrett look at Clay. They're embarrassed. Tom watches them all. He didn't expect them to be like this.

CLAY

(to her)

We're not comin' back from where
we're goin', ya get it?

A distant *GRUMBLING* in the distance. The men turn.

It's growing louder, closer...

A DODGE PICKUP comes rumbling out around the corner shop 150 yards away. It stops in the middle of the road, facing Clay and the others... WENDELL'S TRUCK.

Clay stands still, squinting at its distant windshield.

GRMMMM... the engine rumbles.

IN WENDELL'S TRUCK

Branson glares at Clay, Jack and Garrett. All holding guns. Branson - *CLICK* - cocks the hammer on his rifle.

Townspeople who haven't cleared out already start to back away from the road. But they're still watching, because it's surely about to get interesting.

BRANSON

Let's get 'em.

BACK WITH CLAY

The hunted watch as -

VRooooooooooooMMMMMM! The Dodge starts tearing toward them.

Clay is immobile as Jack raises his revolver -

Garrett's frozen in the driver's seat. And -

BANG! Jack fires at the Dodge.

I/E. SPEEDING CHEVY

Wendell drives, Branson in the passenger seat with his rifle.
 Branson aims out the window as the Dodge slows, nearing them:
BANG!

EXT. STREET

Tom ducks behind the open back door.
 Jack hurries behind the car -
BANG! Fires again just before getting in -
 Jack reaches over Will and pulls Tom inside -

GARRETT

Clay!

Clay gets into the front seat and SHUTS THE DOOR ON SARAH
 OUTSIDE. Wendell's truck accelerates toward them...

Garrett guns it forward, toward the quickly approaching
 Dodge, and makes a dirt-kicking U-turn - with Sarah in the
 middle of all of it.

SHE RUNS for the turning car as it comes back her way, hops
 onto the runners, clinging onto the passenger side door, her
 hands clasping Clay's shirt, nearly falling off -

IN TOM'S CAR

SARAH

LET ME IN!

She slips - but Clay pulls her in through the window, her
 legs kicking outside, the world spinning, as -

BANG! - Someone from the Dodge takes a shot, it plunks into
 the metal of the car somewhere.

Tom cowers in the backseat, heart pounding. He sees his
 camera sitting on the floor.

IN WENDELL'S TRUCK

Branson aims out the window, looking like a sharpshooter -

BANG!

BRANSON

That's two-thousand dollars,
Wendell!

Wendell floors it.

IN TOM'S CAR

The Dodge is catching up as they tear out of town - the buildings becoming a fading memory in lieu of the bumpy dirt road and the quickly approaching highway.

Sarah clings to Clay, he holds her -

BANG! Jack takes a shot out the window -

The car swerves, nearly sliding off the road -

BANG! Another shot from Branson.

Tom reaches as his camera rolls away from him -

Jack ducks, reloading, then leans out the window. He's hanging out, not very stably, pointing the gun back.

BANG!

The gun goes off unintentionally, his finger bumping on the trigger.

GARRETT

Oh Jesus...

With a heavy bump, they hit the highway - a rough switch from packed dirt to pavement. The car swerves right, catching traction on the road.

Clay, Jack and Sarah look back as the Dodge turns onto the road too, just as -

SLAM!

A truck hits the Dodge, sending two packed trunks and bags of supplies flying forward and nearly cleaving the car in two.

Garrett continues driving as the Chevy fades from being real, dangerous and close to a distant speck - a sideshow accident.

Clay holds Sarah close to him.

GARRETT
(quiet, genuine)
You think they're alright?

CLAY
I'm not too sure.

CLOSE ON CLAY... LOOKING AHEAD.

CUT TO:

EXT. CREEDE, COLORADO - OUTSKIRTS - DAY

Snow covers the town of Creede. Nestled under the massive Rockies mountains, Creede is a cloister, the people warmed only by struggling stone hearth fires and sheepskin coats.

EXT. RIO GRANDE RAIL DEPOT - CREEDE, COLORADO - DAY

A HORSE'S HOOOF presses into the snow - the snow grinds, creaking under the weight.

The horse snorts, its breath cloudy in the cold. It's tied up outside a small STABLE and looking at -

ANNIE. She stands on the platform of the Rio Grande rail depot, her trunk is at her side as a train leaves the station, continuing on from Creede. Annie looks down the street at -

CREEDE. A bustling mining town. Workers, proprietors, the occasional child or teen. This is what a mining town *should* look like. The antithesis of what she's used to in Nevada.

The RAIL DEPOT WORKER (20) next to her loads a heavy cart with her TRUNK and BAG.

DING... DING... DING... the town clock tower rings.

EXT. THE HOME - TAVERN - LATER

The depot worker following behind her, Annie opens the door to "THE HOME" -

INT. THE HOME - TAVERN - CONTINUOUS

A RAUCOUS BAR with dirty, work-a-day MINERS, liberal-minded UNMARRIED WOMEN and several PROSTITUTES.

Local brews and whiskey are the town drinks. As Annie steps through the door, trunk in tow, the men react:

THE MEN
OOOHHHHHHHHH!!!

They laugh and drink, a couple of the men looking long at Annie, others shyly averting their gaze.

A YOUNG WOMAN (25) playing cards at a back table makes eye contact with Annie and her face lights up. The young woman nudges the MATRON (50) next to her.

Both women excuse themselves with the MEN at the table and come to greet Annie.

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOME - BEDROOM - LATER

A bedroom in "The Home". It's mostly red, soft, warm. The matron has a smoky voice - aged and hoarse.

THE MATRON
You're going to have to do things
you may not want to do.

ANNIE
What might I not want to do?

THE MATRON
Honey, I could be your mother. I'm
old enough and I've seen enough.
And so long as you're here, I *am*
your mother. That means I'm in
charge. When I say you're going to
have to do things you may not want
to do, that means you smile and
wait for me to finish talking.
(beat)
You'll make a great deal of money
here. And I will make more. If you
take issue with that, I suggest you
keep it to yourself or seek
employment elsewhere. Now I'm going
to tell you how to bring in money:
you meet a man at the bar. You
don't proposition the man. The man
propositions you. These are yours.

She holds up two cloth napkins. One RED, one WHITE.

THE MATRON (CONT'D)

You leave them at the bar.

(holds up the red)

This means you've taken a man upstairs and he's fuckin' you. This is so we tell your customers you aren't here. You're red. Your friend Lila is violet, other girls got other colors. The last thing a loyal customer wants is to hear that his girl's fuckin' another man, whether she's a whore or not, so you always leave your color. That way we tell them, 'well, you aren't here right now'.

(holds up the white)

This is your white flag. You show this, it means you need help. And I mean, *you show this, it means you need help*. You use this wrong, and you *will* need help. Our customers don't get out of line unless they pay for the privilege.

(off Annie's expression)

You alright honey?

(beat)

We give you makeup, we give you a bedroom, we give you money. You give us everything else.

She brushes aside the hair hanging over Annie's brow.

THE MATRON

Welcome to the Home, honey.

Annie is visibly disgusted to have a woman tell her what to do, let alone touch her. The matron leaves. Annie regards the room, guessing what it holds in store for her. And she looks out the window, a sadness in her face.

CUT TO:

INT. CHICAGO FBI OFFICE - DAY

CLOSE ON: A CAST IRON RADIOFAX MACHINE.

The drum on the radiofax rotates slowly, a stylus swiping back and forth like a metronome as an image is unfurled on the photo paper wrapped around the barrel.

A MAN pulls the paper out of the machine, we track behind him as he carries it with him down the hall and into -

INT. THE MEETING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The photograph is placed in front of Melvin Purvis, who sits on the wide side of an expansive oval-shaped table.

SIX AGENTS are with him in the room, among them Conrad Hall.

Melvin Purvis looks at the photo, studying...

A MUGSHOT. CLAY DERING. BLURRY AROUND THE EDGES.

"CARSON CITY", "10587" - says the placard around his neck.

In the picture, Clay looks tired, defeated, and a little younger. Melvin suddenly looks up -

MELVIN PURVIS
Who's smoking?

The AGENT (27) at the far end of the table has just lit up a cigarette. Now he looks like he was just caught pants down.

MELVIN PURVIS
Don't ever smoke in this room. If
you have to destroy evidence, do it
at home.

The agent stubs the cigarette into the back of his matchbook. And Melvin dismisses the man who brought him the picture -

MELVIN PURVIS
James, thank the good men in
Nevada.
(to the task at hand)
So... there is a history of
violence here, isn't there?

AN AGENT
He spent fourteen months in Carson.
But I say if he got caught in the
middle of nowhere, he can't be very
good.

MELVIN PURVIS
Maybe he's just learning the ropes,
so let's not jump to conclusions.

The agent nearest Mel takes a look at the mugshot.

ANOTHER AGENT

Why'd they shoot the sheriff in the first place?

CONRAD HALL

Hoover's flooding their town to finish the dam -

AN AGENT

Certainly finds ways to make himself popular, doesn't he?

CONRAD HALL

The Boulder City Sheriff was assigned to help vacate. Maybe they were opposed to leaving home. Kinda quaint.

Conrad chews his gum. There's a small pause before -

MELVIN PURVIS

I want to find out what kind of gears he's got up here.

(he taps his own skull)

Wherever he's running to next, we're going to be there waiting. Now that we've got his name, I want it on the radio, nationwide. I want it heard in every living room, stores, bars. I want his picture in the papers. Let's shake Clay up a little bit. If he's scared he'll be easy to catch.

CONRAD HALL

We're just gonna rely on tips from good samaritans, huh?

MELVIN PURVIS

There are some out there.

INT. THE CAR - DAY

Tom is in the backseat. Will is dead next to him. *Really dead.* He's pale, festering, petulant. And Tom's right shoulder is stained with Will's dried blood now.

Tom's infected with the air of death - quiet, morose - not his usual self. Throughout the scene, Tom is framed with the dead body next to him...

TOM

You know what a reporter is, right?

(beat)

What's your name?

(a longer beat)

I could write about you.

CLAY

What d'you wanna write about?

Tom looks around: the blood, the rifles, the fifteen year-old girl, the dead man next to him. "What do you want write about?" is a pretty insipid question given the circumstances.

TOM

Well, for example... What d'you do next? Rob a bank? That's popular.

(a long beat)

...So no banks?

JACK

We ain't robbers. We're miners.

The information hits Tom like cold soup.

TOM

But you have a brothel?

CLAY

Garrett, pull over.

Garrett pulls to the side of the road.

EXT. ROADSIDE - AMONG DIRT AND DRY GRASS - CONTINUOUS

Everyone sits in the stopped car:

TOM

Is something wrong?

CLAY

Yeah. You.

(beat)

How d'you know about us?

TOM

I listen.

(off Clay's glare)

I met a man and his young boy stranded in the desert. Someone had left them to die, with no food or water.

This has the effect Tom intended. Clay is momentarily weak.

TOM (CONT'D)

They were very scared. I can write your story how you want it. You'll be in every paper from Los Angeles to New York, in your own words.

Garrett and Jack look instantly overwhelmed.

CLAY

What makes you think we care about your city paper?

TOM

You should care. My newspaper's gonna keep you alive tomorrow. It could make you a hero or it could make you a villain. And either one would be the truth. Cause my newspaper only prints the truth. Without me, you're just a big, fat two-thousand dollar reward.

The car idles like a hungry stomach. Jack looks at Clay, *the guy's right*.

TOM

They killed your friend. They murdered him in cold blood. Don't you want me to print that?

Just then, a loud, buzzing HOUSE FLY lands on Will. It sits on Will's forehead, tip-toeing along his hairline, glistening and black and filthy.

Garrett watches it walk. Transfixed by the morbid grime.

JACK

We need a shovel.

EXT. STANDARD OIL OF CALIFORNIA "SOCAL" FILLING STATION - DAY

The car pulls into a SOCAL filling station, parks far from the gas pumps, on the edge of the lot.

This is Eureka County, Nevada - the young winter brings a faint dusting of frost from which the grass sprouts defiantly and a brittle chill hangs in the air.

I/E. TOM'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Everyone watches as -

THE ATTENDANT (40) approaches in the rear view, carrying a smile and holding his hat to his head as the wind kicks up.

CLAY

Get out and talk to 'em.

Garrett gets out, Sarah following. Jack bristles, though -

JACK

Is that an order?

CLAY

I don't know, ask me again.

Jack gets out, pissy. Tom is still in the back. Clay looks at him in the rear view, cold eyes -

And Tom hurries out of the car. Clay watches them all go, Jack saying something to the attendant, the attendant leading them back to the station. No one is looking.

Just Clay... and Will.

Clay begins to cry.

EXT. STANDARD OIL OF CALIFORNIA "SOCAL" FILLING STATION

Sarah looks back toward the car, Clay is shaking in the front seat, his back to her. No one else seems to see it...

EXT. A FIELD - LATER

The clouds have come in to cast a darkness over the great expanse as Tom puts his eye to his camera's ground-glass. He secretly snaps a photo - what will be a black and white, a lifeless still of a burial scene. Because before his eyes:

Standing many yards from the car - now parked in cold grass and dirt - Clay, Jack and Garrett finish digging with shovels and hoes while Sarah watches.

MOMENTS LATER

Will lies in a shallow pit.

The men look on at their dead friend. Clay kneels by the grave's edge, holding a handful of clotted, cold dirt. He is unable to let go, the dirt seeping between his clasped fingers. But finally, he releases...

They are still, no one wanting to pick up the shovels to begin the hardest part.

GARRETT

I told 'im we were burying a dog.

Jack and Clay are silently put off by the odd comment.

GARRETT (O.S.)

You think they're gonna notice?

Clay turns, sees the station a field away. Sarah sits on her own, picking grass, sneaking glances at Clay. And Jack sits down quietly next to him.

JACK

The gas man says we can stay in the barn. Lotta migrants do. No one lives there now.

CLAY

Everyone's been driven from their homes. Whether by force or by fear...

The barn stands as a rasping monument to a dying way of life.

GARRETT

You think there's somethin' to eat around here? I'm hungry.

And it becomes apparent now just how tired Clay, Jack and Garrett are. Sleepless, the adrenaline slipping away.

Tom watches them, the notepad in his hand reads:

CLAY. JACK. SARAH. GARRETT?

And he sees Jack turn around. They make eye contact, Jack looking suspicious. Tom pretends he was looking at the sky.

EXT. AT THE WOODS' EDGE - NIGHT

A fire is reflected in Clay's still eyes. The group sits around a burning pile of forest tinder. The world is ink black beyond the flickering orange.

Tom watches the others. Studying primates.

JACK
You still set on our destination?

CLAY
I am.

JACK
If it's just you wanna lay down
with your old cooze, she's already
busy humpin' shepherders for
change. You should keep your mind
where it belongs - on yourself.
(beat)
I say that as a friend.

Jack offers the rubbing alcohol to Clay. He doesn't take it.

But Sarah reaches over and takes it instead. She tilts back
the bottle and takes a gulp. Clay thinks to stop her. But
after all this, she's entitled to get drunk.

CLAY
Sit down, reporter.

Tom is standing, stretching his legs on the other side of the
fire. On Clay's command, he sits. Right next to Garrett.

TOM
Look, you've had me sitting quiet
for going on eight hours.
Eventually a man's gotta take a
shit.

But Clay's eyes are focused intently off in the distance:

A small light is bobbing in the darkness. Coming toward them.

Jack reaches for his gun, keeping it hidden but ready. The
light, an oil lamp, approaches. The edge of the fire's glow
illuminates the face of a wrinkled, PORTLY WOMAN (60).

PORTLY WOMAN
Good evening.

JACK
Hello ma'am.

TOM
(dry)
Howdy.

PORTLY WOMAN

My son neglected to tell me we had
guests at the barn tonight.

CLAY

Who are you lady?

PORTLY WOMAN

(hurt, offended)

Oh. We live at the filling station.
I was hoping to ask if you'd join
us for a late supper?

(beat)

I can't bear to see a child go
hungry... Please.

Clay immediately seems sorry. He looks at Sarah. She does
look famished, as do they all. They wait for Clay's answer.

CLAY

Thank you.

TOM

(an announcement)

I'm about to explode.

Tom smiles sideways. Clay looks at Garrett, sitting by Tom.

CLAY

...Garrett.

Garrett looks up.

CUT TO:

EXT. IN THE WOODS - MOMENTS LATER

Garrett escorts Tom through the woods, walking a careful
length behind him. The twigs crack beneath them.

TOM

What's your name? Garrett? I had an
uncle named Garrett.

Tom turns, extending his hand.

TOM (CONT'D)

Tom.

Garrett hesitates... then reluctantly shakes hands.

GARRETT

Garrett.

TOM

You know what I admire, Garrett?
You're very calm and collected.
Your friends are a little, they're
great. I just wonder if they're
handling the situation the right
way. You see what I mean?

Garrett is a blank stare.

TOM (CONT'D)

What's Clay's girl's name? Annie?
(beat)
Right?

GARRETT

Annie.

TOM

Where's Annie?

Tom stops walking, facing Garrett.

GARRETT

I don't think I should tell you
that.

TOM

They don't treat you right, do
they? See, look. They went to go
eat a nice, hot meal and they left
you to watch me take a shit. How
does that make you feel?

Garrett's eyes shift.

TOM

I don't know why they don't want me
to help you. I mean, I could get
you out of this pretty easily,
you'd never have to go to jail. Or
maybe you don't want out. Maybe you
want to be *brave...* and *famous*. You
know, I could arrange that,
Garrett. I just need you to *help me*
help you.

Cracks appear in Garrett's surface. Tom pulls out a flask,
unscrews the top -

TOM

So what's your story? You look very confident with a gun, Garrett.

GARRETT

...I was a private. First class.

TOM

No kidding. Really?

(takes a swig)

You fight in the big one? Well tell me about it. See, right now, out there, they don't know you're a war hero.

Garrett looks in his eyes. *War hero...* that sounds nice.

TOM (CONT'D)

I just wanna tell your story.

He offers the flask to Garrett, who takes it.

GARRETT

Don't you have to shit?

TOM

It's working it's way.

CUT TO:

INT. THE FILLING STATION HOUSE - NIGHT

A cramped room in the home adjoining the filling station.

Clay, Jack and Sarah sit at a small table with the filling station ATTENDANT, his mother the portly woman and a ONE YEAR-OLD BABY GIRL. Everyone eats stew and bread - but Jack and Sarah eat greedily, alternating sips of milk from tin cups.

Clay is looking out the window until -

PORTLY WOMAN

When's the last time you ate? Why you must've been positively starving.

ATTENDANT

Ma, leave 'em be.

PORTLY WOMAN

I'm just askin' a question.

CLAY

I thank you for the meal.

ATTENDANT

It's nothing. We seen all them
Okies comin' through, just wantin'
work, down on their luck. There
isn't a whole heck of a lot to hold
on to these days.

His mother nods in agreement. The young baby girl watches everyone else, just about as complacent as your average American living through this great depression.

Clay sees the look on Jack's face, and follows his eyes -

BLOODBATH IN LINCOLN COUNTY. The headline on the Eureka County Sentinel newspaper that's sitting by the door.

ATTENDANT

Where you headed on your journey?

And the attendant turns, sees what they're looking at.

ATTENDANT

You heard about that?

CLAY

About what?

ATTENDANT

You heard about Clay Dering?

Clay just holds the tin cup of milk, he was about to take a sip. But now... frozen.

ATTENDANT

(proudly)

Nevada's got her own public enemy
now. Nobody knows what he looks
like but he's a cold killer.

PORTLY WOMAN

Oh, Sam. I wish you wouldn't
subscribe to that movie gangster
garbage.

ATTENDANT

It's on the radio all day. They
killed ten police in cold blood, no
problem. They were in Lennock
yesterday. Bet it's on right now.

He reaches over and turns on the radio.

FLETCHER HENDERSON'S HENDERSON STOMP is playing. Just about the last thing Clay or Jack wants to hear. The baby *CRIES*.

PORTLY WOMAN

Turn that down, it's supper.

He does. It plays quietly while he coos to his baby girl.

PORTLY WOMAN

(to Clay)

So where were you saying you were headed?

CLAY

...Texas.

PORTLY WOMAN

Texas? For work? You're goin' the wrong direction. Haven't they been hit by the dust?

CLAY

We got family there. Far south.

ATTENDANT

(re: Sarah)

She's very pretty.

CLAY

Yes she is.

JACK

I'm sorry, I don't mean to interrupt. But this would all be much livelier with a drink in my hand, don't you think?

ATTENDANT

Oh, we got a dry house here. Ever since Mary departed, I try to live right by her.

The attendant's mother looks on at her son proudly. And the attendant respectfully turns the radio off. It's quiet.

JACK

(dry)

That's very admirable.

ATTENDANT (CONT'D)

(to Clay)

When you lose the woman you love,
you know, all you feel is hurt and
alone... but you're not alone, you
got family, that's what matters.

MOTHER

Amen.

JACK

Amen.

Clay nods, gulps some milk. And looks out the window -

CUT TO:

EXT. AT THE WOODS' EDGE - LATER

Clay, Jack and Sarah *crunch* through the brittle grass back to
dying embers. No one around the fire.

JACK

Should we look for 'em?

CLAY

Nah.

JACK

What if they got caught?

CLAY

(looking out at the woods)
They didn't.

INT. BARN - NIGHT

It's dark in the barn. The dead of the night.

Quiet at first. Then some light *scuffling noises*.

A shape sleeps under a wool blanket on a sparse bed of dried
grass. And Sarah approaches the shape, tip-toeing.

She lays out a blanket next to the lump.

Lays down.

Slides closer to the shape - closer to Clay.

She's near enough to breathe his sleeping breaths -

But Clay looks at Sarah, he's been awake this whole time. Sarah looks into his eyes, searching for something. This conversation plays out slowly and quietly.

SARAH

I saw you cry. I don't ever cry.
You know that? Were you crying
cause Will's dead?

CLAY

Go to bed.

SARAH

I don't have any friends. Now
you're like me.
(beat)
Why'd you say I'm pretty?

CLAY

I didn't.

SARAH

Yeah you did, you said I'm pretty.

CLAY

The gas station man said that.

SARAH

He said, "She's very pretty." And
you said, "Yes she is." Did you
always think I'm pretty?

She slides closer to him.

CLAY

Yes I did.

SARAH

Even when you were with Annie?

He looks at her. Not wanting to answer that.

SARAH

Do you think...

CLAY

Do I think what?

SARAH

Do you think we're all gonna die?

CLAY

Yes.

SARAH

I mean do you think we're gonna die soon? Cause the police'll come after us, and try to kill us?

CLAY

Probably sooner than later.

SARAH

I think I might like that. I wanna die young. You know I never done it with anyone, though. This floor's rough. It's hard sleeping without a pillow.

She comes closer to him, they are touching now.

SARAH

Brr. You weren't really going to leave me.

CLAY

Why are you talkin' now? You ain't talked for three days...

SARAH

Cause now we both got nobody.

Her chin is on his chest. She looks up at him.

A dark shape is under another blanket in the corner. JACK.
He's not moving and is hard to see from here.

Sarah looks in Clay's eyes, a long, meaningful, anxious, oppressive silence.

K-CHUNK!

The barn door opens -

Sarah spins quickly away from Clay and pretends to be asleep.

Tom and Garrett stumble in, boots scuffling on the dirt.

INT. BEDROOM - CHICAGO TENAMENT - DAWN

Melvin Purvis sits up in bed, his wife asleep beside him. Through the cold window, he watches the outside world, wondering what it holds in store for him today.

INT. PRINTING PRESS - LOS ANGELES - EARLY MORNING

It's before dawn in the Los Angeles Examiner printing press.

A WORKER walks into the room, he flicks on the light. He sets down a set of plates by the machine.

The printing press TOWERS over the room, its potential for action awe-inspiring. It has the power to change policies, to affect politics, business, family life -- and all of that power is pregnant in its stillness.

MOMENTS LATER

Several workers set the plates into the machine. The presses are started.

They print the cover page:

A NEW PUBLIC ENEMY!

And beside it, LARGE, is CLAY'S MUGSHOT.

EXT. THE FILLING STATION - DAWN

The pale morning sun climbs over the hills of Eureka. The filling station is not yet open.

INT. BARN - MOMENTS LATER

CLAY (O.C.)
(quietly)
Garrett -

Garrett is fast asleep on the barn floor, a thin wool blanket clutched beneath his chin. Clay prods at his shoulder.

CLAY (O.C.)
Garrett. Wake up.

Garrett rouses, he casts a suspicious, sleepy eye on Clay. Who pushes a tin can of beans toward him. Clay whispers very quietly and Garrett follows suit:

CLAY
Where'd you go last night?

GARRETT
Last night? Nowhere.

CLAY

Nowhere? He took an awful long
shit.

GARRETT

I got lost, I didn't wanna yell.
Where's the reporter?

CLAY

He's sleeping.

GARRETT

You talk to him?

CLAY

He don't carry his half of a
conversation too well with his eyes
shut.

GARRETT

I'll wake him.

Garrett starts to get up. Clay puts a hand on his chest.

CLAY

We're gonna leave him here.

GARRETT

Here? In Eureka? We're not gonna
take him?

Clay just looks curious. Garrett, a fidgeting liar.

GARRETT (CONT'D)

That's good, I guess. He seemed,
last night, he was saying things -
I don't know if I trust him,
y'know?

CLAY

He said things? What'd he say?

GARRETT

He said things like, like he was,
well he didn't say anything,
actually. You just get that
feelin', where you can't trust
somebody?

Clay watches Garrett, who continues on, nervously -

GARRETT (CONT'D)

Are you gonna wake him?

CLAY

Eat up.

Garrett looks down at the beans. He starts greedily stuffing them into his mouth, like it might be his last meal.

Tom sleeps on the other side of the room.

CLOSE ON TOM:

Sleeping, Tom looks sickly and cold, a hangover pounding at his skull. He wakes and turns on his side.

THE BARN IS EMPTY. We realize now that it is much later than the previous scene - the sun has moved a great deal.

Just the flask sitting on the floor before Tom, like a farewell offering. He picks it up as -

He jumps to his feet, runs out of the barn. He pulls on his shoes - untied and barely clinging to his feet.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE BARN - CONTINUOUS

The car is gone, tire tracks leading away in the grass.

Tom starts running for -

INT. THE FILLING STATION

Tom bursts into the filling station office.

TOM

Where'd they go?

The attendant's mother looks up at him from the rocking chair in the corner. The baby is in her lap.

TOM (CONT'D)

Where did they go!? The men, the girl, the fucking dopes with guns! They buried a man in your backyard - Lady! Where did they go? Jesus Christ.

The baby is crying now.

TOM (CONT'D)

Lady!

She looks terrified, cupping the infant's ears.

CRASH! In a rage, Tom swipes the oil cans off the counter and they clatter over the floor. The baby screams its head off.

The attendant enters from outside -

ATTENDANT

What the hell's goin' on here?

TOM

Where'd they go?

ATTENDANT

You gonna pick that up?

TOM

Look, the men who stayed here last night. They've killed many people, they're bad men. They're running from the police and you let them go. You understand? I need to know where they're going, right now.

ATTENDANT

You're sayin' they killed people?

Tom grabs a newspaper off the stack by the door -

TOM

You see that?

He shoves the "BLOODBATH" headline in the attendant's face.

ATTENDANT

Yes I do.

MOTHER

They're goin' to Texas!

ATTENDANT

Ma!

TOM

Texas? That's it?

MOTHER

They just said Texas. That's all!

TOM

Your dress looks like a picnic table.

He exits.

EXT. THE FILLING STATION - CONTINUOUS

Tom walks out into the empty front lot. Looks east. Looks west. No hints of where the car might've gone.

He walks to the roadside. Not a car in sight. Stranded.

He reaches into his pocket but something makes him grimace. There is a mess on his hand, he tries to wipe it off but suddenly realizes -

He takes the metal flask back out of his pocket. On its back, written by finger dipped in MESSY BEANS, is part of a word:

'CPFEDE'

Tom traces his finger back across where his own hand smudged it, and recreates what was originally written...

'CREEDE' - scrawled in a crude hand. Garrett's.

CUT TO:

EXT. ALLEY - CHICAGO - DAY

A shadowed Chicago alley. Fire escapes and trash cans.

A YOUNG BOY

BANG! BANG! Stop running I got you!

A GAP-TOOTHED BOY

No you didn't!

The gap-toothed boy runs to the edge of the alley where -

THUD!

EXT. HOT DOG CART - CHICAGO - CONTINUOUS

He bumps into Melvin Purvis at a sidewalk hot dog cart. Melvin sees the wooden toy gun in the boy's hand.

MELVIN PURVIS

Uh oh. Are you a police officer?

A GAP-TOOTHED BOY

Freeze!

Melvin plays along, putting up his hands.

A GAP-TOOTHED BOY
Hand it over. I'm Clay Dering!

Melvin drops his hands, play time's over. Conrad Hall smirks as Melvin pays the HOT DOG VENDOR.

MELVIN PURVIS
Go play somewhere else, son.

CONRAD HALL
Everyone knows 'em. Forget bein' a movie star, just rob a bank, kill a couple cops. Say aren't you worried you might be feeding the beast?

MELVIN PURVIS
You gotta feed the beast before you kill it.

Conrad receives his hot dog, they start walking.

MELVIN PURVIS
Hoover wants my job. The man says I've become a liability.

CONRAD HALL
You think that's maybe true?

MELVIN PURVIS
If he wants my job he can come take it from me.

EXT. CHICAGO FBI OFFICE BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Just as Melvin is about to open the door to the Chicago field office building, another AGENT bursts out -

THE OTHER AGENT
Mel! You got a phone call.

They lock eyes. The agent is out of breath.

CUT TO:

INT. CHICAGO FBI OFFICE - PHONE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Melvin sits at a desk, the receiver gripped tight to his ear, he looks across at the AGENT who mans a huge REEL TO REEL WIRE RECORDER. Melvin waits a moment, the agent RECORDS...

MELVIN PURVIS

Hello?

EXT. FILLING STATION - SIMULTANEOUS

Tom Pickett is on a wood-mounted payphone outside the filling station. We INTERCUT between Purvis and Tom as they speak:

TOM

Hello.

MELVIN PURVIS

Who's this?

TOM

Is this Melvin Purvis?

MELVIN PURVIS

Who's this?

TOM

This is Tom Pickett.

MELVIN PURVIS

What're you calling about, Tom?

TOM

Well, Mel, if I've got you on the line you must know what I'm calling about already.

MELVIN PURVIS

...Where are you calling from?

TOM

(dry)

A phone booth.

Melvin pauses. He doesn't much like talking with asses, but he does like *outsmarting them*. Tom listens close -

... the recorder hums and grinds as the reels spin ...

TOM

You want me to sing a song?

Melvin looks at the agent at the wire recorder, he points at the man's coat, the man looks confused...

Finally Melvin grabs his own coat off the seat back, hands it to the agent and indicates to him that he should -

COVER THE MACHINE WITH THE JACKET. He does. Tom just hears *silence* on the line.

MELVIN PURVIS

Mr. Pickett. What are you calling for?

TOM

I know where Clay Dering's going.

MELVIN PURVIS

(*yeah right*)

Is that right, where's he going?

TOM

It sounds like you don't believe me. I mean, it's a bit like a boy telling his father he doesn't believe in Santa Claus and then asking, "Where are the presents?"

MELVIN PURVIS

I think you should consider whether you want to waste my time right now.

TOM

Clay Dering has three accomplices: two men and a teenaged girl. One's drunk, one's crazy, one's fifteen. He has pale eyes; a strong chin that's a little cleft; thick eyebrows; straight dirty hair; he's got a scar on his neck about as wide as a pinky, he also has a dark birthmark just below his right eye. Yesterday he was in Lennock, Nevada, he killed three men who wanted your reward very badly. You can stop recording now, I'm really not going to tell you anything you don't already know.

...

TOM (CONT'D)

Mel, how quickly can you have some of these backwood cops pick me up and take me to a train station?

Melvin looks around the room: Conrad Hall, a few agents. The air is thick and stale, hard to breathe.

MELVIN PURVIS

I don't know, Tom. I'm not sure the police want to be your car service.

TOM (CONT'D)

That's too bad. Cause once I'm on that train, you'll know where I'm going.

MELVIN PURVIS

And I suppose you want the reward?

TOM

Well, I'm not gonna laugh at two-thousand dollars. But I want to be there for the shootout. I want exclusive photographs. And I assume you'll give me an interview as well, is that right?

Tom pops a mint in his mouth. He watches a mangy dog walk into and out of the road. No cars in sight just now.

MELVIN PURVIS

You could tell me where they're going now and I'll meet you there.

TOM

Let's not ruin the surprise, Mel. I'm at the Socal gas pumps off Squire Road in Eureka, Nevada.

...

MELVIN PURVIS

I'll see you soon, Tom.

TOM

See you soon, Mel.

Click.

CUT TO:

I/E. TOM'S CAR - ON THE ROAD TO CREEDE - LATE IN THE DAY

The car is lightly rumbling on the road. Sarah's asleep in the backseat, next to Clay. Clay looks out at *the Rockies*.

A majestic sight. Nature abounds. Great distant stone peaks towering over an untouchable expanse of white. Clay is close enough to taste it.

Jack drives. Garrett stares at the dashboard, lost inside.

CLAY (V.O.)
Garrett... Garrett.

SMASH CUT TO:

I/E. TOM'S FORD - PARKED OUTSIDE AN INN - EVENING

It is dusk. Garrett is asleep in the front seat. Everyone else is getting out of the parked car.

CLAY (CONT'D)
Garrett.

He wakes.

CLAY
Get us a room, alright?

GARRETT
(groggily)
You could say please once in a while, y'know.

CLAY
Just get a room with some beds. And take Sarah with you. Don't give 'em your name.

Garrett stares at Clay, an icy disobedience.

SARAH
Where are you going?

CLAY
I'm goin' someplace I don't want you to go.

Before them:

CREEDE at dusk. A lightly frosted street, dangling electric lights begin to glow, and the street is full of activity.

CUT TO:

INT. INN - NIGHT

Garrett and Sarah walk into the small inn, Garrett hides the rifle behind his back as he stutters in.

GARRETT

We need a room.

The INN KEEPER (55) behind the desk looks at Garrett with a judging eye - after all, it looks like a nearly forty year-old man is bedding an adolescent.

INN KEEPER

Two?

GARRETT

What are you makin' faces about?
How much is it?

INN KEEPER

Five dollars a night.

GARRETT

We'll pay you in the morning.

The inn keeper is noticeably unhappy about that arrangement, but the glimpse of the rifle and the wild glint in Garrett's eye keep him in silent agreement.

GARRETT

Key?

The Inn Keeper slides him a key.

INN KEEPER

Upstairs, first on your left.

Garrett waits for Sarah to walk, then follows her upstairs. The inn keeper watches suspiciously.

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOME - TAVERN - BAR

Clay and Jack are at the bar in THE HOME - Annie's new workplace. The room is rowdy, smoke-filled and loud. Pale thighs hiding behind short skirts, flirtatious smiles...

CLAY

I'm lookin' for Annie.

The BARTENDER (30s) is sweaty, unshaven, looks like he's been working since dawn.

JACK

Whiskey sour.

The bartender pours as he talks -

BARTENDER
Annie? Remind me.

CLAY
Dark hair, she's got a pretty face.

And Jack starts eagerly drinking the whiskey sour.

BARTENDER
Well, that could describe just
about anyone. All we got is pretty
faces, half of 'em got dark hair.

CLAY
She's half-indian.

A flash of recognition. The bartender looks down at the bar
for an untraceable instant -

BARTENDER
Nah, she i'nt here. Can I get ya a
drink?

Clay looks down at the RED HANDKERCHIEF on the bar.

CLAY
What was that?

BARTENDER
Nothin'.

The bartender turns to walk away, but Clay lunges out and
grabs him by the shirt. Drunks at the bar turn to look.

Clay just looks the man dead in the eyes.

JACK
Clay, he don't know 'er.

CLAY
I'm in a very delicate state.

A WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
You're looking for Annie?

Clay turns to see THE MATRON behind the bar. He releases his
deathgrip. The matron's smoky voice is a slow poison.

THE MATRON
She's not here.

CLAY
Where is she?

THE MATRON
I don't know, honey. The fact is,
Annie never came. All I got was a
letter saying she'd decided to look
elsewhere and would in fact *not* be
coming to Creede.

Clay's heart sinks.

THE MATRON (CONT'D)
I guess she felt life had bigger
things in store for her.
(beat)
...There are some quieter bars
across the street.

Jack downs the rest of his drink.

Clay looks around the room. The people seem alien, from some
place where it makes sense to smile and laugh and be merry.

LILA, the girl who enthusiastically greeted Annie when she
first arrived, watches from afar.

And now Clay has fixated on the GRANDFATHER CLOCK. It's
pendulum goes -

TICK... TICK... TICK... the sound continues over:

INT. TRAIN - RIO GRANDE LINE - NIGHT

A SLOW ZOOM ON: Tom. Sitting on the train. Eager and content.
His camera sits next to him, his only friend.

INT. CHICAGO FBI OFFICE - NIGHT

TICK... TICK... TICK... is all we hear as:

Melvin rounds up his men, giving orders. Agents are putting
on coats. It's night, but the day is just beginning.

INT. A POOL HALL BAR - CREEDE - NIGHT

WE MOVE SLOWLY IN ON: A man's back at the lively Creede bar.
His shoulders drooped, his coat dirty.

It's Garrett. He looks shiftily about at the people having a grand time around him. An untouched whiskey in front of him. And he watches the radio, its glowing, pulsing light.

TICK... TICK... TICK...

He holds the gun tight at his waist, and a drunk PATRON bumps into him. We can see the patron's mouth move:

PATRON (SILENT)
Watch where you're goin', asshole.

Garrett is a kettle about to boil. *TICK... TICK... TICK...*

And then SILENCE.

CUT TO:

INT. INN - LATE NIGHT

Midnight. Jack stumbles up the stairs, Clay sober behind him. Jack is five drinks past oblivion.

He slugs from a METAL FLASK as they reach the top of the stairs. But Clay has stopped several steps behind.

JACK
What's a matter?

CLAY
(re: the flask)
Where'd you get that?

JACK
Pawned it off the bar.

CLAY
Let me see it.

Jack hands Clay the flask. Clay looks at it, tips it back, and drinks. Not stopping... drinking like a camel.

JACK
See, you don't need no cunt. You got your friends. And we're gonna survive all this together.

Clay lumbers up the final few steps. Jack looks at the doors, not sure which is right. He stops by the door nearest him.

JACK
Garrett?

For good measure, he grabs the door knob. It opens with ease.

INT. BEDROOM - THE HUMBLE INN - CONTINUOUS

The room is dark. Empty.

JACK
Wrong room.

He's about to close the door, when he hears something:

CRYING.

There is a dark shape in the corner, by the wall. Clay flicks on the light.

SARAH IS ALONE IN A CHAIR AGAINST THE WALL.

CLAY
Where's Garrett?

No answer.

CLAY
Sarah.

She turns to look at him. Her right eye is bruised badly. Clay's face goes *mean* in an instant.

CLAY
Where'd he go?

SARAH
I don't know.

CLAY
He take the guns?

SARAH
I don't know.

Clay comes and puts an arm around her, she clings to him.

CLAY
What he do to you?
(beat)
It doesn't matter.

SARAH
You smell like whiskey.

He turns his face away from her and looks at Jack, who is staring dumbfounded from across the room. Sarah's hair is soft beneath Clay's chin, it feels good to hold a young woman so close. Then, faintly, from downstairs they hear -

A DOOR OPENING.

Clay stands up and walks to the door.

FOOTSTEPS COMING UP THE STAIRS.

Garrett comes up into the hall.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL - THE HUMBLE INN - CONTINUOUS

Clay confronts him outside the room. Garrett seems wired.

GARRETT
(a cheshire grin)
We're on the radio.

CLAY
Where you been?

GARRETT
Don't you wanna know what they
said? We're Public Enemy Number
One. Walter Winchell called us a
gang!

Garrett starts to walk toward the room. Clay puts a hand up to block him. And Garrett begins a confession:

GARRETT
Clay... I'm in trouble.

CLAY
Are ya?

GARRETT
I got into a scrap.

Garrett shows Clay his hand, his knuckles are bleeding.

CLAY
Is that it?

GARRETT
Yeah, hey, could I sit down?

Garrett takes a step but Clay grabs him by the collar and shoves him backward til he HITS THE WALL HARD.

GARRETT

Alright! What gives? Don't push me!

CLAY

Don't *push* you!?

As he talks, Clay shakes Garrett, shoving him against the wall twice more.

Garrett pulls the REVOLVER and points it in Clay's face. Clay glares at him - all trust lost. *CLICK* - he pulls back the hammer.

The door opens down the hall. An INN CUSTOMER (40) comes out of his room dressed in a night gown, ready to complain, that is until he sees the gun in Clay's face and promptly slinks back in his room, LOCKING THE DOOR.

GARRETT

I said don't push me.

CLAY

Some pal.

GARRETT

They wouldn't believe me. They wouldn't believe it was my gang. You know what they called us? The Dering Gang. The Clay Dering Gang. How do you think that makes me feel?

CLAY

Pull the trigger. You fuckin' coward.

For a good long while, Garrett holds the gun under Clay's nose and for a good long while, Clay stares at Garrett.

Until Garrett lowers the gun, losing courage.

Clay takes it.

A tense silence.

CLAY

What you do to Sarah?

Garrett's clueless. Clay searches his eyes. Sarah watches as -

Clay CLOCKS Garrett in the face with the gun. BAM! Again and again - Garrett falls back to the ground, bleeding.

Clay is still on him, hitting him.

CLAY

You don't touch her, y'understand!?

Garrett catches Clay across the face, Clay bats him away -

GARRETT

(catching his breath)

I didn't touch her!

Clay raises the revolver again, pointing at Garrett -

GARRETT

Clay!

(beat)

I didn't touch that girl, Clay! Who d'you think I am? She was actin' a bitch, so I shut her in and told her to stay put.

CLAY

That's all you did, huh?

GARRETT

She said you was gonna get married. She was actin' a bitch, Clay. She said I was too stupid to keep with you.

CLAY

So you struck her? Fifteen year old girl?

Garrett looks genuinely confused.

GARRETT

I didn't struck her.

CLAY

You got that bloody knuckle.

GARRETT

I got into a bad scrap, I told ya!

Clay looks back into the room at Sarah. She looks away, caught lying. He stands, letting go of Garrett and the gun.

Garrett feels the blood flowing from his nose. It's slick and inky on his fingertips. He looks at the gun on the floor, all by itself.

Clay collects his senses, picks up the gun and walks back into the room.

Garrett gets up, shaky on his feet and walks in the door.

As he does, Jack offers him the flask. He doesn't take it.

Clay stands next to Sarah, puts his hand on her face, he thumbs at the bruise beneath her eye. It smudges.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - THE HUMBLE INN - LATER

GARRETT

I hit 'em. I hit 'em with the gun.
I hit 'em with my fists. And I kept
hittin' 'em til I couldn't see no
face no more. On account of the
blood and his nose was broke, I
think. Some of his friends was
watching, but I think maybe they
didn't wanna come on, cause I had
the gun.

Clay sits in a chair by the window, his head in his hands.
Garrett sits on a trunk, hands folded, while Jack leans
against the wall and Sarah hugs her knees on the bed.

CLAY

How many friends did he have?

GARRETT

The place was mostly full.

CLAY

You tell 'em all you were in a
gang?

Garrett looks down. The answer is yes. Clay gulps the metal
flask again. He's getting drunk.

He looks at Sarah. She looks away.

GARRETT

Where's Annie?

Garrett looks from Clay to Jack, who shakes his head.

CLAY

Sun's comin' up. I ain't even
tired.

It's quiet.

The pale, haunting light of a winter dawn creeps over the street outside. Everyone allows Clay quiet to think.

THE SOUND OF THE INN DOOR OPENING DOWNSTAIRS. SEVERAL HEAVY-BOOTED FOOTSTEPS.

Clay is alert. The footsteps grow in number. Clay opens the revolver's chamber, checking the bullets. But something catches his attention:

One of the bullets has been fired. Clay pulls out the empty casing and looks over at Garrett, piecing it together. He gets up, crosses the room and reaches into Jack's coat.

He fishes out some bullets. Puts some in his pocket and pops one in the revolving chamber.

The empty casing drops to the ground.

The footsteps are getting louder - and there's *WHISPERING*.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL - THE HUMBLE INN - DAWN

Clay sneaks to the top of the stairs. As he gets there -

A MAN WITH A BEARD (30s) is stepping onto the bottom steps, he looks up and makes eye contact with Clay -

Clay points the gun -

The man quickly backs off the stairs and out of sight -

THE FOOTSTEPS AND WHISPERING STOP.

CLAY
Who's there?

Quiet...

INT. DC 3 AIRPLANE - MIDAIR - DAY

A MAN in a ruffled black wool suit sits on a shakey DC-3 airplane. The plane is shaking like a tin can. The man's leg twitches, antsy. In the seat behind him:

Melvin Purvis. Melvin is serene in comparison. He looks out the window, just a cloudy fog. There is a gun in a holster on the seat next to him.

K-THUMP! The wheels touch ground, every other agent is clutching his seat in terror. Melvin has been through it before. He waits.

The cockpit door opens.

MELVIN PURVIS

Alright men. You're all alive. But despite how you may feel, this was not the most dangerous part of trip.

The agents laugh nervously.

MELVIN PURVIS (CONT'D)

Let's go get 'em.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL - THE HUMBLE INN - SAME

Clay looks down the stairs, the revolver clutched in his trigger hand.

CLAY

I said who's there?

A MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Who's askin'?

CLAY

This is Clay Dering.

DEAD QUIET.

CLAY (CONT'D)

You know who I am?

EVEN QUIETER.

Jack, Garrett and Sarah watch him... Clay slowly sets his foot on the first step of the staircase. It *CREAKS*.

He steps again -

THE SHUFFLING OF FEET DOWNSTAIRS.

Pointing the gun, he comes down several more steps, and peeks around the corner. He sees legs, boots, he peeks further...

SEVEN MEN in the lobby. ONE of them looks bruised, battered.

A POSSE.

The men hold rifles and shotguns.

Clay comes around the corner, the gun down at his side -

INT. LOBBY - THE HUMBLE INN - CONTINUOUS

He faces them directly. They don't fire. Or move.

ONE AT A TIME, WE SEE THE MEN DOWNSTAIRS IN CLOSE UP:

They are shaky, sweaty, anxious. Barrel-chested men of strong working stock. The beaten one has a swollen jaw and scabbing lips, his nose is broken. He looks at Clay through bloodshot green eyes.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL - THE HUMBLE INN - SAME

Jack is in the hallway now, quietly watching Clay below.

And Garrett and Sarah watch Jack from the room, Sarah's heart beating like a jack rabbit's.

INT. LOBBY - THE HUMBLE INN - SAME

Clay speaks slowly.

CLAY

You don't know the first thing
about death. But you're all scared
of it.

Clay steps down off the stairs, and walks slowly...

A BEARDED MAN

Stay where you are!

Clay keeps walking... to the beaten man.

CLAY

You angry?

The man glares. Yes. Angry.

CLAY (CONT'D)

Me too.

Clay looks around the room at the men, making eye contact with them. Their hands are on their guns. Twitchy, nervous. He has their fear and respect.

BANG! The beaten man crumples forward toward Clay - his knee has been shot out. Clay grabs him, holding him up - he digs the revolver into his gut. The man is *SCREAMING IN AGONY*.

CLAY

Do you want me to kill him or do
you wanna leave?

ONE OF THE MEN

Let 'em go!

CLAY

I can't do that. Put down your guns
if y'all don't wanna die. Put 'em
down.

He starts walking toward the men, pushing the beaten man. One by one, the men put their guns down and file out backwards.

CLAY

(to the screaming man)
You're gonna be alright.

He walks him toward the open door, helps him to sit down outside. He points the gun at the posse on the street.

CLAY

Get back!

He quickly stalks back in, shutting the door.

The inn keeper, still in pajamas, peeks carefully out of the door behind the lobby desk. He makes eye contact with Clay and shuts the door.

INT. THE HOME - BEDROOM

Annie finishes peeling last night's makeup from her face. She looks in the mirror, and yet can't seem to see herself.

INT. THE HOME - TAVERN

Annie descends the steps into the parlor. The room is a husk of what it was last night. And Annie approaches Lila, who sits alone, looking puffy, a mug of hot chocolate in her hand. Lila looks at Annie without even saying good morning:

LILA

He was here last night.

ANNIE
Who was here last night?

LILA
Clay Dering.

And Lila flips the newspaper in her hand.

Clay's sour face in black and white.

I/E. DODGE TRUCK - MOVING - MORNING

Melvin Purvis sits in the backseat of a sturdy 1934 Dodge. Four other agents in the truck. He looks out at the buildings as the car pulls into Creede. There is an anticipation in the air, nobody talking, but everyone's mind racing.

The car slows to a stop. Melvin looks ahead.

There is a man in the street. Blood flowing down his leg, soaking into the snow at his feet. TWO MEN are helping him away from the door of THE HUMBLE INN. ANOTHER FOUR MEN watch and walk alongside. After a moment's hesitation:

MELVIN PURVIS
Hide your guns.

Melvin gets out of the car, the other agents with him. The driver stays behind and parks a few feet ahead.

EXT. STREET - CREEDE - CONTINUOUS

Melvin and company carry their RIFLES and TOMMY GUNS at their sides, hidden behind long coats. They cross to the corner shop, casing the bloody man and his six friends.

As TWO KIND CITIZENS rush out of a building to the bleeding man's aid, Melvin realizes the man's not one of the killers.

Melvin looks at inn. The blood stained snow in front of it.

MELVIN PURVIS
The Humble Inn.

EXT. RIO GRANDE RAIL DEPOT - MOMENTS LATER

Tom walks down the train platform with his camera, typewriter case and a bag. He looks at -

The horse tied to a post by the stable, staring back at him. Tom braces himself against the cold. And walks.

It's beginning to snow. Already four inches on the ground.

EXT. STREET - MOMENTS LATER

As Tom walks, he sees the SHERIFF'S STATION across the street. A MAN IN A COAT smokes casually outside. Good. Tom hasn't missed anything.

EXT. THE HOME - SAME

Annie steps out of the home wrapping a scarf around her neck. The snow is falling. A gentle, cascading dance of fat, descending flakes. Beautiful. But the beauty is lost on her.

She hurries down the street. Passing right by a bridal shop.

A WEDDING DRESS in the window.

INT. THE HUMBLE INN - SAME

Clay's face is mean. He's sitting by the door staring at the pot-bellied stove in the corner of the room. A glowing ember is dying inside, coal gray at the edges, but a fiery heat at its heart, the will to remain alight.

CLAY

We should've never left home.
That's where Will would've wanted
to be buried.

Jack. Garrett. Sarah. Staring at him. The gun in his hand.

CLAY (CONT'D)

I don't care who we have to kill.
Nobody's gonna tell me where I can
and can't live. Or what I can and
cannot have. I'll settle in
Oklahoma, where men have nothing
and are happy for it. We're
entitled to our way of life. And I
will take others' to keep it.

The bloody stain in the middle of the room.

Clay stands, puts the revolver in his coat and picks up one of the discarded rifles on the ground. Garrett picks up another rifle. Glad to finally have one.

EXT. STREET - OUTSIDE THE INN - SAME

The agents have fanned out on the street. One breathes clouds of vapor into the air as he leans against a shop window, his eyes on the inn. Another leans against the wall of the building next to the inn, hand on his gun.

The snow falls silently...

Melvin stands behind the car, now parked in front of the closed saloon across the street. He pretends to read a newspaper. He looks up as he sees -

Tom walks down the eerily empty street. He sees a trail of blood ahead, leading from a big crimson stain outside THE HUMBLE INN to the buildings across the street. A few men in black coats stand suspiciously in the vicinity. Tom sees -

Annie rounding a nearby corner and turning onto the same street. She's in a hurry on the other side of the street. But she slows and looks in horror at the blood stains.

And Tom's smile fades as this is all becoming real. Not content and eager now but anxious, tense.

The agents' hands all itch at their guns.

INT. THE HUMBLE INN - SAME

Jack looks out the lobby window. Through the warped glass he can see:

An empty street, a parked car, a man reading a newspaper.

JACK
Nobody, Clay.

Clay opens the door...

EXT. STREET - OUTSIDE THE INN

Melvin watches. Tom and Annie look at the inn.

The door opens...

Clay steps out first -

Eyes open. Guns up. Clay sees motion across the street.

Tom and Annie register his face - *IT'S CLAY*. But he doesn't see them as -

BANG! RAT-A-TAT-A-TAT!

First a rifle and then a Tommy gun fire from Clay's left. Clay ducks and aims the rifle back through falling snow -

BANG!

He falls back inside, Jack shutting the door behind him.

Annie runs toward the inn, a scream trying to come out.

INT. THE HUMBLE INN - SAME

Jack and Sarah immediately hurry to Clay's side. Clay touches his chest, his stomach, checking to see if he's been shot.

His leg is bleeding all over the floor, a bullet torn into his calf. Sarah clutches him, kissing his forehead.

He gets up on his bad leg and hurries to the back of the inn, Jack ahead of him. Panic has set in.

MEANWHILE, OUTSIDE

An agent runs alongside the house toward the backyard. He carries a shotgun.

INSIDE

Jack opens the back door, stepping out.

OUTSIDE - CONTINUOUS

He sees the agent coming around the building on his right, raises the handgun -

BANG! BANG!

The agent falls into the snow - *KA-BOOM!* His shotgun fires into the air.

A woman looks out of her bedroom window from across the way.

EXT. STREET - OUTSIDE THE INN

Annie runs along the sidewalk, trying to look into the backyard.

ANNIE
CLAY! CLAY!

Tom watches her run, his eyes taking in everything: the agents, Annie, the pedestrians further down the street.

Melvin Purvis meanwhile runs alongside the buildings, trying to flank and catch Clay's gang on the other side.

INT. THE HUMBLE INN

Garrett has frozen in place in the inn. He watches Clay, Jack and Sarah run off in the snow. He is breathing rapidly, shocked. He turns around and walks back through the inn.

It is oddly quiet.

The inn owner is at the bottom of the stairs, finally having come out of his room to look around. He stops at the sight of Garrett, blood and five rifles laying on the lobby floor.

DING... DING... DING... the town clock tower rings out in the distance...

EXT. BEHIND THE BUILDINGS - SAME

DING... DING... DING...

Clay turns as he trudges through the snow. No one behind them. Garrett is gone. He continues running and they come to a wooden fence.

They must run alongside it...

DING... DING... DING...

The clock tower stops. Quiet now.

They turn, running along the back of the fence, toward a side street ahead. Jack is well ahead now, Clay still dragging a bleeding, shot-up calf. Sarah stays with Clay, trying desperately to drag him along.

SARAH
Come on!

JACK
Clay!

CLAY
Go on! GO ON!

The snow is collecting in Clay's hair. His face has gone pale and cold. Jack considers stopping for a moment but runs on, leaving Sarah and Clay.

ALONGSIDE THE BUILDING

Jack turns left to run along the small space between two buildings. Up ahead, in the street, he spots -

TOM PICKETT.

JACK
Hey!

He raises his revolver. Tom freezes.

EXT. STREET - OUTSIDE THE INN

Garrett walks out the front door of the inn. No one around to see him. He's in no great hurry to get away. He moves slowly, numb like a battered dog.

EXT. BEHIND THE BUILDINGS

Clay and Sarah move through the backyards. Clay's breathing is labored, every step is agony. She turns to him -

About to tell him to hurry, but instead her eyes go wide -

Clay turns as an AGENT rounds the fence behind them -

BANG! Clay fires.

The agent ducks against the fence, not wanting to fire with the young girl there. Clay can sense this.

CLAY
Get down, Sarah.

Sarah ducks in the snow. Clay aims -

The agent raises the tommy gun -

BANG!

The agent is hit in the thigh.

RAT-A-TAT-A-TAT! He fires wildly, peppering the house nearby -

BANG! Clay shoots again. The agent crumples in the snow. The falling flakes already starting to build a blanket for him.

He pulls the trigger again - *CLICK*.

EXT. STREET - OUTSIDE THE INN

Garrett is standing in the middle of the street. Two agents approach him, guns drawn.

Garrett turns and starts running, the agents give chase -

THE FIRST AGENT

Freeze!

And Garrett's foot catches on the curb hidden under the snow, he trips, the rifle pointed up, right at his chin and -

BANG!

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET

Jack approaches Tom, pointing the revolver. He grabs Tom by the scruff of the neck and starts walking him forward, a hostage.

JACK

You think I need a hostage this time?

TOM

I think you need more than a hostage.

ON A SIDE STREET

Clay runs with Sarah close behind him, just the revolver in his hand. They emerge onto a side street.

Clay spots a heavily snow-covered car ahead and runs for it.

He reaches forward and wipes the snow -

Revealing the window underneath.

He wipes away more, finds the handle, tugs at it.

Frozen. He tugs again... a third time -

CRACK. It opens.

CLAY

Get in.

SARAH

No.

CLAY

Get in!

He pushes her inside the car.

She looks in his eyes: desperate, afraid.

CLAY

Stay in the car, Sarah.

(short of breath)

Stay in the car.

(beat)

Sarah... You are pretty.

He shuts the door. She looks out at him.

SARAH

No!

Clay bangs at the door handle with the butt of his handgun. He hits it again and again until it BENDS -

Sarah tugs desperately at the door, it won't budge.

SARAH (MUFFLED)

I don't wanna stay in the car!

Clay! Let me out! I don't wanna

stay in the car!

Leaning against the door, Clay fishes bullets from his pocket.

His fingers are nearly too frozen with cold to slide them into the chamber. But he does. The snow falls all around him, burying everything in sight.

He looks down, his boot filling with blood.

ANNIE (O.S.)

CLAY!

Clay perks up. His heart flooding.

EXT. HOUSES

Jack walks Tom forward at a fast clip. Tom's camera swings in his hand.

JACK
How'd you find us?

TOM
I'm good at what I do, Jack, and
that makes one of us. I can get you
out of here.

JACK
Yeah? I heard that before.

TOM
I'm your only way out. You have to
trust me.

JACK
Where are we supposed to go?

TOM
Turn around.

Tom leads Jack back in the other direction.

I/E. THE SNOW-COVERED CAR

Sarah tugs at the car door, it won't give. She's sobbing -

EXT. THE STREET

Clay is dozens of feet away, limping through the snow.

CLAY
Annie!

Silence.

CLAY (CONT'D)
Annie!

ANNIE (O.S.)
Where are you!?

EXT. ANOTHER STREET

Annie drags herself forward through the heavy snow, her hair a mess, her clothes soaked.

ANNIE

Clay?

EXT. BETWEEN BUILDINGS

CLAY (O.S.)

I'm here!

Melvin Purvis hears Clay's voice and changes his course. He's out of breath, his lungs burning in the icy air.

EXT. SIDEWALK

Tom looks anxious as he leads Jack along the sidewalk. Jack's eyes are darting every which way. They're approaching a snow covered rocking chair ahead.

TOM

Go in here.

They turn right, open the door -

INT. SHERIFF'S STATION - CONTINUOUS

Tom and Jack walk right into the Sheriff's station that Tom passed earlier.

The SHERIFF is inside, throwing on a coat, his DEPUTY beside him - *looking right at Tom and Jack.*

Jack turns but -

The OFFICER by the door already has a revolver aimed at him.

Jack drops the rifle and puts up his hands, glaring at Tom. Tom wears a shit-eating grin.

EXT. THE STREET

Clay stumbles forward through the deluge of snow.

ANNIE (O.S.)

Clay!

He holds the revolver with a weakening grip.

I/E. THE SNOW-COVERED CAR

Sarah kicks the door -

She pulls at the handle again, and while holding it back,
KICKS again.

She's stuck. She starts to cry.

EXT. THE STREET

Clay collapses against the side of a building. He leans
against it, sitting on his ass in the snow outside a small
grocery store.

He holds his bleeding leg. His hand is covered in the blood.

CRUNCH... CRUNCH -

Approaching footsteps -

Clay turns, pointing the gun -

BANG!

He fires -

A POSTAL DELIVERY MAN falls in the snow, clutching the wound
in his gut. Clay looks at him in shame. Just an innocent man
on his way to work.

CRUNCH CRUNCH CRUNCH -

Hurried footsteps approaching from the other direction. But
Clay doesn't take his eyes off the mailman for a second...

The approaching footsteps belong to -

ANNIE. She sees the blood-stained snow around Clay, hurries
to him, drops to her knees and embraces him.

THE STREET

Annie caresses Clay's face. He stares, exhausted, into her
eyes, at her fingertips and her lips. He's weak in every way.

ANNIE

Get up.

CLAY
You smell good.

She kisses him. Starts to help him up, he can barely stand.

THE STREET

Annie and Clay round the corner onto the side street. She supports his weight as he limps along as quickly as he can.

Sarah watches from inside the car as they pass her, tears staining her red face.

THE STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Melvin Purvis and AN AGENT round the corner moments after Annie and Clay have walked off.

They spot -

The CAR with the window wiped clear.

They stalk toward it, guns raised.

As Melvin is about to fire, he can see a girl's hair through the window.

Sarah is laying against the window, sobbing. Not at all what Melvin was expecting.

He peeks inside, sees that Sarah's alone in there.

And he follows the footsteps that lead from the car.

OUTSIDE THE STABLE

Annie helps Clay drag himself toward the stable next to the Rio Grande train station.

INSIDE THE STATION

The large stable door opens as Annie and Clay enter.

THREE HORSES sleep inside - including the horse that watched Annie and Tom arrive at the station.

Annie hurries around the room, searching for something -

She grabs a wool horse blanket off the workbench and wraps it around Clay's shoulder.

ANNIE
Hold this, hold it.

She heaves a saddle onto one of the horses. Looks at Clay, who looks tired, just watching her.

ANNIE
You help now. You don't give up.

She points him to another saddle, hanging over a bench.

He gathers his strength, picks it up, puts it on the horse. He fastens the saddle to the horse as Annie fastens the other saddle to her horse.

Clay picks up the horse blanket he's dropped and hugs it tight around his shoulders.

CLAY
I'm cold. Let's just lay here.

ANNIE
Get on that horse.

She helps him up onto the horse, goes to open the stable door, keeping an eye on the street outside.

THE STREET OUTSIDE THE STABLE

Melvin runs. The stable is far down the street ahead.

IN THE STABLE

Clay watches as Annie climbs onto the other horse.

She readies her horse by the door, waiting for Clay to go.

CLAY
(to the horse)
C'mon now. Git.

The horse lopes lazily over to the stable door, not really listening to Clay so much of moving of its own accord.

Clay pushes the revolver deeper into his belt, so it sticks close to him and won't fall out. He holds the reins in one hand, the blanket in the other.

CLAY
(to the horse)
Alright, you filthy animal.

OUTSIDE

And Melvin is almost to the cracked open stable door...

INSIDE

Clay nudges the horse with his boot. It won't move.
He raises his boot, and gives it a good, HARD KICK -
The horse takes off out of the stable -
Annie kicks her horse and follows -

OUTSIDE

SLAM! The door blasts opens, the horse's body beating it hard. It swings toward Melvin, kicking up snow and -

BANG!

Melvin fires into the door, Clay and Annie flying out on horseback.

BANG!

Melvin fires again as they gallop away. He runs around the door, trying to get a better shot.

And they're already fifty yards away.

EXT. RAIL LINES/SNOW

Clay and Annie ride away along the snow-covered rail lines. The snow trickles away...

EXT. STREET - LATER

Until the snowing has stopped completely.

Garrett's body lies nearly frozen, his head just a splattering of blood and tissue, half-buried in snow.

CLICK.

Tom Pickett snaps a photo from his tripod.

A TRIO OF CHILDREN run through the street bundled in winter clothing, dragging sleds behind them.

PEOPLE stand in snowed-in doorways, looking out.

I/E. THE SNOW-COVERED CAR

Sarah holds herself in a ball on the car seat as -

An agent tears open the door on the other side.

EXT. CREEDE, COLORADO - MORNING

The sun shines on Creede, melting away the snow and ice.

CUT TO:

INT. ROADSIDE DINER - DAY

A grease-pan diner. Eggs and pancakes served all day.

In bold white, a title appears at the bottom of the screen:

TOPEKA, KANSAS

Clay and Annie are eating a breakfast of pancakes and maple syrup. Clay wears sunglasses as he smiles at Annie.

Annie puts a hand to his face, feels his cheek. She's wearing a RING on her ring finger.

WAITRESS

Coffee?

ANNIE

No thank you.

WAITRESS

Sir?

CLAY

I'm alright. Excuse me.

Clay gets up, taps the waitress on the shoulder before she gets too far.

CLAY

Bathroom?

She points down the restaurant, where a short hall leads around a corner.

Clay walks toward the hall.

He looks outside as he walks. Two BLACK FORD MODEL A CARS parked at the GAS PUMPS outside.

He pays them no mind, rounds the corner.

As he does -

The BACK EXIT opens in front of him and a MAN DRESSED IN BLACK walks in. He makes eye contact with Clay.

Clay knows.

He turns, looks at Annie -

She's being spoken to by TWO MEN DRESSED IN BLACK.

Clay turns back -

BANG! BANG!

Two shots. One hits him in the chest, one in the gut, piercing his liver. Other DINERS cry out in shock -

Clay falls back against the cigarette machine.

Annie leaps to her feet but is detained by the agents. She SCREAMS - unable to move, unable to be near Clay as -

Clay stares blankly forward. He breathes slowly, each breath coming further and further apart...

Until he breathes his last.

Melvin Purvis stands next to the OWNER of the diner, watching Clay die.

INT. CLASSROOM - COLORADO SPRINGS - DAY

Sarah sits in a classroom in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

She sits, disinterested, as her OTHER CLASSMATES answer the TEACHER's questions about the Revolutionary War.

INT. LOS ANGELES EXAMINER - DAY

Tom Pickett walks past several desks in the Los Angeles Examiner building. Heads turn as he -

Walks into his new, corner office. He sets his things down on an impressively-sized desk. He sits, breathes in, and looks out over Los Angeles. New and big and great.

INT. THE BROTHEL - NEVADA - DAY

The brothel looks much as we last saw it, the front door is open. The window's glass is broken where it was shot out.

Blood stains the floor where Will was shot.

The sign on the door still reads "ORDER TO VACATE".

But then, something mystical happens -

Water begins to flow into the bar.

Slowly at first...

It cascades across the wood floors, wiping them clean of dirt and dust...

The water picks up a bottle, bringing it floating along.

The chairs shift, moved by its increasing force... and the bar is slowly enveloped by water -

As Lake Meade fills the bar, drowning the past.

END.